THIS BOOK
MUST NOT BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LIBRARY

REFERENCE ONLY

ary

P. RL. PAPERS
FOR REFERENCE ONLY.

University of London

620151

REFERENCE ONLY

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

47° VICTORIÆ, 1884.

VOL. CCLXXXVIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TWELFTH DAY OF MAY, 1884,

TO

THE TENTH DAY OF JUNE, 1884.

Fifth Volume of the Session.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY CORNELIUS BUCK,
AT THE OFFICE FOR "HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,"
22, PATERNOSTER ROW. [E.C.]

1884.

195

BIBL.
LONDIN.
UNIV.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME CCLXXXVIII.

THIRD SERIES.

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 12.

Page

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—HYDE PARK CORNER—THE WELLINGTON STATUE—Questions, The Duke of Rutland; Answers, Lord Thurlow .. 2

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Notice of Question, The Earl of Carnarvon 3

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for, Papers relating to the assumption by the Emperor of Germany of sovereignty over the bay and harbour of Angra Pequena, on the West Coast of Africa, and neighbouring territories,"—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*) 3

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

RIVERS POLLUTION—MOTION FOR A PAPER—

Moved for, "Return of all proceedings instituted in the county courts in England and Wales for the prevention of the pollution of rivers under the 'Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876,' and the result of such proceedings (ordered to be laid before the House on the 29th of May 1883),"—(*The Duke of Northumberland*) .. 5

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Great Seal Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 83) .. 6

[5.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 12.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEES—CHAIRMAN'S PANEL—

Leave given to the Chairman's Panel to make a Report 6

Report to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, AND LEGAL PROCEDURE—

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure have leave to sit and proceed on Thursday, the 15th day of this instant May, at Twelve of the clock,—(*Mr. Sclater-Booth.*)

[*May* 12.] Page

QUESTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ORIGINATING NOTICE FOR FAIR RENT—DATE OF LIABILITY FOR PAYMENT—CASE OF MRS. CASEY, CARTONGAR, CO. LONGFORD—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 7
BOROUGH FUNDS ACT—COLLECTION OF RATES (DUBLIN) ACT—LEGISLATION —Questions, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 8
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT LONDONDERRY—"YOUNG WALLER"—Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 8
INDIA (MADRAS)—THE SALEM RIOTS—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 9
THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXHIBITION—REDUCED RATE OF ADMISSION FOR THE WORKING CLASSES—Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 10
MOROCCO—WOMEN FLOGGING—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 10
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CLAUD COLE HAMILTON, MOYNALTY, CO. MEATH—Questions, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Leamy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 11
INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—ASSESSMENT AT TARBERT—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Courtney 11
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—PENSIONERS—Question, Colonel O'Beirne; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 12
THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney 12
FRANCE AND MOROCCO—THE PAPERS—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 13
COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—UNPAID DIVIDEND FUND ACCOUNT—Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Courtney 13
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MR. JAMES ELLIS FRENCH—Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Small; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 13
IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT—QUIT AND CROWN RENTS—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Courtney 15
EGYPT—FLOGGING—THE "CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS"—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 15
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—POLITICAL LECTURES IN BOARD SCHOOL ROOMS—Questions, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Mac Iver, Mr. Bulwer, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Mundella 16
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Mundella 17
THE STONE CORONATION CHAIR, "LIA FAIL," OR STONE OF DESTINY, WESTMINSTER ABBEY—ALTERATION OF THE NOTICE AFFIXED—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 18
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—METROPOLITAN BUILDING ACTS—Question, Mr. B. Samuelson; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg .. 18
EXPLOSIVES ACT—DYNAMITE EXPLOSION IN AYRSHIRE—Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 19
NAVY—UNBUOYED MOORINGS IN THE MEDWAY—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 20
THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY —Question, Sir Hervey Bruce; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 21
NAVY—SHIPBUILDING BY CONTRACT—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 22
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—POLICE GUARD OVER A LADY—Questions, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 22
FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS—EMPLOYMENT OF FEMALES IN LAUNDRIES —Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert .. 23

[*May* 12.] Page

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 23

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—SURVEY OF THE BARROW—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 24

SWITZERLAND—THE SALVATIONISTS—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 25

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF BERBER AND DONGOLA—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 25

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. MARTIN LANGTON, CO. WICKLOW—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 26

INDIAN STATE RAILWAYS—CONTRACTS—Question, Mr. Ecroyd; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 26

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—THE INDIA OFFICE—Question, Baron De Ferrières; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 27

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—ARREST OF THOMAS BUCKLEY AND RICHARD POWER AT KILMACTHOMAS, CO. WATERFORD—Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 27

EGYPT—THE PAPERS—ABRIDGMENT OF NO. 18—Questions, Lord John Manners; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 28

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—Questions, Mr. Guy Dawnay, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 28

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone:—Short debate thereon .. 29

MOTIONS.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to General Gordon's Mission,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION—VOTE OF CENSURE—

Moved, "That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed,"—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) 31

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolution [5th May] *considered* .. 137

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £57,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Divine Service, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885" .. 137

After short debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) Bill [Bill 179]

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) 138

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.

[House counted out.] [1.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 13.

Public Notaries Bill (No. 53)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Aberdare*) .. 139

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months,")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Public Notaries Bill—continued.

After short debate, on Question, That ("now") stand part of the Motion? their Lordships *divided;* Contents 30, Not-Contents 92; Majority 62.
Resolved in the *negative:*—Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months.*

Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment Bill (No. 78)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Aberdeen*) .. 146
Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill—
Order of the Day for the Consideration of the Commons' Amendments to the Bill read 146
After short debate, Commons Amendments *considered* accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Marriages Legalization Bill (No. 76)—
Amendments *reported* (according to order) 147
After short debate, Amendments *agreed to:*—Bill to be read 3ª on *Tuesday* next.

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act (1878) Amendment Bill—
Moved, "That the Bill be withdrawn,"—(*The Duke of Richmond and Gordon*) 148
After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

The Wellington Statue—Question, The Duke of Rutland; Answer, Lord Sudeley 149
Egypt—The Proposed Conference—Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon .. 150

Public Libraries Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*): read 1ª (No. 95) 162

[7.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 13.

QUESTIONS.

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 162
The Magistracy (Ireland)—County of Tyrone—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 163
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Tipperary County and the King's County—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 163
Poor Law (Ireland)—Manorhamilton Board of Guardians—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 164
National Education (Ireland)—Carrickaslane National School—Dismissal of Miss Fitzgerald—Question, Mr. Kinnear; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 165
Law and Police (Ireland)—Military Riot at Athlone—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 166
Post Office—Telegraph Department—Protection of Telegrams—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Fawcett 167
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Appointment of Mr. Matthias M'Manus—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 168
Poor Law (Ireland)—Dr. O'Neill, Medical Officer, Athy—Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 169

[May 13.] Page

INLAND REVENUE—HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCES—Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 169

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—DONGOLA—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 170

POST OFFICE—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Gray, Mr. Moore, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Fawcett 170

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—MISSION OF ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA—Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Alexander Gordon, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 174

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—COUNTY INSPECTOR FRENCH—Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 175

LAW AND JUSTICE—ARRANGEMENT OF THE ASSIZES—Questions, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Bulwer; Answers, The Attorney General 176

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE BROTHERS DELAHUNTY—Questions, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan; Question, Mr. O'Brien; [No reply] 176

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE CHANTREY BEQUEST—Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 178

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—ESTIMATE OF LOSS OF LIFE—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 179

PARLIAMENT—THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Attorney General 179

MOTION.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND ORDERS OF THE DAY—RESOLUTION—

Ordered, That the Adjourned Debate on General Gordon's Mission have precedence, this day, over all Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION—VOTE OF CENSURE [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th May]:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 180

After long debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (REPORT)—

Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade 236

Report to lie upon the Table.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION—VOTE OF CENSURE [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th May]:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 237

After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 275, Noes 303; Majority 28.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 302

[*May* 15.]

Page

ARMY — RE-ERECTION OF LONGFORD BARRACKS — Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 428
IRELAND—PALMERSTOWN RACES—GENTLEMEN RIDERS DRESSED AS FEMALES —Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 428
NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 429
PRISONS BOARD (IRELAND)—THE REPORT—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 430
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER CAMPS—Question, Mr. Forester; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 430
IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY—Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 430
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—POLITICAL EMBLEMS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Mundella 432
EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—VOTE OF THANKS TO OFFICERS AND MEN OF H.M. SEA AND LAND FORCES—Questions, Sir John Hay, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Speaker .. 433
AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE NATIVES IN THE CONGO TERRITORY—Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 434
INLAND REVENUE OFFICE—GRIEVANCES OF THE OFFICIALS—Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 435
THE CITY LIVERY COMPANIES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 436
WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—GUN LICENCES—Question, Mr. J. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Courtney 437
NAVY—THE BRITISH AND FRENCH NAVIES—Questions, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Speaker .. 437
PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY—Question, Mr. Houldsworth; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 438
THE FIJI ISLANDS—MR. PATTERSON—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 439
EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 440
THE IRISH GLEBE AND CHURCH LANDS PURCHASERS' ASSOCIATION—Question, Mr. Beresford; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 440
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PENSIONS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS—Question, Mr. Sykes; Answer, Mr. Mundella 441
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—DISQUALIFICATION OF DISPENSARY MEDICAL OFFICERS—Questions, Dr. Lyons, Mr. Healy, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 441
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—INSTRUCTIONS TO SCHOOL INSPECTORS—Question, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answer, Mr. Mundella.. 442
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF MR. P. N. FITZGERALD—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, The Solicitor General for Ireland 443
EMIGRATION—IRISH PAUPER EMIGRANTS—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 443
TRADE AND COMMERCE—COMMERCIAL TREATIES—GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN —Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 444
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Edmund Lechmere; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Gladstone .. 444
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SIR FRANCIS CHANTREY'S FUND—Questions, Sir Robert Peel, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 446
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—COINAGE AND NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILLS—Questions, Mr. Hicks, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 447

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL—Questions, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. M. Brooks; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 448

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Questions, Mr. M'Coan, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone .. 448

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gibson, Mr. T. A. Dickson; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 449

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE LOSS OF LIFE—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 450

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 450

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

EXCISE—IMPORT DUTIES UPON TOBACCO—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, a revision of the Import Duties upon Tobacco is expedient and necessary; that the system upon which Duty is now levied upon unmanufactured and manufactured Tobacco is beneficial to home manufacturers only, and is detrimental to the interests of the consumers in the United Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane,*)—instead thereof 451

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed:—

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE—DUTIES ON GOLD AND SILVER PLATE—Observations, Mr. Slagg; Reply, Mr. Courtney:—Debate thereon 460

CUSTOMS—DUTIES ON FOREIGN IMPORTS—Observations, Mr. Mac Iver .. 473

TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE—Observations, Mr. O'Sullivan, Dr. Cameron 478

LOCAL TAXATION—RESOLUTION OF MARCH 28—Observation, Mr. Pell .. 481

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE—Observations, Mr. Rylands 481

PRIVATE BREWING LICENCES—Observations, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Clare Read; Reply, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 483

PARLIAMENT — AMENDMENTS ON MOTION FOR GOING INTO COMMITTEE—RULINGS OF MR. SPEAKER—Observations, Mr. Healy, Mr. Gladstone:—Short debate thereon 488

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS—

(In the Committee.)

(I.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

£ s. d.

Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 6" .. 495

After debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

WAYS AND MEANS—Committee—*continued.*

£ *s.* *d.*
Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 3"
—(*Colonel Nolan*) 517
After further debate, Question put :—The Committee *divided ;* Ayes 19, Noes 70 ; Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 94.)
Original Question put, and *agreed to.*
(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Customs and Inland Revenue" 527
After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor :*)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock ; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) [COSTS]—
Considered in Committee 528
Resolution *agreed to ;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

[1. 30.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MAY 16.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN ASSOCIATION AND FRANCE—RUMOURED TREATY—Question, The Earl of Fife ; Answer, Earl Granville 529
PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—IRREGULAR DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS —Observations, Lord Balfour ; Reply, Earl Granville 529

THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE—WEATHER REPORTS—RETURN OF UNWARNED STORMS—MOTION FOR A PAPER—
Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office ; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*) 530
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL—PIGEON-SHOOTING—Question, Observations, The Earl of Wemyss ; Reply, The Earl of Dalhousie : —Short debate thereon 532
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—THE LAST TELEGRAM—Questions, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Carnarvon ; Answers, Earl Granville 537

[5.15.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 16.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

TREASURY SOLICITORS' ACT, 1876—INTESTATES ESTATES—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton ; Answer, Mr. Courtney 538
IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RE-APPOINTMENT OF THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 539
THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES AND ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—REV. DR. MOLLOY—Question, Mr. Corry ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 539
MOROCCO—SLAVERY—Question, Dr. Cameron ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 541
MINERAL PROPERTIES—FINES, &c. ON LEASES—Question, Mr. Rolls ; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 541

[*May* 16.]

Page

Parliament—Business of the House—Questions to Ministers—Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 542

The Straits Settlements—The Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero"—Questions, Mr. Storey; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 542

Egypt—The Army of Occupation—Discharges from English Regiments—Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 543

Board of Trade—Telegraphic Communication with Light Vessels—The Sunk Light Vessel—Question, Mr. D. Grant; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 544

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, a Prisoner—Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland 544

Egypt—The Proposed Conference—Personal Explanation, Mr. M'Coan; Observations, Mr. Gladstone 545

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [Second Night]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 6th May*] 546

After long time spent therein, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

QUESTION.

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon—Telegram—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 613

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Law and Justice (Ireland)—The Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters—Motion for a Select Committee—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the facts connected with the conviction of the Crossmaglen prisoners and the subsequent release of Bernard Smith,"—(*Mr. Lynch,*)—instead thereof 614

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Supply,—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 638

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress, to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) Bill [Bill 55]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) .. 639
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment Bill—
Motion for Leave (*Mr. Sykes*) 641
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill to amend "The Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act, 1877," *ordered* (*Mr. Sykes, Colonel Dawnay*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 208.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 205] 641

WAYS AND MEANS—
Customs and Inland Revenue Bill—
Resolutions [May 15] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—*Ordered*, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill, upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of the whole House, upon Ways and Means, on the 28th day of April, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolutions; Bill *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 206.]

Metropolitan Police Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 209] 642

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT)—
Members added to the Standing Committee on Law, &c. 642

[12.30.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 19.

WESTERN PACIFIC—DEPORTATION OF FRENCH RECIDIVISTS—Postponement of Motion, The Earl of Rosebery 643
AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA AND WALLFISCH BAY—Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, The Earl of Derby .. 645

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—HOUSE OF LORDS—INTERIOR ARRANGEMENTS—RESOLUTION—
Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, or other authority having charge of the arrangements of the House of Lords, to furnish in a substantial manner a portion of the Royal Gallery as a writing room for the use of Peers during the sittings of the House,"—(*The Earl of Longford*) 647
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*); read 1ª (No. 102) 649

[5.15.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 19.

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOCAL INSPECTORS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney 649

[*May* 19.]

Page

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—STATISTICS OF EXPENDITURE—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 650

ARMY (IRELAND)—USE OF PARTY TUNES—Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 651

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—RED BAY PIER, CUSHENDALL, CO. ANTRIM—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 651

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—VETERINARY INSPECTORS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 651

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER INNY—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Courtney 652

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—"HOME FARMS"—Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 653

REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 654

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MR. JOHN JAFFRAY (BIRMINGHAM)—Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Sir William Harcourt .. 654

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PROMOTION OF TEACHERS—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 655

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BANKRUPT MAGISTRATES—Questions, Mr. Healy, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 655

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—Questions, Sir Henry Holland; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 656

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS—RETURN OF LEGISLATION—Questions, Mr. Warton; Answers, Mr. Hibbert 657

ARMY—MILITARY BALLOONING—Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 657

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—SARAKHS—Questions, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 658

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—JUVENILE OFFENDERS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 658

NAVY—THE COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE SHIPYARDS—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 659

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS—THE PEABODY TRUSTEES—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General 660

ARMY—THE 45TH REGIMENT—ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT ATHLONE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 660

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875—INSPECTORS—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 661

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—ALLEGED RESISTANCE TO SHERIFF IN LEWIS—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate .. 661

SCOTLAND — THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH — Question, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh; Answer, Mr. Courtney 662

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SECTION 31—LOANS FOR IMPROVEMENTS—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Courtney 663

ARMY—THE 45TH REGIMENT—ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT ATHLONE—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 663

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT OF CARLINGFORD, CO. LOUTH—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 664

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 665

EXCISE—THE TOBACCO DUTY—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 665

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY—Questions, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 665

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SPELDHURST NATIONAL SCHOOL—Questions, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Cropper; Answers, Mr. Mundella 666

THE IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—THE VACANT INSPECTORSHIP—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 667

[*May* 19.] Page

CONSOLIDATED FUND, &c. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION) ACTS, 1873 AND 1883—COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Courtney 667

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—PENSIONS TO WIDOWS AND ORPHANS—Questions, Colonel Milne-Home, Lord Henry Lennox; Answers, Sir Arthur Hayter, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 668

POST OFFICE—ISSUE OF THE NEW ANNUITY AND INSURANCE TABLES—Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 669

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—COSTLEA, CO. LIMERICK—CASE OF MURPHY AND O'CONNELL—Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 669

THE MALAY STATES—ABOLITION OF SLAVERY—Question, Mr. Wodehouse; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 669

THE COINAGE BILL—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 670

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Bourke, Mr. E. Stanhope, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 670

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 672

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Bourke, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 673

FRANCE AND CHINA — TREATY OF TIEN-TSIN — Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 675

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND — Question, Sir Donald Currie; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 676

PARLIAMENT—RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—ALTERATION OF NOTICES—Observations, Mr. O'Brien:—Short debate thereon 676

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 684

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—REMOVAL OF YORK ASSIZES—Question, Sir Frederick Milner; Answer, The Attorney General .. 685

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Merchant Shipping Bill [Bill 1]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain*) 685

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Mac Iver.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. E. Clarke:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday*.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill [Bill 91]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Courtney*) .. 787

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Warton:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 14, Noes 107; Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 95.)

Original Question again proposed 789

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor:*)—After short debate, Question put: — The House *divided;* Ayes 21, Noes 90; Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 96.)

Original Question again proposed 790

After short debate, Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 86, Noes 17; Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 97.)

Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) Bill [Bill 55]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That the Order for Committee be read and discharged,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) 792

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Order *discharged*:—Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill [Bill 111]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Burt*) .. 793

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC PETITIONS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Order with regard to Petitions be amended, by substituting six for five o'clock as the latest hour for presenting Petitions,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) .. 794

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

YORKSHIRE LAND REGISTRIES AND YORKSHIRE REGISTRIES BILLS—NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE—

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Yorkshire Land Registries Bill and Yorkshire Registries Bill do consist of seventeen Members: — The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL and Mr. STUART-WORTLEY *nominated* Members of the Committee .. 795

Moved, "That Mr. Dodds be one other Member of the said Committee," —(*Mr. Dundas*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 46, Noes 15; Majority 31.—(Div. List, No. 98.)

Other Members nominated 796

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 211] 796

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 212] 796

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 213] .. 797

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 214] .. 797

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 215] .. 797

Local Government Provisional Order (Salt Works and Cement) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 216] 798

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) Bill —*Ordered* (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 210] 798

[1.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 20.

NEW PEER—The Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, created Viscount Hampden of Glynde in the county of Sussex.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN ASSOCIATION AND FRANCE—Question, The Earl of Fife; Answer, Earl Granville .. 799

Secretary for Scotland Bill (No. 79)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Dalhousie*) .. 799

After debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly.

Great Seal Bill (No. 83)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 812

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on the *first sitting day after the recess at Whitsuntide.*

Public Libraries Act Amendment Bill (No. 95)—

House in Committee (according to Order) 814

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; and to be read 3^a on *Friday* next.

Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill (No. 44)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Derby*) .. 815

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* next.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE—RESOLUTION—

Notices of Motion, Lord Stratheden and Campbell and Lord de Ros.

Moved, "That the said Motion be not made,"—(*The Earl Granville*) .. 816

After short debate, on Question? their Lordships *divided*; Contents 52, Not-Contents 78; Majority 26:—*Resolved* in the *negative.*

Moved to resolve—

"That in the opinion of this House it is not desirable to remove the equestrian statue of the late Duke of Wellington from London until the public have an opportunity of judging the monument by which it is intended to replace it,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 820

Moved to resolve—

"That this House, being now possessed of fuller knowledge of the views and feelings of the late Duke of Wellington as regards his statue at Hyde Park Corner, is of opinion that it ought not to be removed from London,"—(*The Lord de Ros*) .. 823

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Amendment again *moved.*

On Question? their Lordships *divided*; Contents 66, Not-Contents 44; Majority 22:—*Resolved* in the *affirmative.*

Division List, Contents and Not-Contents 836

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—Resolution, The Lord Balfour 837

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Redesdale*); read 1^a (No. 103) 837

[7.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 20.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—REVISION IN BANTRY UNION—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Courtney 837

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. THOMAS WALSH, J.P.—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 838

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—UNCLAIMED DIVIDENDS—Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Courtney 838

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. THOMAS DOWLING, J.P.—Question, Mr. Mayne; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 839

PUBLIC OFFICES—THE NEW ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE—Question, Mr. Brogden; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 839

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—DEDUCTION FOR ATTENDING UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 840

[*May* 20.]

Page

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. JOSEPH LOWRY, SUB-SHERIFF OF MEATH —Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 840
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF EXPLOSIVES—CASE OF —— M'GINN—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 841
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE RATE COLLECTOR FOR THE CROGHAN DIVISION, BOYLE UNION—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 842
FISHERIES (IRELAND)—ILLEGAL SALMON FISHING—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 842
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SORTERS IN TRAVELLING POST OFFICES—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 843
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—COSTLEA, CO. LIMERICK—CASE OF MURPHY AND O'CONNELL—Questions, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 844
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—DISQUALIFICATION OF PUBLICANS — MR. CHARLES O'NEILL, LONDONDERRY—Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 844
THE CIVIL SERVICE—COPYISTS—Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, Mr. Courtney 845
LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LORD ST. LEONARDS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General 845
CONSOLIDATED FUND, &c. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION) ACTS, 1873 AND 1883—COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS —Questions, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Courtney 846
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—DONGOLA—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 846
CENTRAL ASIA—ADVANCES OF THE RUSSIANS—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 847
THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM — CREW OF THE "NISERO"—Questions, Mr. Storey, Sir John Hay, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 848
EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 850
SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. T. A. Dickson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 851
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 851
PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 852
STATE-AIDED EMIGRANTS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 852
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDERS OF THE DAY—Question, Mr. Newdegate; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 852

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [THIRD NIGHT]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 16*th May*] 853

After long time spent therein, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Friday*, at Two of the clock.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

[House counted out.] [9.5.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 21.

Page

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 21.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—NEW STANDING ORDER, TO FOLLOW STANDING ORDER No. 133—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That where a Chamber of Commerce or Agriculture, or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or business in any district to which any Railway Bill relates, petition against the Bill, alleging that such trade or business will be injuriously affected by the rates and fares proposed to be authorised by the Bill, or is injuriously affected by the rates and fares already authorised by Acts relating to the Railway undertaking, it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills, if they think fit, to admit the Petitioners to be heard, on such allegation, against the Bill, or any part thereof, or against the rates and fares authorised by the said Acts, or any of them: The provisions of this Order relative to rates and fares already authorised, extend to Traders and Freighters, and to a single Trader, in any case where a locus standi would have been allowed to them or him, if this Order had not been made: Nothing in this Order shall authorise the Referees to entertain any question within the jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners,"—(*Mr. B. Samuelson*) 914

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after the first word "Where," to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "an application is made by a Railway Undertaking for Parliamentary powers, attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee; and that persons affected by such rates or fares shall have a 'Locus Standi' before such Committee,"—(*Mr. Laing*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 18th June.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—ASCENSION DAY—SITTINGS OF COMMITTEES—

Moved, "That Committees shall not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock, and have leave to sit until Six of the clock, notwithstanding the sitting of the House,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) 935

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 93, Noes 37; Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 100.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill [Bill 16]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Molloy*) .. 936

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 75, Noes 138; Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 101.) [5.55.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 22.

Page

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE—REPORT *presented* (*Sir Charles Forster*) 977

Metropolitan District Railway Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time," — (*Sir Charles Forster*) 978

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read the third time, and *passed*:—(Queen's *Consent* signified:)—Further short debate.

QUESTIONS.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—ROYAL CARRIAGE DEPARTMENT — MOUNTINGS FOR NAVAL ORDNANCE—REDUCTION OF HANDS—Questions, Mr. Boord; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Brand 979

NAVY—COASTGUARD STATION IN DONEGAL—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 980

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN ASSOCIATION AND FRANCE — Question, Mr. Brown; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 980

BOARD OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION—THE EXAMINERS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 981

STATE OF IRELAND—MEETING OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE AT ABBEYFEALE—SUPPRESSION OF MEETING—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 982

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—CATHOLIC INMATES—PROVISION FOR DIVINE SERVICE IN DONEGAL WORKHOUSE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 982

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—MR. SUB-COMMISSIONER GRAY—Questions, Colonel Digby, Mr. Lea; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 984

EGYPT—PUNISHMENTS—USE OF THE "CAT"—Questions, Mr. Gray, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Trevelyan 984

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND)—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 986

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONE EXCHANGE LICENCES—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 986

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL ACCOMMODATION IN LIMERICK—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 987

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—FAIR RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 987

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—FIRING AT THE PERSON—CASE OF MICHAEL BURKE—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 988

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS—CLEARANCES IN WHITECHAPEL—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 989

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—TRUSTEES BALANCES—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 990

NAVY—GENERAL OFFICERS OF ROYAL MARINES—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 991

ENDOWED SCHOOLS—TONBRIDGE SCHOOL—Questions, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Causton; Answers, Mr. Mundella 991

INDIA — THE QUETTA RAILWAY — Questions, Mr. Slagg, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. J. K. Cross 993

LAW AND JUSTICE—MAGISTRATES' CLERKS—PROSECUTIONS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 993

[*May* 22.] *Page*

Education Department—The "Blue Ribbon" in Board Schools—Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Mundella .. 994

The Middlesex Registry—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Courtney 994

Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Bill—Question, Colonel Colthurst; Answer, Mr. Biggar 995

Merchant Shipping Act—The Steamship "Elephant"—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 995

Africa (South)—Zululand—Sir Henry Bulwer—Questions, Mr. Guy Dawnay; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 996

Merchant Shipping Bill—Over-insurance—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain 996

The Irish Land Commission—Re-appointment of the Sub-Commissioners—Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Courtney 997

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Communication with Khartoum—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 998

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Admiral Sir William Hewett——Mission to the King of Abyssinia—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 998

India (Madras)—The Governor—Payment of the Professional Tax—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 999

The Indian Civil Service—Examination of Natives—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 999

The Parks (Metropolis)—Hyde Park—Open-air Preachers—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1001

Excise—The Tobacco Duties—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1001

Portugal—Seizure and Detention of the British Yacht "Maud" on the South African Coast—Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1002

Merchant Shipping Bill — Statement of Mr. Chamberlain — The Valuers—Question, Mr. Norwood; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain .. 1002

Merchant Shipping Acts—The "Inchclutha"—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain; Question, Mr. O'Donnell; [No reply] 1003

Railways (India)—The Indo-Afghan Railway—Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1004

The Wellington Statue — Questions, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; [No reply] 1005

Ireland—Condition of Irish Labourers—The Select Committee—Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1006

Education Department—Political Emblems in National Schools—Rothwell School—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1007

Literature, Science, and Art—The Royal Academy—The Chantrey Bequest—Questions, Sir Robert Peel; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1007

City of London Livery Companies—The Royal Commission—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir R. Assheton Cross 1009

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon—Questions, Mr. Gourley, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1009

Parliament—Business of the House—Arrangement of Public Business—Questions, Mr. Gibson, Lord John Manners, Mr. Buchanan, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1010

Army—Sale of Sites at Southsea—Question, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1011

Egypt—The Soudan—Employment of Turkish Troops—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1012

Central Asia—Russian Advance—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1012

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS—VOTE ON ACCOUNT—EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—

(In the Committee)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a further sum, not exceeding £3,468,550, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1885" 1013

[Then the several Services are set forth]

THE DIPLOMATIC VOTE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a further sum, not exceeding £1,968,550, be granted, &c."—(*Baron Henry de Worms*) 1016

After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*

Original Question again proposed 1052

POST OFFICE—ROYALTIES FROM TELEPHONE COMPANIES—Observations, Mr. Gray, Mr. Slagg; Reply, Mr. Fawcett 1052

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—GENERAL POLICY OF THEIR SCHEMES—Observations, Mr. Jesse Collings; Reply, Mr. Mundella:—Short debate thereon 1077

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—Observations, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Reply, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1095

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—CREW OF THE "NISERO"—Observations, Mr. Storey; Reply, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice:—Short debate thereon 1103

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE FOR THE CITY OF CORK—Observations, Mr. Parnell; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan:—Debate thereon .. 1117

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) 1142

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1144

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) Bill [Bill 75]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd April], "That the Bill be now read the third time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1153

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 221] .. 1153

Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 222] 1153

Railway Regulation Acts Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 225] .. 1153

LORDS, FRIDAY, MAY 23.

Page

PARLIAMENT — SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS—Observation, Earl Granville 1154
SCOTLAND—HARBOURS OF REFUGE ON THE NORTH EAST COAST—REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SUB-COMMITTEE—Question, The Earl of Rosebery; Answer, The Earl of Dalhousie 1154

Settlement and Removal Law Amendment Bill—
Order of the Day for the Second Reading read 1155
After short debate, Order *discharged.*

Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 99)—
Amendments *reported* (according to Order) 1156
Amendments made:—Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 107.)

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—Question, Observations, The Earl of Galloway; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury 1167

[7.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 23.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT)—
Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Sir Gabriel Goldney discharged, Lord Algernon Percy appointed in respect of the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill 1171

QUESTIONS.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY—Questions, Viscount Galway, Mr. Brodrick; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1171
PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—RE-VACCINATION—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1172
THE LAND COURT (IRELAND)—MR. BELL, VALUER FOR CO. CAVAN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1174
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF BERNARD ENNIS, PHILLIPSTOWN, KING'S CO.—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1175
INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—CLARE SLOB LANDS RECLAMATION—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1176
LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—THE ARRESTS AT TUBBERCURRY—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland .. 1177
LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883 — SCHEMES FOR THE ERECTION OF LABOURERS' COTTAGES—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1177
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—DRUMCLIFF WEST, CO. SLIGO—Questions, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1178
STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION IN GALWAY CO.—MESSRS. R. AND C. HENRY—Questions, Mr. Lynch; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1179
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—PROTESTANTS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE POST OFFICE AT PORTADOWN—Question, Lord Arthur Hill; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1180
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—LIMITATIONS OF AGE—Question, Mr. Moore; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1180
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—Questions, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone 1180
LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—FORGED CERTIFICATES OF PEDIGREE OF HORSES—CASE OF DAVID AND JOSEPH RAESIDE AND ANOTHER—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1182

Page

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ILLEGAL ACTION OF THE SHERIFF OF KING'S COUNTY—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1183

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIAN ADVANCE — Correction, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1183

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. J. Lowther, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1183

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL—Personal Explanation, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, Mr. Borlase:—Short debate thereon 1184

CUSTOMS—OUTDOOR OFFICERS—Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1189

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [FOURTH NIGHT]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 16*th May*] 1189

After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 226] 1248

The House suspended its Sitting at ten minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

CROWN LANDS—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the management of the Crown Lands, and the principles to be followed in selling or leasing the same,"—(*Mr. Cheetham*,)—instead thereof 1248

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, [House counted out.] [11.15.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 26.

RAILWAYS—CONTINUOUS BRAKES—LEGISLATION—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Lord Sudeley 1264

THE WELLINGTON STATUE—Question, Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Redesdale; Reply, Earl Granville .. 1264

Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) Bill—

Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis—*Presented* (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 1265

After short debate, Bill read 1ª (No. 109.)

METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE—"UNWARNED STORMS"—MOTION FOR A RETURN—

Moved, That there be laid before this House—

"Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*) 1273

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*.

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) Bill (No. 98)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read 1275

After short debate, Second Reading *put off* to *Tuesday* the 17*th of June* next.

CUSTOM HOUSE—SEARCHES OF PASSENGERS' LUGGAGE—THE NEW REGULATIONS—Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Lord Chancellor 1276

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY—Question, Observations, Viscount Midleton; Reply, Lord Carlingford 1277

THE SUGAR TRADE—WEST INDIAN SUGAR—Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, The Earl of Derby 1283

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE—MOTION FOR PAPERS—

Moved, "That there be laid before the House all correspondence relating to the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Cambridgeshire, and to that brought by the steamship 'Toronto,'"—(*The Lord Harlech*) 1287

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Return *ordered* to be laid before the House.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE BLENHEIM PICTURES—Question, Observations, Earl Cadogan; Reply, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1287

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—THE BOROUGHS OF IRELAND—Observations, Lord Waveney; Reply, Lord Carlingford 1289

Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill (No. 44)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a,"—(*The Earl of Derby*) .. 1291

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 3^a accordingly:—Amendments made:—Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

LAW AND POLICE—POLICE PROTECTION OF HER MAJESTY'S MINISTERS—Questions, The Earl of Ashburnham; Answers, Earl Granville .. 1292

[7.15.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 26.

QUESTIONS.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-PERSIAN AND AFGHAN FRONTIERS—Questions, Mr. Jerningham, Lord John Manners, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1293

FRANCE AND CHINA—TREATY OF TIEN-TSIN—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1294

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878—MOVEMENT OF CATTLE—Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1294

ARMY (INDIA)—PENSIONS—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1295

COINAGE BILL—PROFIT AND LOSS OF MINTAGE—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1295

[*May* 26.]

Page
POST OFFICE—FREE POSTAGE—Questions, Mr. Gray, Mr. Birkbeck; Answers, Mr. Fawcett 1295
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. HAMPDEN EVANS TENER AND MR. ST. GEORGE LAWRENCE WILLCOCKS, CO. TYRONE—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1296
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT BENCH OF COOKSTOWN, CO. TYRONE—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1298
IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY—Questions, Sir Philip Miles, Sir Hervey Bruce, Viscount Lewisham, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1299
ARMY (INDIA)—ARREARS OF NON-EFFECTIVE ARMY CHARGES—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1301
OFFICE OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1302
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—SALE OF CARCASES—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. George Russell .. 1302
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE OLDCASTLE UNION—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1303
LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON THE PERSON—CASE OF MR. M'GAUGHEY—Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1303
LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1304
PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CHESTER PRISON—Question, Mr. Tatton Egerton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1305
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE RECORD OFFICE AT VENICE—Questions, Mr. Dillwyn; Answers, Mr. Courtney 1305
GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES—TABLE OF INTEREST AND SINKING FUNDS—Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1306
MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—STATEMENT OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN—THE VALUERS—Questions, Mr. Norwood, Mr. C. M. Palmer; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain 1306
LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—APPLICATION FOR FAIR RENT—CASE OF PATRICK CASSERLAY—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1308
POOR LAW (SCOTLAND)—MR. D. ROSS, PAROCHIAL INSPECTOR OF CROMDALE—REMOVAL BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISION—Question, Sir George Grant; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1309
ARMY—INVERNESS BARRACKS—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1309
THE CHANNEL TUNNEL—SUSPENSION OF WORKS—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1309
PORTUGAL—THE CONGO RIVER—DETENTION OF THE YACHT "MAUD"—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.. 1310
ARMY—EXAMINATIONS FOR PROMOTION—Questions, Earl Percy; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1310
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—ROTHWELL SCHOOL BOARD—Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella 1311
THE WELLINGTON STATUE—Questions, Lord John Manners, Sir William Hart Dyke; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre.. 1312
POST OFFICE—FEMALE TELEGRAPHISTS—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1313
EGYPT—FORCED LABOUR—Question, Mr. Villiers Stuart; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1313
THE MIDDLESEX REGISTRY—THE STAFF—Question, Mr. Ince; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1313
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—STATUS, DUTIES, AND LEAVES OF CLERKS—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1314

[*May* 26.] Page

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1315
LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ASSIZES—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, The Attorney General.. 1315
PARLIAMENT—THE WHITSUN HOLIDAYS—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1315
ARMY—BILLETING—Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1316
ARMY — RELIGIOUS SERVICES FOR SOLDIERS (BARBADOES)—Question, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1317
INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—ABERYSTWITH COLLEGE —Question, Mr. Rendel; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1318
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1318
EGYPT—PUNISHMENTS—USE OF THE "CAT-O'NINE-TAILS"—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1318
COLONIES—RETURN OF COINAGE OF GOLD—Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1319

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [FIFTH NIGHT]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 23rd May*] 1319
After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill [Bill 186]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*).. 1408
After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. J. G. Hubbard.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. Lowther:*) —After further short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

Universities (Scotland) Bill—
Motion for Leave (*The Lord Advocate*) 1429
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill for the better administration and endowment of the Universities of Scotland, *ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 230.]

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill—
Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881,' and to provide facilities for the sale and purchase of land in Ireland," —(*Mr. Trevelyan*) 1434
Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*) 1434

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 232] 1434

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 229] .. 1434

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Findlater, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 231] 1434

Strensall Common Bill—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1434

Ways and Means—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £6,519,368 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*. [1.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 27

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills—

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

Navy—Assistant Paymasters—Admiral Sir Thomas Symonds's Letter—Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook 1435

Education Department—Rothwell School Board—Question, Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, Earl Granville 1437

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Eligibility of Militia Officers to Staff Appointments—Question, The Earl of Galloway; Answer, The Earl of Morley 1438

Egypt—The Proposed Conference—Negotiations with France—Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1439

The Wellington Statue—Question, The Duke of Rutland; Answer, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1447

Africa (West Coast)—Angra Pequena—Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, Earl Granville .. 1449

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon—Question, Observations, The Earl of Wemyss; Reply, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1450

Education Department—Grants to Colleges in Wales—Question, Observations, Lord Norton; Reply, Lord Carlingford 1455

Parliament—The Whitsun Holidays—Adjournment of the House—Observations, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1456

Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces—Observations, The Earl of Galloway; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook 1457

Metropolitan Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Camperdown*); read 1ª (No. 113) 1458

[6.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 27.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Petty Sessions District of Termonfecan, Co. Louth—Questions, Mr. Biggar, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, **Mr. Trevelyan** 1459

[*May* 27.] *Page*

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION OFFICE (DUBLIN)—THE DUBLIN CITY AND COUNTY CONSERVATIVE CLUB—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1460

EGYPT (AFFAIRS IN THE SOUDAN)—MR. BREWSTER, SUB-GOVERNOR OF SUAKIN—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1460

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE RATE COLLECTOR OF THE BLACKROCK TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1461

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT BY ORANGEMEN AT STEWARTSTOWN, CO. TYRONE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1462

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF FERMANAGH—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1463

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—OFFICERS OF THE MULLINGAR BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1463

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—Questions, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Gladstone 1464

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPEALS IN COUNTY CAVAN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1465

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT—IRISH INTERPRETER AT SITTINGS IN DONEGAL—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1465

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. M'CLINTOCK, J.P.—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1465

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, NEWRY UNION—MISCONDUCT OF RETURNING OFFICER—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1466

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JUDICIAL RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1467

CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICIALS—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Courtney 1467

MERCANTILE MARINE—LOSS OF LIFE BY SHIPWRECK—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1468

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—SALE OF CARCASES—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1468

PRIVY COUNCIL—VETERINARY DEPARTMENT—Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1469

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN LINCOLNSHIRE—Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1469

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—MANUFACTURE OF SMALL ARMS—Questions, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Brand 1470

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE BIRMINGHAM DYNAMITERS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Attorney General 1471

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)—CONVENT NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1472

EGYPT—FLOGGING IN PRISON—INTRODUCTION OF THE "CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS"—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1472

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—Questions, Mr. Bourke, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord John Manners, Baron Henry De Worms, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1472

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR—OFFICIAL RESIDENCES—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1480

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain; Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone 1480

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1481

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1481

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1482

MOTION.

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE)—ADJOURNMENT FOR THE RECESS—*Moved*, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1482

SCOTLAND—THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Observations, Dr. Cameron; Reply, Sir William Harcourt:—Short debate thereon 1499

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—Observations, Mr. Norwood:—Short debate thereon 1506

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—Observations, Mr. Kenny; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan 1509

Question put, and *agreed to*:—*Resolved*, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill—MOTION FOR LEAVE [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Motion [26th May]:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1510

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 238.]

WAYS AND MEANS—Resolution [May 26] *reported* 1528

Resolution read a first and second time:—*Moved*, "That this House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *Thursday* 5th June.

MOTIONS.

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 233] .. 1528

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 234] .. 1529

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 5th day of June,—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

HER MAJESTY'S ATTORNEY GENERAL *v.* MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH—

[6.55.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, JUNE 5.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT—GAMBLING AT PORT SAID—Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1530

Post Office (Ireland)—Postal Communication in Co. Waterford—Question, Mr. Villiers Stuart; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1530

Post Office (Ireland)—Appointments of Sorting Clerk and Female Telegraph Learner—Open Competition—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1531

Poor Law (Ireland)—Election of Guardians—Electoral Division of Rathornan, Carlow Union—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1531

Poor Law (Ireland)—The Kilrush Board of Guardians—Disorderly Conduct of Chairman—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1532

National Education (Ireland)—The Kilbiggan National School—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1532

Law and Police (Ireland)—Alleged Assault on the Police by Lord Caledon—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1533

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Mr. Kenrick H. Jones, Co. Antrim—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1534

Scotland—The Clerks in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh—Question, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1534

The Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. Thomas Walpole—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1535

Law and Justice (Scotland)—Alleged Resistance to Sheriff in Lewis—Case of Donald Graham—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1536

The Newspaper Press—Articles on Current Trials for Treason-Felony in Ireland—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1537

Literature, Science, and Art—The May Examinations at South Kensington—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Mundella .. 1538

Navy—Bursting of a 100-ton Gun—Questions, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Brand 1538

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1539

Merchant Shipping—Northern Lights Commissioners—Lighting of Orkney and Shetland—Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain 1540

Post Office (Ireland)—The Drumcondra Post Office—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1541

Parliament—Order—Merchant Shipping Bill—Circular of the Board of Trade—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Speaker .. 1541

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Service Estimates—

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

(1.) £22,063, to complete the sum for the Houses of Parliament.—After long debate, Vote *agreed to* 1542

(2.) £106,555, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1574

(3.) £65,000, to complete the sum for Public Offices Site.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1582

(4.) £11,240, to complete the sum for the Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1592

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £184,116, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Tele-

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—*continued.*

graph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services" .. 1603

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £174,116, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*:)—After debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(6.) £20,125, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,549, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings" .. 1636

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £71, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 18, Noes 50; Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 104.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(8.) £6,516, to complete the sum for the Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1641

(9.) £16,969, to complete the sum for New Courts of Justice and Offices.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1642

(10.) £162,500, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1644

(11.) £10,429, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1645

(12.) £4,711, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.

(13.) £1,400, to complete the sum for Natural History Museum.

(14.) £6,347, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

(15.) £124,740, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(16.) £5,000, to complete the sum for Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(17.) £195,000, to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and Main Roads, England and Wales.

(18.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, in Aid of the Cost of Maintenance of Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland during the year ended Whitsuntide 1884" .. 1652

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £19,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 7, Noes 50; Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 105.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £138,568, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations" .. 1659

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Molloy*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(19.) £14,650, to complete the sum for Royal University, Ireland, Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1661

(20.) £4,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1661

(21.) £8,460, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(22.) £36,416, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1664

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 16th May*] .. 1667

After short time spent therein, [House counted out] [1·45.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, JUNE 6.

Page

QUESTIONS.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—FOOD ADULTERATION—Questions, Mr. Duckham, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Dodson .. 1679

PRISONS (IRELAND)—WEXFORD GAOL—CASE OF EDWARD MALONE—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1680

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1681

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—NATIVE HOSTILITIES—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1681

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RUMOURED ADVANCE OF THE MAHDI TO KHARTOUM—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Marquess of Hartington 1682

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—PAYMENT OF WAGES—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 1687

IRISH LAND COURT (APPEALS)—SITTINGS AT LIFFORD—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1687

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "NISERO"—Question, Mr. Storey; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1688

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill [Bill 186]—SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [26th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1688

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 117, Noes 34; Majority 83.—(Div. List, No. 106.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [5th June] *reported* 1722

First Sixteen Resolutions *agreed to.*

Seventeenth Resolution read a second time:—*Moved,* "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 67, Noes 4; Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 107.)

Eighteenth Resolution *postponed.*

Resolutions 19 to 21 *agreed to.*

Twenty-second Resolution *postponed.*

Further Consideration of postponed Resolutions *deferred* till *this day.*

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 239] 1722

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 240] 1723

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 241] 1723

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

[House counted out.] [9.5.]

LORDS, MONDAY, JUNE 9.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 72 and 82 be suspended for the remainder of the Session.

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That the order of the 18th of March last be suspended, and that a statement in the following form be circulated in the case of all Bills to which Standing Order No. 38 applies, not later than the second day after the first reading.—[The Form is then appended.]

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—Question, The Earl of Donoughmore; Answer, The Lord Chancellor 1724

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE)—NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—Question, Observations, Earl Stanhope; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury 1724

NAVY—CONDITION OF THE IRON-CLAD NAVY—CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR THOMAS M. SYMONDS, G.C.B.—

Motion for Papers, Viscount Sidmouth 1731

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—MOTION—

Moved, "That this House do adjourn till Monday next,"—(*The Earl Granville*) 1740

After short debate, Motion *amended,* and *agreed to.*

Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Sudeley*); read 1ª (No. 114) 1741

[5.30.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, JUNE 9.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Cardiff Corporation Bill—
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SOUTH WALES—

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations that they have power to insert in the Cardiff Corporation Bill provisions enabling the said Corporation to contribute the sum of Ten thousand pounds to or (*Sir Edward J. Reed*) 1742
for the purposes of the 'University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire,'"—

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 185, Noes 141; Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 108.)

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Sewerage Scheme) Bill [Bill 211]—

Order for Second Reading read 1767

After short debate, Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee to consist of Seven Members, Four to be nominated by the House, and Three to be added by the Committee of Selection.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY—SMALL ARMS—REGULATION SWORDS—Question, Mr. C. Phipps; Answer, Mr. Brand 1768
INLAND REVENUE (SCOTLAND)—INCOME TAX—THE TARBERT FISHERMEN—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1769
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—TELEGRAMS IN DUBLIN, WITHIN TWELVE MILES RADIUS—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1769
FRANCE AND CHINA—THE TREATY OF TIEN-TSIN—Questions, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1770
EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—NOTICES BY POST—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1770
LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF MISS KELLY, OF BALLICUDIHY, CO. KILKENNY—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1771
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—DR. C. BROWNE'S REPORTS—Questions, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella 1772
THE CIVIL LIST—THE ROYAL PALACES—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1773
ASIA (CENTRAL)—THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF MAP—Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1773
CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—PROMOTIONS—Question, Mr. Acland; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1774
AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ADMINISTRATION OF THE BRITISH COLONIES—Question, Mr. Roe; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1774
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MOUNTMELLICK UNION—CLAIM TO VOTE—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1775
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED ILL-CONDUCT OF SERGEANT M'GRATH AT COOLRAIN, MOUNTRATH, QUEEN'S CO.—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1775
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION REPORT—Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1776
INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX SURCHARGES—Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1776
ARMY—DRAINAGE OF THE NAAS BARRACKS—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1776
EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1777
ASIA (CENTRAL)—THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF MAP—THE AFGHAN FRONTIER—Questions, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1778
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA RECRUITING—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1779
THE UNITED KINGDOM—DEFENCES OF THE MERCANTILE PORTS—THE CLYDE—Question, Mr. J. Stewart; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1780
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT OF TERMONFECKEN, CO. LOUTH—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan.. 1780
RAILWAYS (METROPOLIS)—METROPOLITAN URBAN DISTRICTS FOR RAILWAYS—THE MAP—Question, Mr. Francis Buxton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1781
INDIA (MADRAS)—RETURNS OF LANDS HELD BY UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVANTS, &C.—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1781
INDIA (MADRAS)—BREACH OF INDIA OFFICE REGULATIONS, 1879—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1781
IRELAND—THE COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES, DUBLIN—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1782

[*June* 9.] Page

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CHARGE AGAINST SERGEANT GALLAGHER—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1782

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—GRATUITY TO THE FORCES—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1783

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt .. 1784

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE GARRISON AT SUAKIN—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1784

CONSOLIDATED FUND, &C. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION ACTS, 1873 AND 1883)—COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1784

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1785

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE ORDER BOOK—Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1785

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE)—THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—Questions, Mr. Bourke, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1786

EGYPT—NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKEY—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1788

EGYPT (FINANCE, &C.)—INTERNATIONAL CONTROL—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1788

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—THE NEWRY PROCESSION—Questions, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gibson, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1789

EGYPT—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—MISSION TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1791

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Charles Russell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Gladstone 1792

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [SIXTH NIGHT]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 26th May*] 1792

After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill [Bill 167]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 1875

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Royal Courts of Justice Bill [Bill 139]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1877

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Shannon Navigation Bill [Bill 201]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Courtney*) .. 1879

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months,"—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

Marriages Legalization Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 237]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1880

Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Bill *considered* in Committee :—Committee report Progress, to sit again *To-morrow.*

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill [Bill 186]—

Order for Committee read 1881

After short debate, Committee *deferred* till *Thursday.*

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 206]—

Order for Committee read :—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1881

After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Post Office Protection Bill [Bill 161]—

Moved, "That the Order for Second Reading be discharged,"—(*Mr. Fawcett*) 1882

Motion *agreed to* :—Order *discharged* :—Bill *withdrawn.*

Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment) Bill [Bill 208]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Sykes*) .. 1882

After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Irish Land Court Officers (Exclusion from Parliament) Bill [Bill 88]—SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April], "That the Bill be now read a second time :"—Question again proposed :—Debate *resumed* 1883

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Brodrick* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

County Courts (Ireland) Bill [Bill 104]—

Order for Second Reading read 1884

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 23rd June.

QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE COINAGE BILL—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 1884

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 242] 1884

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 243] .. 1885

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 244] 1885

Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Act (1860) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 245] 1885

METROPOLITAN POLICE [EXPENSES]—
Considered in Committee 1885
Resolution *agreed to ;* to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock
[1.15.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, JUNE 10.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Smith's Trust Estate Bill [*Lords*]—
Order for Second Reading read 1886
After short debate, Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

COMMISSIONERS OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PROFESSOR CURTIS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1887

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ESTABLISHMENT AND EXTRA POLICE FOR CO. WATERFORD—Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1888

THE DYNAMITE CONSPIRACIES—THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES—Questions, Mr. Anderson; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1889

TURKEY (EUROPEAN PROVINCES)—THE GOVERNOR GENERALSHIP OF EASTERN ROUMELIA—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1889

MADAGASCAR—RUMOURED FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1889

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—MEDICAL INSPECTORS—APPOINTMENT OF DR. WOODHOUSE—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1890

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND) — DISORDERLY CONDUCT OF A DETECTIVE AT KNOCKBARRON RACES, CO. GALWAY—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1891

NAVY—ASSISTANT DOCKYARD CONSTRUCTORS—Questions, Mr. A. F. Egerton, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey .. 1892

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL—INVESTMENTS BY TRUSTEES—Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1893

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—NUMBER OF SUB-COMMISSIONERS—Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Brodrick; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1893

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACTING MAIL GUARDS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1894

UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION AT ANTWERP—A BRITISH COMMISSION—Questions, Sir Robert Peel; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1895

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—EMPLOYMENT OF TURKISH TROOPS—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1896

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—MISSION OF SIR WILLIAM HEWETT TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA—Observations, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1897

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [Seventh Night]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 9th June*] 1897
After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 246] .. 1964

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes to Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Board of Trade—Constitution and Functions—Resolution, Mr. Mac Iver 1964
[House counted out.] [9.5.]

LORDS.

NEW PEER.

TUESDAY, MAY 20.

The Right Hon. Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, created Viscount Hampden of Glynde in the county of Sussex.

TOOK THE OATH.

MONDAY, JUNE 9.

The Lord Langford, a Representative Peer for Ireland (Writs and Returns, March 20).

SAT FIRST.

MONDAY, MAY 19.

The Lord Fisherwick (Marquess of Donegall), after the death of his brother.

MONDAY, MAY 26.

The Lord Mostyn, after the death of his grandfather.

MONDAY, JUNE 9.

The Lord Raglan, after the death of his father.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5.

For *Athlone Borough*, *v.* Sir John J. Ennis, baronet, deceased.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6.

For *Southampton County* (*Southern Division*), *v.* Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott, Manor of Northstead, in the county of York.

MONDAY, JUNE 9.

For *Lincoln City*, *v.* John Hinde Palmer, esquire, deceased.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

THURSDAY, MAY 15.

Kent County (*Mid Division*)—Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Fifth Session of the *Twenty-Second Parliament* of the
United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 29 April, 1880, in the Forty-third
Year of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 12th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Great Seal * (83); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) * (84); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (Alton-Barnes, &c.) * (85); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) (Bovey-Tracey, &c.) * (86); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) (Ashill, &c.) * (87); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) (Acton, &c.) * (88); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) (Ashen, &c.) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) (Abberley, &c.) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) (Abergwilly, &c.) * (91); Water Provisional Orders * (92).

Second Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order * (75); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (The Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * (64).

Committee—Marriages Legalisation * (76-93).

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—HYDE PARK CORNER — THE WELLINGTON STATUE.—

QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND asked, Whether any assurance could be given on the part of the Government that the Wellington Statue should not be removed until after the discussion of the Motion which stood on the Paper for Thursday in the name of Lord Stratheden and Campbell, who wished to move that it was not desirable to remove the statue from London until the public had an opportunity of judging the monument by which it was intended to replace it?

Lord THURLOW: Not having received any Notice of the Question, I have not informed myself on the subject, and am, therefore, unable to give the noble Duke any information whatever.

The Duke of RUTLAND: Perhaps the noble Lord will be kind enough to assure me that the statue will not be removed?

Lord THURLOW: I will make inquiries.

The Duke of RUTLAND: I will repeat the Question to-morrow.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

The Earl of CARNARVON gave Notice that, to-morrow, he would call attention to an answer which was reported to have been given by Mr. Gladstone on Friday, May 9, with regard to the bases of the proposed Conference, and would ask the Government for some explanation of the meaning of that answer.

WEST AFRICA—ANGRA PEQUENA.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Viscount SIDMOUTH rose to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Correspondence had passed between Her Majesty's Government and the German Government or other public authorities in reference to the assumption by the Emperor of Germany of sovereignty over the bay and harbour of Angra Pequena on the West Coast of Africa, and neighbouring territories; and whether, in consequence of this assumption, any previous rights or claims of the Government of this country were abandoned? and to move for Papers. The noble Lord said, it might be known to their Lordships that not only this harbour, but the coast from the Orange River, belonged to England. There seemed to be no question about that, as all the maps so marked it, and our claim had never been disputed. But a year or two ago a German trader, acting for himself or a Company, bought from a Native Chieftain some miles of property inland and along the coast, and he had not only carried on trade there, but had commenced large works and expended much money there, and he sought to recover duties from English traders and merchants going to the same place. He had also interfered with English merchants residing on the spot, and had threatened to fire on an English ship, and was only deterred from doing so by the captain running up the English Flag. He did not know what action the German Government had taken on the subject; but it was reported in the newspapers that there was a very strong feeling in Germany in favour of Colonizing the district. It was said that we had never substantiated our claim to the place, and had taken no steps to Colonize it, and it was reported from Berlin that it was considered a very desirable investment for Germany, and that German traders were preparing shipments for the district. It was said that the German gentleman had given under £200 and two guns for the rights he had purchased, and that the Chief who sold them inherited them from his father, who purchased them for a pickaxe. Having visited the place many years ago, he had been struck with the immense facilities it offered for a naval station, and he had been astonished that it had not been used as one. It was the finest harbour along that coast, and the islands opposite the harbour abounded in guano, the deposits of which were now claimed by this gentleman. He had seen 300 vessels anchored there, and nobody had ever disputed our rights. Now, not only the harbour, but the small islands forming part of it, were claimed by this gentleman, or the Company which he represented. He anticipated that it would be said that the coast was valueless, and that we did not want the harbour; that it was not an attractive country, and that it was without water; but if the place were valueless, it would hardly be worth the while of a German gentleman to make large investments there. He was assured by an ex-Governor of the Cape Colony that colonization in that direction was extending, and a report of Captain Spence, a considerable trader, to the Chamber of Commerce at the Cape, dwelt on the advantages of the place for stock-farming, and also on its mining capabilities. Unless something were done, the traffic would go into the hands of the German traders. About two years ago the Admiralty sent a man-of-war to inspect the coast, and since that time copper mines had been discovered in the territory said to be included in the cession to the German gentleman. There could be no doubt as to the advantages of the harbour for a naval station. He looked with regret at the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in ceding so many parts of Africa and other places. For instance, Delagoa Bay, a magnificent harbour on the east coast, was ceded some years. He should regret if we pursued the same course in this case. He therefore moved for Papers on the subject. He also wished to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any surveys or reports had been received by him or existed in the archives of the Admiralty in reference to the harbour of Angra Pequena and the neighbouring coasts; and whether, in such case, he would lay the same on the Table of the House?

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for, Papers relating to the assumption by the Emperor of Germany of sovereignty over the bay and harbour of Angra Pequena, on the West Coast of Africa, and neighbouring territories."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

Earl GRANVILLE: In regard to Delagoa Bay and the coast, I think the noble Viscount must have been misinformed. We never claimed the harbour of Delagoa Bay, and therefore we never ceded it; but there was an arbitration, and it was decided against us. With regard to the noble Viscount's first Question, I have to state that a Correspondence has been going on and is going on between the German Government and our own as to the extent of the claim of this country over the territory in question. The German Government has never assumed any sovereignty over any portion of these territories that I am aware of. The Correspondence is in progress at this moment, and the noble Viscount will understand that I cannot undertake to produce it at once. Perhaps the noble Viscount will allow me to answer the Question he has addressed to my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. I beg to state that all the information possessed by the Admiralty is published in the *African Pilot*, vol. 2, page 223. I think, therefore, it would be hardly worth while to reprint that information in the shape of a Parliamentary Paper.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

RIVERS POLLUTION.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Moved for,

"Return of all proceedings instituted in the county courts in England and Wales for the prevention of the pollution of rivers under the 'Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876,' and the result of such proceedings (ordered to be laid before the House on the 29th of May 1883),"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

Lord THURLOW said, he had to express regret that there had been some delay in this matter. It occurred in consequence of the Notice being inadvertently referred to the wrong Department; but he could assure the noble Duke that there should be no further delay, and the Papers should be laid on the Table at the earliest possible time.

Motion *agreed to;* Return ordered *forthwith.*

GREAT SEAL BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to simplify the passing of Instruments under the Great Seal—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 83.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 12th May, 1884.

MINUTES—Supply—*considered in Committee—Postponed Resolution* [May 5] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Plymouth, Devonport, and District Tramways.*

Public Bills—*Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee*—Strensall Common * [177].

Committee—Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) [179] [House counted out].

Considered as amended—Commons Regulation Provisional Order * [172].

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEES—CHAIRMAN'S PANEL.

Leave given to the Committee of the Chairman's Panel to make a Special Report:—

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR accordingly *reported* from the Chairman's Panel, That they had appointed Mr. Sclater-Booth to act as the Chairman of the Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by the Order of the House, be referred to such Standing Committee.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, AND LEGAL PROCEDURE.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure have leave to sit and proceed on Thursday, the 15th day of this instant May, at Twelve of the clock.—(*Mr. Sclater-Booth.*)

QUESTIONS.

———o———

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ORIGINATING NOTICE FOR FAIR RENT —DATE OF LIABILITY FOR PAYMENT—CASE OF MRS. CASEY, CARTONGAR, CO. LONGFORD.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Mrs. Casey, widow, who, being present tenant of a holding in the townland of Cartongar, electoral division of Breanrisk, county of Longford, served on her landlord, Mr. Tobias H. Peyton, of Hermitage, Newtonforbes, an originating notice, to have a fair rent fixed, previous to the 12th of November 1881; whether she was thereby entitled to have her judicial rent, whenever fixed, to run from 1st November 1881, she being a May and November tenant; whether, through delays, not attributable to her, the judicial rent was not fixed till after 1st November 1883; whether her previous rent was £5, and her judicial rent was fixed at £3 10*s.*; whether her landlord has, by civil bill or otherwise, recovered from her three half-year's rent, due at May 1882, November 1882, and May 1883, on the previous scale; whether she has any and, if so, what remedy; whether he is aware that there are hundreds of tenants in a similar position; and, whether, if they have no remedy in the existing state of the Law, any remedy will be provided for them by legislation?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): Mrs. Casey served an originating notice to have a fair rent fixed previous to the 12th November, 1881. Her application was recorded under the 60th section of the Land Act, and she was entitled to have her judicial rent when fixed bear date from the 1st November, 1881. It was fixed on the 12th July, 1883, at £3 10*s.*, the old rent being £5. The landlord would be acting within his legal rights if he enforced before the 12th July, 1883, the three half-year's rent at the old rate. But I think Mrs. Casey will be entitled at the next settlement of rent to get credit for three sums of 30*s.*, which in the event have been proved to have been overpaid by her.

BOROUGH FUNDS ACT—COLLECTION OF RATES (DUBLIN) ACT— LEGISLATION.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Government expect to be in a position to introduce their promised Bill for the extension of the Borough Funds Act to Ireland, and the amendment of the Collection of Rates, Dublin Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is the case that the Irish Government agree as to the propriety of dealing by legislation with both the subjects mentioned in this Question—that is to say, the collection of rates in Dublin City and an extension of the English Borough Funds Act to the larger Irish towns. These subjects, however, should be dealt with in separate Bills, both because there is no express connection between them, and, more particularly, because one relates to Dublin alone, while the other extends to Ireland generally. If I had any expectation that these Bills would be unopposed, I would be prepared to introduce them at once. But I cannot see any advantage in adding to the amount of opposed Business relating to Ireland which is at present before the House. I will be glad to communicate with the hon. Member or with other hon. Members as to the views which I take about these matters.

Mr. GRAY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a positive pledge in writing was given to promote these Bills this Session?

Mr. TREVELYAN: These pledges are always dependent on circumstances. I am sorry to say every Government has "paper" of that sort flying about.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE RIOTS AT LONDONDERRY—"YOUNG WALLER."

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, seeing that young Waller had firearms in his possession on the occasion of the riots in Derry in November last, he will make inquiry as to whether Waller had an excise licence to carry arms, and, if not, why has he not been prosecuted for a violation of 33 and 34 Vic. c. 57; whether he had special licence to carry arms in a proclaimed district, and, if not, why he has not been prosecuted under the Crimes Act; and, to ask some questions regarding Taylor McCandlers, who was charged with firing a revolver at female factory hands?

MR. LEWIS: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether or not he is aware that the person described in the Question as "young Waller" distinctly denied having had any firearms in his possession?

MR. TREVELYAN: Waller, referred to in the Question, had not an Excise licence, or a licence to carry arms in a proclaimed district. At the time of the riots in Derry, in November last, the names of four persons, members of the Protestant party, including Waller, were mentioned as having arms or firing shots. The names of four persons who took part in the Lord Mayor's Procession were also mentioned as having arms or firing shots. The Attorney General did not consider the evidence satisfactory against either side, as in each instance it consisted of partizans of the other side only, and in some instances the person alleged to have fired shots was the person who made the countercharges. Under these circumstances, and as an important conviction was had, no prosecution will be now instituted against these alleged offenders of either party. As regards Taylor M'Candlers, a bill against him was sent up to the Grand Jury and ignored. No prosecution would lie under the Gun Licence Act or Peace Preservation Act, as the use of the revolver as alleged was in a dwelling-house or its curtilage.

MR. LEWIS: Are the Government satisfied that the person described as "young Waller" ever had firearms?

MR. TREVELYAN: Because, Sir, we are not satisfied we do not intend to prosecute him.

MR. BIGGAR: Is it not the fact that the shot was fired on the footpath of the street, and not within a dwelling-house?

MR. TREVELYAN: No, Sir; it is not the information in the hands of the Government.

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE SALEM RIOTS.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a Petition lately presented to the Viceroy of India by upwards of ten thousand persons in the Presidency of Madras, who allege that numerous innocent persons have been convicted for alleged complicity in the Salem riots; and, whether he can lay a Copy of the Petition upon the Table, together with a letter written by Mr. Lewis M'Iver, collector and magistrate at Salem, dated November 4th 1882, and Governor Grant Duff's comments on Mr. M'Iver's suggestions as to the proposed action of the Madras Government in the appeal cases at the time before the High Court of Madras?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The India Office has no information as to the Petition referred to. As regards the rest of the Question, I have nothing to add to what I said in reply to the hon. Member for Cavan's (Mr. Biggar's) Question on the 3rd ultimo as to the same matter, except that what I stated to be Mr. Grant Duff's comments may be found in *The Madras Times Overland*, of the 19th of March, page 25.

THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXHIBITION — REDUCED RATE OF ADMISSION FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he can inform the House whether it is in contemplation to enable the working classes to avail themselves of the instruction offered to the public by the Health Exhibition, by setting aside certain days for admission at a much reduced rate?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that he had no authority whatever in the matter.

MOROCCO—WOMEN FLOGGING.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to a case reported in *The Globe* newspaper of the 5th May, under the head of "Women flogging in Morocco," in which it is stated that a girl of good character, named Esther Amar, was cruelly flogged in the presence, and by the command, of a person named Amiel, who was then employed as interpreter to the British Consular Agent at Casablanca; whether the matter was officially reported, by the American Consul, to the English Minister at Tangier;

and, whether he can state if any and what steps have been taken to compensate the poor girl for her sufferings, and to punish Amiel for his barbarity?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The case referred to occurred more than a year ago, and was the subject of a Question put in this House on the 15th of March, 1883, to which a reply was made at the time. The facts are that eight women, said to be of bad character, had been flogged by the Moorish authorities, on a complaint of the interpreter Amiel, who was present when the punishment was inflicted. He was in consequence summarily dismissed from his post. The case led to representations to the Moorish Government, and orders were given to the local authorities which, it is hoped, will prevent a recurrence of a similar outrage. I am not aware whether any compensation has been paid, but inquiry will be made.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. CLAUD COLE HAMILTON, MOYNALTY, CO. MEATH.

Mr. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Claud Cole Hamilton, of Moynalty, county Meath, a magistrate for the counties of Meath and Cavan, did recently take forcible possession of a garden from a tenant named Bradly, the latter holding a house and garden in separate tenancies, and no decree for possession of the house for some days after possession of the garden had been taken?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Mr. Hamilton did attempt to take possession of the garden referred to, believing that he had a legal right to do so, but that he was forcibly prevented by Bradly. I cannot express any opinion on the question of title involved—especially as I understand that it will be brought before the proper tribunal.

Mr. LEAMY: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that a magistrate who made such a mistake as that is fit to sit on the Bench?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, the proper person to reply to that Question was the Lord Chancellor.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—ASSESSMENT AT TARBERT.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a Memorial to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, signed by forty-seven fishermen at Tarbert, Lochfyneside, who have been assessed for income tax; whether it is a fact that, the men have returned their incomes at less than the assessable amount, both the Assessor and the Commissioners, to whom they appealed, although asked to state the grounds on which they pronounced the returns to be untrue, so as to afford them an opportunity of rebutting the evidence against them, refused to do so; and, whether it is usual, without the production of evidence, to pronounce income tax returns false; and, if not, whether he will have the case of the forty-seven fishermen inquired into?

Mr. COURTNEY: The Government have no legal power to interfere with such decisions of Local Commissioners, who, as my hon. Friend is aware, are not civil servants. The course taken as regards evidence was the only legal one, as the burden of proof rests with the appellant against the decision of the assessor. I have, however, looked into the Papers relating to this case, and there seems to have been ample evidence that the men had understated their profits. The decisions of the Local Commissioners, making abatements in many cases from the original claim, appear to have been well-considered.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—PENSIONERS.

Colonel O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Pensioners, at present serving in the Auxiliary Forces, will be permitted to give up their pensions, for the purpose of reverting to their Army engagement, provided they are within the limits of age and are pronounced to be fit for service?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes; it is proposed to amend the Royal Warrant, so that the pensioners referred to may be able to resume their Army engagements, subject to special rules.

THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, considering the promise of promotion to the lad who is said to have discovered the recent frauds in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, has not been carried out, and also, in view of the Treasury Minute of the 27th March 1881, which says—

> "That the selection of clerks for particular duties, and for promotion to the higher appointments, will depend solely upon experience, merit, and ability, as determined by the authorities of the department,"

my Lords will reward the discoverer out of the surplus drawings of the office, and not at the expense of his fellow clerks; and, whether the present practice of selling fee stamps on commission, in the lobby of the Sasine Office, entails a yearly loss to the Country of about £500?

Mr. COURTNEY: The clerk referred to in the first part of this Question will be promoted on the occurrence of the next vacancy. The arrangement described in the second part is certainly not the most economical one that can be devised, and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue hope to make an appreciable saving here at a suitable opportunity.

FRANCE AND MOROCCO—THE PAPERS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay any Papers on the subject of the recent dispute between France and Morocco upon the Table of the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to lay on the Table any Papers on the subject at present.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—UNPAID DIVIDEND FUND ACCOUNT.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What is done with the interest on the forty thousand pounds of unpaid dividends which is lying derelict in the Bankruptcy Court in Ireland?

Mr. COURTNEY: No interest is received by anyone on the money in question. It lies at the Bank of Ireland, which gets the benefit of it in return for the trouble of keeping the bankruptcy account.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MR. JAMES ELLIS FRENCH.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, At what date any alteration was first made in the status of Mr. James Ellis French, late County Inspector and Detective Director of the Royal Irish Constabulary; whether any inquiry was made by any member of the Irish Government; and, if so, at what date, and by whom, with respect to the charges made against him; why such inquiry, if any, was not followed up; and, whether there is any intention of bestowing a pension or other retiring allowance upon Mr. French?

Mr. SMALL inquired, further, whether any steps would be taken to prosecute Mr. French, and to prevent him leaving Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No alteration was made in the status of Mr. French until the date of his being struck off the strength of the Force. He was on leave from the 6th of August in last year. Medical certificates were from time to time submitted as to his being in ill health. When the imputations against his private character were first brought to the notice of the Inspector General, he made some informal inquiry on the subject; but after the matter came before the Courts of Law, it was considered better to await their decision. Mr. French remained on leave, and no steps were taken which might prejudice the pending action. I have already stated that the question whether any pension should be given is postponed, pending the issue of the legal proceedings affecting his private character.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the "informal inquiries" made by Colonel Bruce were not the summoning to Dublin of three Sub-Inspectors of Constabulary from distant parts of the country, and the taking down of their evidence?

[No reply.]

Mr. O'BRIEN: I think I am entitled —[*Cries of* "Order!"]—to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that is not so; or whether the House is to understand that, though the Government knew that there was a *primâ facie* case of guilt of the most horrible sort against this official, they determined to observe an attitude of benevolent neutrality—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—while a private individual had to bring him to justice?

[No reply.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT—QUIT AND CROWN RENTS.

Mr. GIBSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is a fact that the Irish Land Commission on all sales of land effected through them require the redemption of all quit and Crown rents, and all tithe rent-charges payable out of same; what rate do the Government now require for the purchase or redemption of such rents and rent-charges; and, whether, having regard to the great fall in the price of Irish land, and the present condition and circumstances of Ireland, he will direct that in future there be a substantial reduction of such rates?

Mr. COURTNEY: I believe the Land Commission require commutation of these charges on land which passes through their hands. This course has the advantage of giving the purchaser a title free from all encumbrances, and also of enabling him to obtain a larger advance from the Land Commission than would be possible if they remained outstanding. Quit rent and Crown rent are sold at 28 or 30 years' purchase, according as the amount in one proposal exceeds, or does not exceed, £1 a-year, these rates having been fixed in 1854. These charges take precedence, both of the landlord's and of the tenant's interest in the land; and as there is no evidence of a decrease in the total value of these two interests since 1854, there seems no reason for altering the terms of commutation. The quit and Crown rents are a very secure form of revenue, being easy and inexpensive to collect, and the arrears upon them are small. As regards tithe rent charges, the price of commutation is fixed by statute at 22½ years' purchase.

EGYPT—FLOGGING—THE "CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS."

Mr. GRAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd has in any cases substituted for the whip in ordinary use in Egypt for purposes of punishment a cat-o'-nine-tails with the thongs loaded with metal?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have not heard the report, and I do not believe it; but a copy of the Question has been sent to the Acting Consul General at Cairo.

Mr. GRAY said, that he would repeat the Question on a future day.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—POLITICAL LECTURES IN BOARD SCHOOL ROOMS.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he is aware that the school buildings belonging to the Birmingham School Board have been repeatedly used on Sundays for lectures of a violent political character, at which controversial subjects are publicly discussed, amongst which have been "A Defence of Nihilism," "Home Rule for Ireland," "Lord Randolph Churchill and Political Immorality," "Lord Beaconsfield a Traitor," "Socialism versus Monarchy;" whether he is aware that one of the ratepayers brought this question before the Birmingham School Board at their meetings on the 3rd of April and 1st of May, and objected publicly to the misuse of the building, the desecration of the Sabbath, and probable breach of the peace; and, whether such misuse of Board School buildings is legal; and, if not, whether he will take immediate steps to mark his disapproval of the practice, and order its discontinuance?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Education Department has no right of interference with the discretion of School Boards. [Mr. Warton: It ought to have.] It has not, and ought not to have, any right to interfere in the letting of school buildings out of school hours. The clerk of the Birmingham Board writes to me that the Board lets its rooms on Sundays, as well as on week-day evenings, to bodies of ratepayers who give sufficient guarantees for the preservation of the buildings and furniture and the payment of rent. The rooms are used for Sunday school and religious services, as well as for lectures on secular subjects. I might mention that when I was at Birmingham, about two years ago, the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) was addressing his constituents in a Board school.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: On Sunday?

Mr. MUNDELLA: On Sunday; certainly not. The clerk further states that no lecture on Lord Beaconsfield has ever been delivered, nor any on "Home Rule in Ireland;" but one was delivered on "Home Rule" which related solely to the principle of local government. The lecture on the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) ended in the passing of a resolution by the Lecture Society, that "for the future lectures on English Party politics shall be rigidly excluded."

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question whether he would take immediate steps to mark his disapproval of the practice, and order its discontinuance?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have already stated that we have no control over School Boards in regard to the letting of their buildings out of school hours. I think it is a very useful practice that public buildings should be used indiscriminately for proper and useful purposes. [An hon. MEMBER: On Sundays?] I understand that on Sundays the buildings in question are used for lectures on religious subjects.

MR. MAC IVER: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that the subjects mentioned in the Question were useful subjects?

MR. MUNDELLA: The so-called "Defence of Nihilism," was a lecture delivered in opposition to Nihilism.

MR. BULWER asked whether another of the lectures referred to was not entitled "Socialism *v.* Monarchy?"

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir; that is a mistake. The whole matter is fully explained in a letter eight pages long, which I have here, but I do not intend to trouble the House with it. I shall be happy to show it to hon. Members privately.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether it was not a fact that if the managers of voluntary schools allowed their schools to be used for political purposes, they rendered themselves liable to forfeit the Government grant?

MR. MUNDELLA: Certainly not, Sir. The Governors of voluntary schools constantly use their school buildings for political purposes.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

MR. RAIKES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether any communication has been received from Dr. Crichton Browne respecting the inquiries into over-work in Elementary Schools which it was announced to the House he had agreed to make?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have received a very voluminous communication from Dr. Browne, which I have not yet had time to read. The substance of it, however, will be presented to the House with various other Reports relating to the same subject.

THE STONE CORONATION CHAIR, "LIA FAIL," OR STONE OF DESTINY, WESTMINSTER ABBEY—ALTERATION OF NOTICE AFFIXED.

MR. KENNY asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he can state for what reason the public notice attached to the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey has been altered, by the omission of all reference to the legend hitherto generally admitted and recognized, viz. that the Coronation Stone (in Irish, Lia Fail) was first used for the coronation of the Irish Kings, and was only carried to Scotland by Fergus, the Irish King who subdued that Country; and, if he will cause the notice embodying the ancient legend to be substituted for the present incomplete statement?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I must disclaim altogether any responsibility for the internal arrangements of Westminster Abbey. They are entirely under the control of the Dean of Westminster under the Statute of Queen Elizabeth. The Dean has written me a long and interesting statement in reply to the hon. Member's Question, which I do not think I should be justified in reading to the House. If the hon. Member wishes to see it, I shall let him have it, and he can make any use he wishes of it. The Dean states that most patriotic Irishmen entirely deny the theory referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and say that "Lia Fail" is still to be found upon the Hill of Tara.

MR. KENNY: Might I inform the right hon. Gentleman that all the Irish authorities except one, Dr. Petrie, say that the stone in Westminster Abbey is the real "Lia Fail?"

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—METROPOLITAN BUILDING ACTS.

MR. B. SAMUELSON asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the district surveyors employed by them, in taking proceedings for infractions of the Building Acts, do so at their own risk, and, if unsuccessful are personally liable for the costs incurred; whether, in cases where they have been successful, district surveyors have been compelled to sue defendants for costs out of pocket to a considerable amount; and, whether the Metropolitan Board will take such steps as may prevent district surveyors being thus deterred from bringing to light infringements of the Acts?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In answer to the Question of my hon. Friend, I may state that, although the District Surveyors are appointed by the Metropolitan Board of Works for the purpose of enforcing the regulations of the Building Acts as to the structure of houses and buildings in the Metropolis, they exercise statutory authority, and take proceedings in the Courts of Law in their own names and upon their own authority, and they incur the same risk as other suitors, and are liable to pay costs in those instances where the magistrates may consider that the proceedings have not been justified; but, on the other hand, the District Surveyors are entitled to considerable fees for the discharge of their ordinary duties. Where the District Surveyors are successful in obtaining convictions, but the defendant is unable or unwilling to pay the costs awarded, they have to pursue the ordinary remedies to recover payment. I may add that, in certain cases, where questions of difficulty have arisen before the magistrates as to the proper interpretation of the Building Acts, the Board has been in the habit of taking a case for the opinion of the High Court, in order that a decision may be obtained as to the construction of the Acts. In these cases the Board has been accustomed to pay the costs incurred in the name of the District Surveyors for the purpose of obtaining a judicial decision.

EXPLOSIVES ACTS — DYNAMITE EXPLOSION IN AYRSHIRE.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, taking into consideration the disastrously fatal consequences of the explosion which occurred on Thursday at the dynamite manufactory in Ayrshire, and the fact that there are no coroners in Scotland, he will follow the precedent adopted in the case of the *Daphne* catastrophe in Glasgow, and order an independent and public investigation into the whole circumstances of the case?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am informed that Colonel Ford, one of the Inspectors of Explosives, went down on Thursday night to conduct an investigation into this explosion.

Dr. CAMERON: What I ask is, whether a public investigation will be ordered?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, Sir. I will read what Colonel Majendie writes. I think it is a very good reason why the investigation should not be public. He says—

> "It would be impossible that such an inquiry should be conducted in public. The investigation will have to be carried on in the factory itself, and it involves visits to various dangerous departments, and an examination of the processes of manufacture, in some cases experimental, and any admission of the public to the buildings or factories would be obviously unsafe."

Dr. CAMERON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman publish the Report of the Inspector?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will consider that point.

NAVY—UNBUOYED MOORINGS IN THE MEDWAY.

Mr. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that a number of Government moorings, which have not been used for many years, are sunk in the Medway without any buoys or other indications to show where they are; whether complaints have been made by fishermen of losses caused by their nets being fouled by these moorings; and, whether the Government will get up or buoy these unused moorings, and will compensate the persons who have been damaged by their negligence to indicate this source of danger?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No complaint has been officially received on this subject. On inquiry, made in consequence of the hon. and learned Member giving Notice of this Question, it has been found that only one instance has occurred since 1882 of a fisherman fouling his nets on sunk moorings. There are now no sunk moorings not buoyed.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY.

SIR **HERVEY BRUCE** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. William Gray, who is one of the Sub-Commissioners for fixing rent in Ireland, is the same Mr. William Gray who is reported to have been in the habit of attending, and occasionally presiding, at political meetings where cheers for the suspects and the Land League, and cries of "no rent," and denunciations of landlordism were common topics, and who, in one speech, said—

> "If Griffiths' valuation of a farm be twenty shillings per acre, and the taxes, say, three shillings, then eight shillings and sixpence would be a fair rent. But I am not certain that, when the forces represented by steam, and the contemplated arrangements in America are fully carried out and developed, even this will not be an exorbitant rent."

In a speech on another occasion, is reported to have said—

> "The farmers did not get, as they should get, the benefit of the Healy Clause. . . . They would not, however, give up agitation; and, before 1891, they would have another Act, which would be a greater improvement on the Act of 1881 than the Act of 1881 was on that of 1870. . . . Lord Monck was a landlord, Judge O'Hagan, who betrayed the early traditions of his youth, Litton, who by false promises was elected for Tyrone, and who now betrayed the farmers, and Vernon, were all landlords."

and, if, on inquiry, he finds that Mr. William Gray, who is reported to have made these observations, be a Sub-Commissioner, he is prepared to consider whether he possesses the qualifications which would comply with the rules laid down by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as guiding him in making such appointments, as expressed in a Letter to a reverend gentleman, dated 11th January 1883?

MR. **TREVELYAN**: There appears to have been some unavoidable delay in communicating with Mr. Gray with regard to this Question—I presume in consequence of his duties requiring him to move from place to place in a remote part of the country. I have only within the last hour received a telegram on the subject, from which it appears that, while admitting to some extent the accuracy of the statements in the Question, he says he has been misrepresented. I wish to have the opportunity of communicating with Lord Spencer and the Land Commissioners before finally answering the Question.

NAVY—SHIPBUILDING BY CONTRACT.

MR. **RYLANDS** asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he will state to the House the names of the members of the Committee appointed by the Admiralty to inquire into the conditions of Shipbuilding by Contract, and into the system of repairing Ships; and, the terms of the reference to such Committee?

MR. **CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: The Committee to which my hon. Friend refers has been appointed

> "To inquire into the conditions under which contracts are invited for the building or repairing of ships, including their engines, for Her Majesty's Navy; and into the mode in which repairs and refits of ships are effected in Her Majesty's dockyards."

The Members of the Committee are the Earl of Ravensworth, who is Chairman, Sir Daniel Gooch, M.P., Captain Codrington, R.N., C.B., Mr. Norwood, M.P., Mr. C. M. Palmer, M.P., Mr. John Burns, Mr. T. H. Ismay, and Mr. Samuda.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—POLICE GUARD OVER A LADY.

MR. **T. D. SULLIVAN** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the guard of police allowed to Miss Lucy Anne Thompson, of Fenit, near Tralee, was originally three men, and has since been raised to six; on whose recommendation has this increase been made; and, what fund will be charged with the expense of this police establishment?

MR. **TREVELYAN**: I am informed that Miss Thompson's special guard consists as originally of three men; but that, in consequence of outrages, three additional men have, on the recommendation of the District Inspector, been sent to Fenit for patrolling purposes, and for the protection of a caretaker on an evicted farm. The expense of the six men is chargeable to the Constabulary Vote in the same manner as that of men at ordinary police stations.

MR. **T. D. SULLIVAN** asked whether Miss Thompson had any pecuniary interest in those farms?

MR. TREVELYAN was understood to say that he would make further inquiries into the matter.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS—EMPLOYMENT OF FEMALES IN LAUNDRIES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, under the provisions of the Factory Acts, or any other statutes, the Home Office exercises any supervision over the employment of women and girls in laundries; and, if not, whether he will cause inquiries to be instituted as to the circumstances of such employment?

MR. HIBBERT: The Factory and Workshop Act of 1878 does not include laundries. The question of placing laundries under some restrictions was fully considered, and they were specially named in the Bill when it was brought into the House in 1878. The Irish Catholic Members strongly objected on the ground that laundry work, being extensively carried on in convents in Ireland, the admission of Inspectors, and especially of Protestant Inspectors, would be intolerable. It was therefore decided not to include laundries in the list of works to be defined as workshops. No complaints have reached the Home Office as to any abuse in the employment of women and children in such places, so the Secretary of State cannot cause inquiries to be instituted.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to the large number of private arrangements with creditors made during the last four or five months; whether he has any ground for believing that a large proportion of them are not for the benefit of creditors; and, whether he will introduce or support a Bill making void any deed of arrangement which is not registered within one week of its execution?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The system of private arrangements with creditors is not a new one. Such arrangements were made when the Act of 1869 was in force, as well as under the Act of 1883. Only a few instances have actually come under the notice of the Board of Trade; but I have some reason to believe that these arrangements have somewhat increased in number, although not to the extent currently reported. I am not able to state the actual terms of these deeds; but some general opinion may be formed upon the subject from the fact that such deeds usually grant a debtor's discharge without any reference to misconduct or any formal investigation into the causes of his bankruptcy, that ordinary creditors have no security that under such arrangements particular creditors have not retained property acquired by fraudulent preference which under the Act would have been distributed among the general body of creditors, and that creditors who agree to such arrangements thereby divest themselves of all control over the estate or its realization. As regards the third Question raised by the hon. Member, I think it is too early to attempt fresh legislation, and it is my hope and expectation that the costs of proceedings under the Act will be found in practice much less than the cost of these arrangements. If so, we may assume that this fact, coupled with the other disadvantages attending such arrangements, will soon make them unpopular. In the meantime, however, the subject will be very carefully watched, and I shall endeavour to collect as much information as possible.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—SURVEY OF THE BARROW.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he can now state what progress has been made in the survey of the flood-area in the valley of the Barrow; and, whether the Government have decided upon any definite line of action to be entered upon during the present year?

MR. COURTNEY: We are promised that the survey of the flood area in the Valley of the Barrow will be completed in the middle of June, unless some unforeseen accident should occur. Very shortly after that date we shall be in a position to appoint the promised Committee or Commission, which it is hoped will, upon consideration of the facts disclosed by the survey, be able to suggest a practicable scheme for remedying the floods from which the Barrow Valley suffers.

SWITZERLAND—THE SALVATIONISTS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF (for Sir ROBERT PEEL) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the promised Papers on the subject of the religious persecution of British subjects and others in some of the Cantonal States of Switzerland will be presented to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Papers are in course of preparation and will be laid on the Table as soon as possible.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF BERBER AND DONGOLA.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the present position of the governor, the garrison, and the 2,000 refugees in Berber; and, whether any promise has been made to Hussein Khalifa of assistance at a later period if he holds out? The hon. Member also asked whether Dongola was in a condition of peril, and whether the reinforcements asked for would be sent?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Information on the situation at Berber up to April 30 will be found in Egypt, No. 18, No. 55, and in reply to the second Question in Egypt, No, 13. In reply to the last Question put by the hon. Member, he will find all the information he requires in the Papers I have mentioned. Nothing material in regard to Berber has come in since that date; and with regard to Dongola the hon. Member has given me private Notice of a Question involving a number of important matters which I think he can hardly expect me to answer on such short Notice.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I have just had placed in my hands a telegram said to have been received today to this effect, that the Commandant of the Dongola garrison has telegraphed to the Khedive that the Mahdi has sent emissaries for the purpose of raising troops for taking Dongola and marching on to Cairo. The Commandant further says that the telegraph posts between Berber and Meroe have been burnt by the rebels. The superintendent of telegraphs at Berber also telegraphs from Korosko that he had fled from Berber; that his *employés* had stayed at Berber waiting for camels, but had not received them. They had then started for Abu Hamid, but were all captured and massacred in the desert. The road between Berber and Korosko is now impracticable, being completely in the hands of the rebels. I should like to ask the noble Lord whether the Foreign Office has received any information on the subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office has not received details of the information mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman; but a telegram has been received stating that in the neighbourhood of Dongola there is a very considerable movement among the population.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. MARTIN LANGTON, CO. WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has come to any decision in reference to the appointment of Mr. Martin Langton to the Commission of the Peace for the county Wicklow?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Lord Chancellor informs me that the case of Mr. Langton cannot be disposed of for some days, and that the moment he has decided upon it his decision shall be immediately communicated.

INDIAN STATE RAILWAYS—CONTRACTS.

MR. ECROYD (for Mr. HOULDSWORTH) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it be true that Contracts for ironwork for the Indian State Railways have been entered into by the officials of the India Office with Foreign manufacturers; and, whether it is the case that, when tenders are invited, the specificatiotns issued to British manufacturers stipulate that only British iron shall be used, while those sent to Foreign firms contain no such stipulation?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Two contracts for axle boxes, amounting to about £5,600, have been entered into with a foreign firm. The same specification is issued to all who tender whether they be foreign or British firms. In the case of axle boxes there is no stipulation that only British iron may be used.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—THE INDIA OFFICE.

Baron DE FERRIERES asked the Under Secretary of State for India, How it is that there is a constant collection of water in the basement of the India Office, necessitating the incessant action of an hydraulic pump, the click of which is very detrimental to work; and, if there is not good ground for the supposition that the remedial drainage works, carried out about a year ago, have not proved efficient, and that the water still collecting there is contaminated with sewage?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: In consequence of a leakage in the main supply water-pipe of the India Office, which was very difficult to trace, it has been necessary to use a small hand pump for an hour or two daily to keep the sub-basement dry. On Tuesday last the pipe burst, and some of the cellars were flooded, necessitating a more vigorous spell at the pump. The pipe is now repaired. As I have said, the water which escaped came from the main supply pipe, and was perfectly clean. There is no reason to suppose it was contaminated with sewage.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT 1882—ARREST OF THOMAS BUCKLEY AND RICHARD POWER AT KILMACTHOMAS, CO. WATERFORD.

Mr. R. POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that on Saturday the 19th of April two respectable farmers named Thomas Buckley and Richard Power, residing near Kilmacthomas, in the county of Waterford, were arrested at ten o'clock at night while they were returning home; that they were immediately handcuffed, brought a distance of two miles, and detained the whole night in a filthy cell, from which two drunken men had just been removed; that these farmers were well known to Constable Jeffs who arrested them; that, when brought before the magistrate next morning, they were immediately ordered to be released; and, whether he will take steps to prevent for the future such acts?

Mr. TREVELYAN: These two men were met by the police outside the house of the caretaker of an evicted farmer, who was recently visited by an armed party. They said they were there on business, but refused to state what it was. They were arrested under the 3rd section of the Crimes Act, and brought to Kilmacthomas. As they resisted arrest they were handcuffed, and they were put in the cell during the night, but the cell was not dirty. In the morning they were brought before a magistrate, who let them out on their own promise to appear when called. As there was some informality in the action of the magistrate, no further action can be taken. The police do not appear to have acted improperly in these cases.

EGYPT—THE PAPERS—ABRIDGMENT OF No. 18.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: I wish to put a Question to the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In the last Paper submitted to the House—"Egypt" No. 18—there was a statement from Sir Evelyn Baring that he considered it important to make the following remarks, and then came two paragraphs. I wish to ask if these two paragraphs constitute the whole of the remarks which Sir Evelyn Baring thought it necessary to make?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The noble Lord will have observed that the despatch is marked "Extract," and does not purport to contain the whole of the communication.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Then we may assume that the two final paragraphs do not contain the whole of what Sir Evelyn Baring thinks it important to state?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There were some remarks of a confidential character which have not been issued.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a telegram in *The Times* relating to recent events in Zululand; and, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take any steps to put an end to the anarchy existing in that country?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The last part of the hon. Member's Question, as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, deserves, I think, a formal Notice, and, besides, I understand that my hon. Friend the Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) has given Notice this evening of a similar Question to the Prime Minister for next Monday. I should be unwilling to anticipate anything that may be said by the Prime Minister on that occasion. As to the recent events in Zululand, the information we have is that the Usutu party were molesting the loyal people in the western portion of the Reserve territory, and that last week Mr. Osborn, our Resident Commissioner, went with a great force of loyal Natives to maintain order. This afternoon we have received a telegram stating that Mr. Osborn, with 3,000 Natives, summoned the Usutus near Inkandla to answer for their molestation of the loyals. The summons was disregarded and other loyals molested. Thereupon Mr. Osborn sent a force to take cattle as a fine and punishment. There was a collision, with the loss of six men on either side. The following morning Mr. Osborn's camp was attacked by the Usutus under Dabulamanzi; but they were repulsed with a loss of 20, the loss of Mr. Osborn's force being only two. That is all the information we have. As to the action of Boer adventurers on the Zulu border, the reports we have received are so uncertain and contradictory that I am unable to speak positively as to any details; but I have no doubt that there is either an actual or a threatened inroad of Transvaal trekkers into a portion of Zululand.

MR. GORST: Are we to understand that Mr. Osborn has in this matter been carrying out the instructions of the Government?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: His instructions have always been to maintain order in the Reserve.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Before the Prime Minister makes the Motion in regard to the postponement of the Orders of the Day, I would like to ask him whether he will make arrangements for the continuation of the debate on the Motion of my right hon. Friend to-morrow evening? The debate will be resumed at the Morning Sitting to-morrow, and I am informed that if it is to go on in the evening it will be necessary to give Notice to-day of a Motion for to-morrow giving it precedence. I understand that the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) and the hon. Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Dick Peddie), who have Notices on the Paper, will be willing to facilitate this arrangement.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not know whether I am to understand that the right hon. Gentleman has come to an understanding with the hon. Gentlemen to whom he refers. But I hope no impediment will be placed in the way of what he suggests.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I cannot say I have come to any understanding, but I venture to make an appeal to the hon. Gentlemen opposite.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said he had to thank the right hon. Gentleman for giving him Notice of this matter; but he had received no request from anyone sitting on this side of the House to postpone his Motion, which stood first on the paper for to-morrow. He had, on the other hand, received assurances from both sides of the House of the interest taken in the subject of that Motion. By continuing the debate to-morrow evening, on this the third attempted Vote of Censure on the Government this Session, the only result would be the delivery of some half-dozen speeches, without the slightest chance of altering a single vote, and without any certainty—["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. and gallant Member was not in Order in entering into debatable matter.

MR. GLADSTONE said, his noble Friend the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had addressed to the hon. and gallant Gentleman a communication that was intended to be a request. Therefore he hoped that the alleged absence of a request would not prevent him from withdrawing. It would certainly be convenient for him to do so.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, this was the first he had heard of the request; but he had told the noble Lord that he should be sorry to stand in the way of the Government if they wished him to postpone his Motion, but he had heard nothing of the matter from that day to this.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said he hoped that, under the circumstances, he should not be too sanguine in assuming that the hon. and gallant Member would give way?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he assumed that the hon. Member for Kilmarnock, who had the second Motion on the Paper, would be of an equally yielding frame of mind?

Mr. DICK PEDDIE said, his Motion for to-morrow was one of very great importance, and one which excited intense interest in Scotland—an interest greater than that aroused by the Motion of the right hon. Baronet. This was the third Session during which he had ballotted for a place, and on the only occasion before this on which he had been successful in securing a place, it had been taken from him by the exigencies of Irish legislation. He thought it was hard to give up the position he had now secured for the sake of this third attempt to, within 12 weeks, pass a Vote of Censure on the Government. If he thought it would serve his end to block the way he would not give way; but as the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire stood between him and the intended debate, and as the hon. Member was, he assumed, going to give way, he would not like to play the part of the dog in the manger. Therefore, though with great reluctance, he would surrender his right in the matter.

MOTIONS.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to General Gordon's Mission.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION.

VOTE OF CENSURE.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, in rising to move—

> "That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed,"

said: Notwithstanding the remarks that have just fallen from the two hon. Members opposite, and certain symptoms of impatience which other hon. Members who sit on that side of the House have shown on the occasion of previous debates this Session on Egyptian affairs, it will, I think, be generally admitted that the subject which I am about to bring under the notice of the House is one of urgency, that it is one on which there is a strong feeling and a deep interest in the country, and that the terms of my Motion present a clear and definite issue to the House of Commons. I do not now intend to question the decision of Her Majesty's Government to evacuate the Soudan, or the means by which they proposed to carry that decision into effect. I take their own policy in this matter as it was described by them to the House in February last, and I propose to address myself to the question—How have the Government carried out, not our policy, but their own policy, and what is their conduct in the present condition of affairs in the Soudan? I hope that before I sit down I shall be able to show some cause for the regret which I ask this House to express—

> "That the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."

When Her Majesty's Government, in the celebrated despatch of the 4th of January last, shattered the Egyptian Government and compelled them to abandon the Soudan, they were at once confronted with the serious danger which menaced the large number of Egyptians, military and civil, who remained in the Soudan. It was impossible that this country could avoid a sense of responsibility for the safety of those people, because that danger was mainly due to the calamity which overtook the unfortunate expedition of General Hicks, an expedition which was permitted by Her Majesty's Government, although they had the power of preventing it. Therefore it was, I suppose, that the Government repeatedly suggested to the Egyptian Government the employment of General Gordon to conduct the evacuation of the Soudan. At last the Egyptian Government consented to the employment of that officer with full civil and military powers to conduct the evacuation. It is not too much to say that no officer ever left this country charged with a more important or more difficult mission, or possessing, to all appearance, more perfect freedom as to the means by which he should carry out that Mission. It was a material element in the satisfaction with which the country received the news of General Gordon's appointment that he was to have, as it has been described, "a free hand," and was not to be interfered with by Her Majesty's Government, who had already so lamentably failed in their conduct of affairs in that part of the world. I will venture to add that this interpretation of the appointment of General Gordon had no slight influence in saving the Government from that Vote of Censure which my right hon. Friend near me proposed in February last. What was the policy that General Gordon was appointed to carry out? It was shortly described by the Prime Minister as "rescue and retire." How was General Gordon to carry out that policy? Undoubtedly by pacific means—if that was in any way possible—but that is a very material qualification. No one could have desired or have tried more earnestly than General Gordon to carry out the mission with which he was charged by pacific means. The keystone of his plan was essentially of a pacific character. It was to establish some kind of local government which should be more agreeable to the populations of the Soudan than the Egyptian Government from which he was sent to deliver them, and which, when established, might be able to conduct affairs, at least for a time, during which the evacuation of the country by the whole civil and military Egyptian administration might take place. Well, various suggestions were made by him to Her Majesty's Government in connection with his mission. One after another those suggestions were negatived, and some were negatived precisely at the very moment when Her Majesty's Government were sheltering themselves from the indignation which was felt in the country at the abandonment of the garrison of Sinkat, on the plea that they were compelled not to undertake an expedition that could by any possibility be contrary to General Gordon's wishes, or that would interfere with the success of his pacific mission. What were those suggestions? In the first place, it is perfectly clear that from the very first General Gordon never desired to go to the Soudan as an official of the Egyptian Government. What he wanted to do was to appear in the Soudan from the side of Suakin as a deliverer of the people from the Egyptian Government. Well, Her Majesty's Government sent him to Cairo. They sent him from Cairo as an Egyptian Governor General over the Soudan. He proposed, again, to undertake the hazardous task of an interview with the Mahdi in order to exercise upon that individual his wonderful personal influence. Why, Sir, a braver proposal than that was never made by an Englishman. General Gordon is a man who does not consider his own safety or his own life as worth a moment's notice when the interest of his country is involved; but Her Majesty's Government negatived that proposal also. Again, he wanted to commence his operations by first dealing with the Equatorial Provinces. He got a peremptory command not to go south of Khartoum. And lastly, after full consideration of the difficulties which attended his original proposal to establish a certain number of local Sultans throughout the country, he recommended to the Government the appointment of Zebehr Pasha as Governor of Khartoum. I do not wish for a moment to underrate the objections to that proposal. It ran counter to one of the strongest sentiments of this country. It was objected to by persons entertaining all kinds of political opinions—by some of the leading Members of the Party to which I myself belong; but I must say that I think that if the very strong arguments which appear in the Papers which have been published had been before the country at the time this proposal was made there would have been, at least, a considerable feeling in the opposite direction. I do not wish, however, to underrate the force of popular sentiment, which in such matters is inaccessible to reason. I am not blaming Her Majesty's Government for declining to assent to the appointment of Zebehr Pasha, or to any of the other proposals to which I have referred. But it should be remembered that those proposals came to them recommended in no ordinary way. The appointment of Zebehr Pasha was recommended by Sir Evelyn Baring, the trusted Adviser of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, as well as by General Gordon. Now, what was the Prime Minister's own opinion of General Gordon? On the 12th of February he told the House that—

> "General Gordon is no common man. . . . . It is no exaggeration to say that he is a hero. It is no exaggeration to say that he is a Christian hero. . . . . that in his dealings with Oriental people he is also a genius; that he has the faculty of influence or command brought about by moral means, for no man in the House hates the unnecessary resort to blood more than General Gordon."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 722.)

This was the man who recommended the appointment of Zebehr Pasha. In seconding that recommendation, Sir Evelyn Baring gave a remarkable hint to Her Majesty's Government. He evidently had in his own mind the past history of their Egyptian policy; and he said to them that if they were unwilling to assume any responsibility in the matter they might give full liberty of action to General Gordon to do what seemed best. Well, Sir, with their usual inconsistency, Her Majesty's Government, having promised a free hand to General Gordon, thought that, not only on the other points to which I have referred, but even in this instance, they were obliged to interfere with him. After long hesitation—indeed, so long that a military demonstration had to be recommended as well as the appointment of Zebehr Pasha—they finally declined the proposal. Now, I have admitted most fully the strength of the objections to it, and I wish to give Her Majesty's Government the full benefit of their arguments. Let us admit, for the sake of argument, that they were right in their decision. But that decision imposed upon Her Majesty's Government an enormous responsibility. The appointment of Zebehr Pasha was recommended by the authorities I have quoted as the essential means for establishing that temporary local government without which the peaceful evacuation of the Soudan was impossible. Her Majesty's Government felt it right to negative that proposal. If they thought it right to do so, they ought to have accepted any alternative proposal that was made, or to have made some other proposal themselves to carry out their policy. Sir, they did neither of these things; but what they did was something even worse than inaction. While they were insisting upon a pacific policy in one part of the Soudan, and negativing the plans by which alone that policy could be carried out, they went to war in another part, and by those military operations they effectually destroyed any chance which General Gordon might have had of carrying out the policy he was sent to accomplish by the pacific means which they themselves desired. What did General Gordon say when he heard of their refusal to appoint Zebehr Pasha? On the 26th of February he telegraphed to Her Majesty's Government as follows:—

> "Telegram of the 23rd February received respecting Zebehr. That settles question for me. I cannot suggest any other."

You throw upon your Christian hero, who is averse from the unnecessary shedding of blood, the necessity of suggesting military action in order to carry out your own policy—

> "When evacuation is carried out, Mahdi will come down here, and, by agents, will not let Egypt be quiet. Of course, my duty is evacuation, and the best I can for establishing a quiet Government. The first I hope to accomplish. The second is a more difficult task, and concerns Egypt more than me. If Egypt is to be quiet, Mahdi must be smashed up. . . . Remember that once Khartoum belongs to Mahdi the task will be far more difficult; yet you will, for safety of Egypt, execute it. If you decide on smashing Mahdi, then send up another £100,000 and send up 200 Indian troops to Wady-Halfa, and send officer up to Dongola under pretence to look out quarters for troops. Leave Suakin and Massowah alone."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 115.]

Well, now, that was his suggestion. I suppose we shall be told that any such suggestion was beyond the scope of his mission. How is that? The Prime Minister, on the 3rd of May, stated that General Gordon's mission involved the use only of pacific means. I challenge that statement altogether. I maintain that General Gordon's mission contemplated the use of pacific means; but it was perfectly clear, from the very beginning, both to General Gordon and to Her Majesty's Government, that pacific means might be insufficient, and that a resort to force might be required. Now, what was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government themselves on the 4th of January last? In that despatch directing the evacuation of the Soudan, Sir Evelyn Baring was directed to urge on the Khedive that all military operations in the Soudan, excepting those for the rescue of the outlying garrisons, should cease—except on the ports of the Red Sea, where assistance could be afforded by Her Majesty's Naval Forces. Therefore, at that time, they thought that the Egyptian Government might be compelled to employ force in rescuing the outlying garrisons in the Soudan. What was General Gordon's opinion after his appointment? In the Memorandum of the 1st of February, written by him before his arrival in Egypt, he examined the proposal to transfer the lands to the local Sultans, and states his opinion that they will not accept the supremacy of the Mahdi—

> "If this is agreed to, and my supposition correct as to their action, there can be but little doubt that, as far as he is able, the Mahdi will endeavour to assert his rule over them, and will be opposed to any evacuation of the Government *employés* and troops. . . . What should be done should the Mahdi's adherents attack the evacuating columns? It cannot be supposed that these are to offer no resistance; and if, in resisting, they should obtain a success, it would be but reasonable to allow them to follow up the Mahdi to such a position as would insure their future safe march. . . . Paragraph 1 fixes irrevocably the decision of the Government—namely, to evacuate the territory, and, of course, as far as possible, involves the avoidance of any fighting. . . . I will carry out the evacuation as far as possible, according to their wish, to the best of my ability, and with avoidance, as far as possible, of all fighting. I would, however, hope that Her Majesty's Government will give me their support and consideration should I be unable to fulfil all their expectations."—[Egypt, No. 7 (1884), p. 2.]

Sir, I should like to know what meaning Her Majesty's Government attached to the words "support and consideration" when they received that despatch? Did they really suppose the position to be that General Gordon would only be allowed to use those Egyptian troops who had already suffered so terribly at the hands of the Natives of the Soudan, and that if he should, as would surely not be unlikely, incur defeat, the Government were not to be liable to aid him? Is it possible that Her Majesty's Government can have saved themselves by sending General Gordon into danger with the understanding that when he got into danger from which he could not escape they were not to save him? Well, but that Memorandum was received, was considered, and was accepted by Her Majesty's Government as embodying the means by which General Gordon should carry out their policy. More than that, they knew that he had been appointed as Governor General of the Soudan with full civil and military powers; they knew that in the Firman appointing him he was directly authorized to retain the Egyptian troops in the Soudan as long as he liked, and to regulate the time and manner of the evacuation in the mode which seemed to him to be best and most politic. They knew all this; and on the 12th of February what did the Prime Minister say to the House on the subject of General Gordon's plan? He said—

> "At Cairo General Gordon formed his plan. . . . . It was evidently a well-reasoned and considered plan: it was entirely pacific in its basis; it proceeded on the belief—a belief which would have been fanatical or presumptuous in my case, or in the case of most of those in this House, but which in the case of General Gordon, with his experience and gifts, was, I believe, neither the one nor the other—not that he certainly must, but that he fairly might hope to, exercise a strong pacific influence by going to the right persons in the Soudan; and it was his desire, quite as much as ours, that this should be done without any resort whatever to violent means. . . . . He went for the double purpose of evacuating the country by the extrication of the Egyptian garrisons, and of reconstituting it by giving back to those Chiefs their ancestral powers, which had been withdrawn or suspended during the period of the Egyptian Government. . . . . He had in view the withdrawal from the country of no less than 29,000 persons paying the military service to Egypt. The House will see how vast was the trust placed in the hands of this remarkable person. We cannot exaggerate the importance we attach to it. We were resolved to do nothing which should interfere with this great pacific scheme, the only scheme which promised a satisfactory solution of the Soudanese difficulty, by at once extricating the garrisons and reconstituting the country upon its old basis and its local privileges."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 724-5.)

Admirable resolutions these, if they could only have been carried out. Well, on the 13th of February arrived the Memorandum of General Gordon containing a scheme for organizing the well-disposed tribes of the Soudan against the pillaging tribes, with the idea of "forming the firm Conservative Soudanese Government which I believe Her Majesty's Government have in view," which obviously would be likely to lead to fighting. I am bound to say that if Her Majesty's Government wanted to form a Conservative Government nearer home than the Soudan, they have taken the very best means of doing so. The right hon. Gentleman again addressed the House in reply to the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson); but he did not say a word qualifying those expressions of confidence in General Gordon and the acceptance of his plans which he had before stated to the House. On the 14th of February the President of the Local Government Board addressed the House. He said—

> "Our views with regard to the evacuation of the Soudan are General Gordon's views as well as our own."—(*Ibid.*, 957.)

On the 18th Lord Granville stated in "another place" that the confidence of the Government in General Gordon was rather increasing than diminishing. Well, to my mind, these documents and statements conclusively prove that Her Majesty's Government in the middle of February fully understood that General Gordon's mission might very possibly involve fighting, and that, so understanding it, they accepted it. Yet now what do they say? That it was not in contemplation that the duties assigned to General Gordon should be of a nature that would require the despatch of a British Expedition to the Soudan. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Well, if those hon. Gentlemen who cheered that statement can reconcile it with the facts I have quoted, I shall be glad to hear them do it. That is not all. General Gordon is now openly accused of promoting a policy not of defence or of rescue, but of conquest. What have Her Majesty's Government said in their telegram of the 23rd of April? They accuse him distinctly of a desire to undertake military operations beyond the scope of his mission, and at variance with the pacific policy of evacuating the Soudan. I will venture to say that the most malicious libeller never coined a more unfair or more ungenerous accusation against a public servant than that which these grateful employers have given currency to against General Gordon. Let General Gordon speak for himself. Do hon. Members recollect the statement which appeared in *The Times* of the 10th of March coming direct from him? What did General Gordon there say? That he was dead against the sending of any British Expedition to reconquer the Soudan; that it was unnecessary; that he would not have a single life lost; that it was his firm conviction that none would be lost by the plan that he proposed, while our honour would be saved; that he liked the people who were in rebellion as well as he did those who were not; and he added—

> "I thank God that, as far as I am concerned, no man has gone before his Maker prematurely through me."

Will the verdict of history on these transactions acquit Her Majesty's Government of the bloodguiltiness which General Gordon disclaimed? Well, Her Majesty's Government, having driven General Gordon to make this proposal of smashing the Mahdi, negatived it. But, as I have said, they did something worse; they deprived him of any chance of carrying out pacifically the commission with which they had intrusted him by their own military operations in the Eastern Soudan. What was General Gordon's opinion upon those operations? It is perfectly clear from these Papers that he never approved of them. On a memorable Saturday the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) asked this House to express its opinion that no reason had been shown for those military operations. Sir, I spoke in favour of that Motion, and I supported it by my vote. And why did I support it? I said plainly that, unless Her Majesty's Government intended that some result in the way of material assistance to General Gordon should follow from those operations, they were unjustifiable. No such result did follow; and I never gave a vote in this House to which I look back with more satisfaction than the vote that I gave in support of that Motion. I have said that General Gordon never wanted you to undertake those operations. When you consulted him, he gave up the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar as lost; he said that he had not the least apprehension for Khartoum or Berber being in jeopardy from events at Suakin; and that the forces which defeated General Baker would remain in their tribal limits. Her Majesty's Government were very grateful for that message; and on the 12th of February they sent their thanks to him for this expression of opinion, which, they said, "filled them with increased confidence in him." But having done so, of course they proceeded to act in direct opposition to his views. A little later he told them that—

> "As to Tokar and Sinkat, you can do nothing except by proclaiming that Chiefs of tribes should come to Khartoum to the Meglis (council) of Notables, when the independence of the Soudan will be decided."

And on the 23rd of February he telegraphs—

"I think if Tokar has fallen Her Majesty's Government had better be quiet, as I see no advantage to be now gained by any action on their part; let events work themselves out. Fall of Tokar will not affect in the least state of affairs here."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 97.]

Of course, the Government were not quiet. They undertook those military operations under General Graham which resulted in the loss of many valuable English lives and the massacre of thousands of brave Arabs, but in no permanent good whatever; while, on the other hand, they tended greatly to weaken General Gordon's power of peaceful negotiation. General Gordon naturally supposed, on hearing of the victories of General Graham, that as the Government had vetoed his proposals for carrying out his pacific mission, and had themselves undertaken military operations in the Soudan, they would take care that his difficult and arduous task should in some way benefit from the victories that had been achieved. He did not know Her Majesty's Government. They can undertake costly and perilous expeditions, but only after the object of those expeditions has been hopelessly sacrificed. He recommended again that a few troops should be sent to Wady Halfa and Dongola, adding that General Graham's victory, if followed up by an advance of two squadrons of Cavalry to Berber, would settle the question of Khartoum, for the people between there and Berber would not think of rising. Now, what did Her Majesty's Government know of his position at that time? On the 13th of March they heard from him that—

"There was no probability of the people rallying round him, or of paying any attention to his Proclamation."—[*Ibid.*, p. 161.]

He told them that if they would not appoint Zebehr Pasha or send British troops to Berber it was no use holding on to Khartoum; for it was impossible for him to help the other garrisons, and he would only be sacrificing the whole of the troops and *employés* there. He suggested that he should be instructed to evacuate Khartoum, retreating to Berber, and sacrificing everything except Berber and Dongola. He asked for a prompt reply; but he was asking for that which is an impossibility to Her Majesty's Government. In a few days the opportunity was lost. He went on to say that he would resign his commission and start for the Equator. He added these remarkable words—

"If I could have given any hope to the people as to the future Government, probably things might have been better. It is evident that no one will throw in his fortunes with a departing Government."—[*Ibid.*, p. 162.]

In reply, Sir Evelyn Baring directed him to stay at Khartoum, pending instructions from Her Majesty's Government. Then Lord Granville telegraphs to Sir Edward Malet—though we are in doubt as to how many of these telegrams reached General Gordon—stating that Her Majesty's Government declined to send either troops or Zebehr. He goes on to say—

"If General Gordon is of opinion that the prospect of his early departure diminishes the chance of accomplishing his task, and that by staying at Khartoum himself for any length of time which he may judge necessary he would be able to establish a settled Government, he is at liberty to remain there. In the event of his being unable to carry out this suggestion, he should evacuate Khartoum, and save that garrison by conducting it himself to Berber without delay."—[*Ibid.*]

Then, on the 16th, Sir Evelyn Baring comes to the front and tells Her Majesty's Government that—

"It has now become of the utmost importance not only to open the road between Suakin and Berber, but to come to terms with the tribes between Berber and Khartoum."—[*Ibid.*, p. 165.]

What is the reply? On the 16th Earl Granville says—

"Her Majesty's Government are unable to authorize any advance of British troops in the direction of Berber until they have received further information with regard to the military conditions of such an expedition, and are satisfied that it is necessary in order to secure the safety of General Gordon. . . . . If General Gordon agrees with you that the difficulty of establishing a settled Government will increase rather than diminish with time, there can be no advantage in his remaining, and he should, as soon as is practicable, take steps for the evacuation of Khartoum."—[*Ibid.*, p. 166.]

In the whole of these telegrams from General Gordon, I venture to assert that there is not a single trace of a desire for aggression. What he wishes to do is simply this—to place himself in the only position in which, Zebehr having been refused to him, he could carry out the orders of Her Majesty's Government to rescue the garrisons. He required material help to maintain himself at Khartoum, to bring out the more distant garrisons, and even, as time advanced, to evacuate Khartoum itself. For the matter is now reduced to this. On the 24th of March Sir Evelyn Baring telegraphs to Her Majesty's Government—

> "It appears to me that under the present circumstances General Gordon will not be able to carry out your Lordship's instructions, although those instructions involve the abandonment of the Sennaar garrison on the Blue Nile, and the garrisons of Bahr Gazelle and Gondokoro, on the White Nile. The question now is, how to get General Gordon and Colonel Stewart away from Khartoum? In considering this question, it should be remembered that they will not willingly come back without bringing with them the garrison of Khartoum and the Government officials. . . . . Unless any unforeseen circumstances should occur to change the situation, only two solutions appear to be possible. The first is to trust General Gordon's being able to maintain himself at Khartoum till the autumn. . . . . This he might, perhaps, be able to do, but it, of course, involves running a great risk."

How great the risk is we see now. The despatch goes on to say—

> "The only other plan is to send a portion of General Graham's army to Berber with instructions to open up communication with Khartoum. . . . . General Gordon is evidently expecting help from Suakin, and he has ordered messengers to be sent along the road from Berber to ascertain whether any English force is advancing. Under present circumstances, I think that an effort should be made to help Gordon from Suakin, if it is at all a possible military operation."

Was it a possible military operation? The despatch continues—

> "General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood, whilst admitting the very great risk to the health of the troops, besides the extraordinary military risks, are of opinion that the undertaking is possible."—[*Ibid.*, p. 186.]

Of course, there would have been risk to the health of the troops. But what does Sir Evelyn Baring himself say on this subject? When it was proposed to move English soldiers to Assouan, Sir Evelyn Baring, on February 28, used these words—

> "I have only to say that we have undertaken the responsibility of preserving tranquillity in Egypt, and that it is impossible to execute the task without exposing our troops to whatever risks the climatic influences involve."—[*Ibid.*, p. 116.]

Then we find, again, in the despatch of March 24—

> "General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood think that General Graham should be further consulted."—[*Ibid.*, p. 186.]

But was he consulted? Did Her Majesty's Government ask Graham to undertake an expedition from Suakin to Berber? I do not believe they ever put it to him. We have no evidence of the fact; but on the 18th of March we have a telegram from General Graham—

> "Present position of affairs is that two heavy blows have been struck at rebels and followers of the Mahdi, who are profoundly discouraged. They say, however, that English troops can do no more; must re-embark and leave the country to them; to follow up these victories and bring waverers to our side we should not proclaim our intention of leaving, but rather make a demonstration of an advance towards Berber, and induce a belief that we can march anywhere we please."—[*Ibid.*, p. 176.]

Now, Sir, I believe that if General Graham had been instructed to send the kind of forces that General Gordon desired to Berber it would have been found that such a force could have marched wherever they pleased. What does General Gordon himself say a few weeks later? He affirms that the insurrection at Khartoum had spread; but he urges that it is a trumpery insurrection that 500 determined men could put down. What is the reply of Her Majesty's Government to Sir Evelyn Baring's recommendation? I do not think that a more heartless despatch ever was written than that of the 25th of March; and yet that one, like the previous despatch, was sent openly, so that the news that Her Majesty's Government did not intend to relieve General Gordon was in the possession of all his enemies, whether it reached him or not. The despatch says as follows:—

> "Having regard to the dangers of the climate of the Soudan at this time of the year, as well as the extraordinary risk from a military point of view, Her Majesty's Government do not think it justifiable to send a British expedition to Berber, and they wish to communicate this decision to General Gordon in order that he may adopt measures in accordance therewith. Her Majesty's Government desire to leave full discretion to General Gordon to remain at Khartoum if he thinks it necessary, or to retire by the southern or any other route which may be found available."—[Egypt, No. 13 (1884), p. 1.]

What does that mean? It means simply this—"We know you are in difficulties and in want of help, but we will not help you ourselves; we will not tell you what to do. You may stay in the trap if you like, or you may leave it as best you can; by yourself if you choose, or, if you are able, taking those who have trusted you along with you." I will venture to say that a more disgraceful suggestion than the suggestion to a British soldier and a Christian hero that he should desert those who had placed themselves in peril for his sake was never made by a British Government. What sort of opinion has General Gordon himself of such a suggestion? What does he say on the 3rd of March? He says—

> "Pray do not consider me in any way to advocate retention of the Soudan; I am quite averse to it, but you must see that you could not recall me, nor could I possibly obey until the Cairo *employés* get out from all the places. I have named men to different places, thus involving them with the Mahdi; how could I look the world in the face if I abandoned them and fled? As a gentleman, could you advise this course? It may have been a mistake to send me up, but having been done, I have no option but to see evacuation through, for even if I was mean enough to escape, I have no power to do so. You can easily understand this; would you do so?"—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 156.]

Would any hon. Member do so if he were in General Gordon's place, except those who sit on the Treasury Bench? Then, later on, we have that well-known telegram of April 16, in which General Gordon says—

> "As far as I can understand, the situation is this—You state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zebehr. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold on here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator, and leave you the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennaar, Kassala, Berber, and Dongola, with the certainty that you will eventually be forced to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties if you would retain peace in Egypt."

Did any British Government ever receive such a telegram from one in their employment without the power of resenting it? And why have they not got that power? Because they know full well that the country agrees with General Gordon. So all help is refused, and that prophecy of Gordon's is fulfilled which, on the 7th of March, was published in *The Times* newspaper—

> "Be sure of one thing; if Her Majesty's Government do not act promptly, Graham's victory will go for naught, and, with the useless expenditure of blood, the effect of it will evaporate."

Now we find how the net begins to close around him. On the 17th of March he is described as defending himself against the rebels around Khartoum with soldiers who are defeated simply because they do not desire to fight. On the 25th we hear of two Pashas being executed for treason, and General Gordon receives a hostile and insolent message from the Mahdi. On the 7th of April comes the first news of danger to Berber. On the 19th the massacre of the garrison at Shendy takes place, and on the 20th Sir Evelyn Baring reports that unless there is some prospect of help held out to Hussein Khalifa, there is risk that he will be thrown into the arms of the rebels, which would seriously affect Gordon's position; and yet, on the 24th of April, having heard all this on the 22nd, the Prime Minister actually told the House of Commons that there had been no essential change in the position of General Gordon in consequence of the fall of Berber. I think that that is not an unfair instance of the extraordinary way in which, for weeks past, Parliament and the country have been misled by the obstinately optimist ideas of the Prime Minister and his Colleagues. Of course, I do not question that those right hon. Gentlemen believe what they told Parliament; but I find it absolutely impossible to understand how they can have derived from these published despatches, or from any confidential Papers in their possession—which, indeed, I fear are more likely to show a worse side of the case—impressions so diametrically opposed to those which, I venture to say, any unbiassed mind must have derived from the perusal of these despatches. On the 21st of April Her Majesty's Government at last discover that the danger at Berber appears to be imminent, and to suggest —and this is almost the only suggestion they have made—negotiations. On the 23rd the Governor of Berber reports that all the country is joining the Mahdi, and asks for troops, which obviously could not then be sent to Berber in time, inasmuch as, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government themselves, it would take 16 weeks to perform the journey. Now comes the last telegram, which is a most remarkable one. I do not wish to do any injustice to Her Majesty's Government. I am going to make an admission. Her Majesty's Government are charged in many quarters with wilfully abandoning General Gordon. The admission I am going to make is this—that the Prime Minister has admitted to the full the obligation of Her Majesty's Government to provide for General Gordon's safety; but, unfortunately, in spite of all the proofs that the net has closed around him, Her Majesty's Government, and first of all the Prime Minister, absolutely refuse to recognize that the General is in any danger at all. Why, Sir, on the 3rd of May the Prime Minister told the House that there was no military danger threatening Khartoum. But what did General Gordon himself think of his position? A month ago this bravest of soldiers telegraphed to Her Majesty's Government—"God willing, I will never be taken alive." Would General Gordon have used those words if he had recognized that there was no danger in his position? What are the facts? I have no doubt that we shall be told that Khartoum is amply supplied with provisions, although even that point does not now seem absolutely clear. My noble Friend near me asked this evening about a despatch from Sir Evelyn Baring relating to this matter, from which it is perfectly obvious that some material facts connected with this subject are not known to the House. It may be; and from the words of that despatch I fear it is only too likely that after all "the sufficient supply of provisions" at Khartoum is not more than enough to last to the end of the current month. But granted, if you like, that Khartoum is sufficiently provisioned until the autumn, famine is not the principal danger with which Khartoum is threatened. The principal danger which besets General Gordon is not famine, nor even the attacks of the insurgents outside; but it is treachery within the town. The House will remember that a considerable number of the soldiers whom General Gordon sent down to Berber went over in a body to the insurgents. The House will remember that, when called upon to fight against the insurgents, General Gordon's own soldiers were defeated simply because they declined to fight. The House will remember that General Gordon had to execute two Pashas for treason, who, of course, had friends in the garrison; while, if the last report be true, General Gordon has had to fortify himself within his own town against the disaffected part of the population. If it should happen that his position becomes so dangerous that he may wish to escape with his friends by the river, what chance has he of effecting such an escape? The Nile is low, and the insurgents have not only rifles, but they have artillery. They have six guns, besides the Krupp gun which they captured from General Gordon, which was said to have been spiked, but which we have since heard was not permanently injured. This constitutes a formidable danger to any chance of escape which General Gordon might have had. Yet, in the face of these facts, what are the terms of the telegram of the 23rd of April? General Gordon, who is in this position, is asked in that telegram by Her Majesty's Government to inform them, in reply to a question which will probably never reach him, not only as to any immediate, but as to any prospective danger to Khartoum. General Gordon, beleaguered in Khartoum by hosts of enemies, bound there even more strongly by those feelings of honour of which Her Majesty's Ministers never seem to think, is asked to state to Her Majesty's Government the cause and intention with which he continues in Khartoum. General Gordon, who cannot know anything that is passing outside Khartoum, except from the merest rumours, is asked to advise those who have never yet taken his advice as to the force necessary to secure his removal from Khartoum, the condition of the roads, and the proper time for the operation. Could anything exceed the cruel irony of that telegram? If anything could add to the astonishment and disgust with which it has been read by the country, surely it would be the concluding words expressing respect and gratitude to General Gordon for his gallant self-sacrifice and for the good he has achieved. What is the value of that respect and gratitude? This is a matter which cannot be trifled with by the Government. I believe that the people of this country are determined, whatever Her Majesty's Government may think of General Gordon's position and claims upon them, that not a hair of his head shall perish, and that he shall be saved with those who have trusted in him. To rescue him you must rescue them also. What are Her Majesty's Government going to do? It is not for me to suggest the course which they should take. What I have undertaken, however imperfectly, to show to the House is how, by their own conduct, by their own inaction, when action was possible, they have brought things to such a pass that it is difficult indeed for anyone to know how to carry out that which we all, I hope, desire to accomplish. There is one thing which Her Majesty's Government ought to have done weeks ago, and which they ought to do, if it be not too late, to-night, and that is to proclaim their determination that General Gordon shall be rescued; and they ought to follow up that statement by taking actual steps to place themselves in a position to carry out their intention—peacefully, by all means, if possible; but by warlike means if the work cannot be done without military co-operation. I venture to say that every hour of delay will only increase the danger of General Gordon, the difficulties of Her Majesty's Government, and a still graver risk, because it is a risk of wider scope than anything that can happen to General Gordon himself. Sir, there is a very old quotation which I should not think of inflicting upon the House did it not contain a moral which, it seems to me, is never present to the minds of Her Majesty's Government. It runs as follows:—

> "Principiis obsta; serò medicina paratur
> Cum mala per longas convaluere moras."

As individuals, Her Majesty's Government are men of decision and action; but collectively they are cursed with this fatal curse—that they are never able to make up their minds in time. It was but the other day that the Prime Minister pointed out to Parliament the success which General Gordon had achieved in putting a stop to the onward movement of the troops of the Mahdi. That statement was perfectly true. The personal influence of General Gordon did achieve, for a time, very material success in this direction. I believe that if General Gordon had been supplied with material assistance, at a time when it could have been sent to him at a comparatively small risk, he would have been enabled absolutely to stem, at Khartoum, that wave of religious fanaticism and social anarchy which we call the movement of the Mahdi. But what is the position now? General Gordon lies helpless and beleaguered at Khartoum. The advancing tide has surrounded him. It has overwhelmed Berber; it is rapidly approaching Dongola, although its approach is concealed by the euphemistic words of the Under Secretary, who said that near Dongola there is a very considerable movement among the population. Notwithstanding this, all that we have heard of any preparations for meeting this rapidly-advancing and terrible danger is that two or three battalions of the Egyptian Army may possibly be despatched to Upper Egypt, and a rumour that Her Majesty's Government intend to send a great British expedition to Egypt in October. Why, Sir, if the recent news be true, long before October our small British garrison in Lower Egypt may be fighting for their lives. This danger must be stemmed somewhere. It is a duty incumbent upon us by reason of our position in Egypt, and a duty the fulfilment of which will rightly be exacted from us by the whole of the civilized world. Have Her Majesty's Government the faintest conception of their responsibility in this matter? In the debate which took place on the Motion of my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition in February last, some right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House, who were naturally anxious to find a reason for supporting Her Majesty's Government, told us that they would give their votes on the side against which they spoke, because they believed that the policy of hesitation which the Government had up to that time pursued had been discarded, and that energetic action had taken its place. I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) are quite satisfied, after reading these despatches, that the expectation which they then formed has been fulfilled? I am quite aware that votes on a Motion such as that which it is my duty to propose are often decided by a feeling of general confidence in the Government of the day, which it is now, perhaps, somewhat difficult to justify, and which, therefore, is more likely to be privately entertained than openly avowed. It is a remarkable circumstance, however, that, either in or out of this House, it has been impossible up to this time to find any expression of complete approval of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in the particular matter which it is my duty to bring before the

House. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) may be congratulated upon the fact that he has, for once in a way, been able to formulate a proposition with which everyone in the House must agree. We must all, of course, regret with the hon. Baronet that General Gordon has not yet succeeded in bringing to a successful conclusion the mission which he has undertaken; but I do not think Her Majesty's Government will be able to agree with the rest of the hon. Baronet's Motion — I mean the part in which he asks the House to express its objection to any course which will involve the taking of any military steps in connection with General Gordon's mission — for the Government have already admitted their obligation to provide for the safety of General Gordon. Then comes the Amendment which has been put upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell). The phrases of the hon. Member are a little involved, as is not unusual; but, as far as I can understand, what the hon. Member means is that General Gordon should be ordered to abandon the expedition on which he has embarked, and to abandon also those with whom, and in defence of whom, he has stated his determination to remain at Khartoum. Her Majesty's Government have been competent to suggest such an abandonment; but I do not think that even they would venture to order it. Then the hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) begins with a censure on Her Majesty's Government, for he expresses his regret that General Gordon has not been recalled. He goes on, however, to express his confidence that Her Majesty's Government will take all possible measures to insure the safety of Generals Gordon and Stewart. I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on his confidence; all the more because the only basis on which it can be founded is, that they failed to take steps in time to relieve the abandoned garrison of Sinkat, and that they have themselves declined, in the despatch of April 23, to recognize the danger of General Gordon, or to do anything to relieve him until they receive information, which there is hardly any chance of their being able to obtain. We do not ask that Her Majesty's Government should undertake an impossible task; but we do ask, and I will venture to say the country demands, that Her Majesty's Government shall not call measures impossible simply because they are unwilling or afraid to try them. The Motion which I make cannot, I believe, be met by the Prime Minister with any comments, however free, upon the repeated Votes of Censure which have been brought forward in Parliament, or be put aside by appeals to that popular feeling which it is very difficult to excite in favour of a more rapid progress with the legislative proposals of the Government. No, Sir; the Motion can only be met by Her Majesty's Government undertaking and proving that they will leave no stone unturned to avert from this country the intolerable stain which would be left upon her honour by any injury inflicted upon General Gordon, and that they at last have made up their minds, in a moment of supreme difficulty, to do what they ought to have done long ago—namely, to grasp this Egyptian Question boldly, as becomes the Government of the Queen. Sir, if the Prime Minister cannot satisfy the country upon these points, I will venture to prophesy that in spite of his great career, and in spite of his commanding abilities, he will not long escape the condemnation of an outraged people. The right hon. Baronet concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I will first discharge that part of my duty which is the most agreeable, and state to the House that, in my opinion, the right hon. Baronet has delivered a speech of great force and eloquence. Beyond that I am afraid I can only speak in language of strong animadversion, except upon a single point in reference to which I would point out what appears to me to be a fundamental inconsistency in the position which the right hon. Baronet has assumed and the doctrines which he has laid down. Referring to the telegram of the 23rd of April, the right hon.

Baronet makes an admission that it fully and absolutely pledges the Government——

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman has mistaken me. I was referring not to any particular telegram, but to a statement made in this House by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the safety of General Gordon.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am quite willing to accept the explanation of the right hon. Baronet. My view is that the telegram of the 23rd of April went very far beyond the statement to which the right hon. Gentleman says he was referring. The right hon. Gentleman fully admits that Her Majesty's Government have pledged themselves to shield General Gordon from danger, and, should necessity arise, to the best of their ability to do this with due consideration to all the circumstances, and by the free use of the power of this great country. That admission, at least, the right hon. Gentleman makes. Then, what does he mean by saying, towards the close of his speech, that it will be an intolerable shame if we do not proclaim our intention to rescue General Gordon?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I mean actions also.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, actions; but actions must have reference to time and place. I am about to criticize the speech of the right hon. Gentleman; for what does the right hon. Gentleman mean when he scoffs at the idea of relieving Khartoum in the month of October? He means this, but he has not put it in his Motion. I will make pretty free comments on his Motion—as he has spoken of free comments—in contrast with his speech; but in his speech he has distinctly intimated that it is our duty to overlook what are called the climatic difficulties, to trust to the energy and the omnipotence of England, to send out troops at once without regard to questions of climate and danger of military difficulty; for, unless he means that, there is no meaning at all in his scoffing at the month of October. Well, then, I ask the right hon. Gentleman why, with this most valorous speech which he has delivered, abounding in big words from beginning to end—and never did I hear a speech in this House which made a freer use of them—why is it that he has made a Motion on which he did not venture himself to offer a single comment? Evidently, Sir, because he could not persuade those who sit around him to adopt for their guidance or proclaim to the House the opinions that he has himself declared, and consequently that he had to acquiesce in a Motion one of the most pale and colourless ever submitted to the House as to what it asserts, at the same time when by his speech he was calling upon the House and reproaching the Government for falling short of his calling—calling upon the House to adopt schemes as wild, as needless, as impracticable, as ruinous in their consequences, as unsound in their principles, as I have ever known propounded. The right hon. Gentleman scoffs at us because he says there was some idea that in October we might, if we admitted the need, be at Khartoum. I suppose he thinks that May, June, July, and August—any of these months—irrespective of the condition of the Desert, irrespective of the supply of water, and irrespective of the state of the Nile, would suit. The right hon. Gentleman is far too high in the clouds to take into his view these conditions. One of his main reproaches is this—that when we have contemplated the possibility of any military proceeding we have actually waited for further information. The right hon. Gentleman obtained loud cheers from his Friends when he ridiculed the Government that they could think for a moment, after having received a proposal from a civil source, it would be their duty to obtain further information from military authorities which they could discuss upon their own responsibility. But the right hon. Gentleman has gone further than this, and he has plainly avowed to the House that it is the duty of England to take in hand and put down the Mahdi's movement. [*Cheers, and* "No!"] What, no? ["No!"] "No," forsooth, says some left-handed Friend behind. But those were the words of the right hon. Gentleman himself. ["No!"]

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I said stemming its advance on Egypt.

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman quoted repeatedly this declaration—that unless it is put down in the Soudan it will advance on Egypt, so that it is not merely stemming. He has adopted that language—to keep it out of Egypt it is necessary to put it down in the Soudan; and that is the task the right hon. Gentleman desires to saddle upon England. Now, I tell hon. Gentlemen this—that that task means the reconquest of the Soudan. I put aside for the moment all questions of climate, of distance, of difficulties, of the enormous charges, and all the frightful loss of life. There is something worse than that involved in the plan of the right hon. Gentleman. It would be a war of conquest against a people struggling to be free. ["No, no!"] Yes; these are people struggling to be free, and they are struggling rightly to be free. [*Interruption by* Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.] I appeal to the noble Lord's courtesy. The right hon. Gentleman himself quoted from General Gordon a passage in which that high-minded man said—"I am as much attached to the rebels as to those who take my side." We hear of the Mahdi and emissaries of the Mahdi at Berber and at Dongola. What does all that mean? It does not mean that they are men over whom the Mahdi has power—General Gordon, when he went to the Soudan, pointed out that the power of the Mahdi was extremely limited—but it means that they are men who carry from the Mahdi invitations to the local tribes in the several districts, inviting them to join in the war for freedom; and it is that war that the right hon. Gentleman wants England to put down. I shall have to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question or two upon various parts of the speech; but this I would say of his speech in general—if it were possible by great carelessness as to facts, by an extremely careful method of selection, by a total avoidance of historical continuity in actions, and by the resources of an ingenious mind in discovering grounds of suspicion against political opponents—if these united resources and instruments make up a case, undoubtedly the right hon. Gentleman has made one. But, Sir, what is the carefulness of the right hon. Gentleman as to facts? He says that General Gordon never desired to be a servant of the Egyptian Government. The right hon. Gentleman is as absolutely wrong as any man who ever delivered the most unfounded assertion. The action of the British Government in the mission of General Gordon was limited to sending him for the purpose of reporting on the evacuation of the Soudan; and it was General Gordon himself who, governed by the most generous motives, in absolute contradiction of this confident statement of the right hon. Gentleman, suggested that he had better be armed with the authority and position of Governor General, in order to carry through the work of peaceful evacuation. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman says that General Gordon proposed a visit to the Mahdi; and one of our offences, the right hon. Gentleman says, is that we negatived the visit to the Mahdi. But even this the right hon. Gentleman cannot state with tolerable accuracy. We did not negative his visit to the Mahdi. Sir Evelyn Baring, hearing of the proposed visit to the Mahdi, before consulting us, conceived, and justly, I think, conceived, a most unfavourable opinion of it. Sir Evelyn Baring accordingly wrote a strongly dissuasive telegram to General Gordon, and also telegraphed home to the Government stating—"I hope you will arm me with authority to put a negative on his visit to the Mahdi." The right hon. Gentleman has not thought it worth while to observe that we approved of this dissuasive telegram. Is that the same thing as an absolute negative? It is totally different. An absolute negative would set aside entirely the judgment of General Gordon; but this dissuasive telegram was one stating that we saw great objections, but such was our disposition to respect in everything the judgment of General Gordon that we acquiesced in that message, which was calculated to give him the opportunity of stating his own view of the case, as we declined to send the prohibition which the right hon. Gentleman said we did send. The right hon. Gentleman said that General Gordon desired to deal first with the Equatorial Provinces. He never desired first to deal with the Equatorial Provinces as part of the plan he received from us. The right hon. Gentleman's case depends almost entirely on the manner in which he has selected from the different parts of the Blue Book and pieced together language and sentiments belonging to different times and circumstances, and he has put them before the House as if they belonged to the same. It is quite true that at one time General Gordon once spoke of dealing with the Equatorial Provinces; but he never spoke of dealing with them as part of his commission from the Government of England. He referred to them, apparently, as another plan for going to work under the King of the Belgians. Then the right hon. Gentleman says if we had given General Gordon material aid—his mind is always on material support—at the time when it would have been comparatively easy; I should like to know when that time would be—

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The middle of March.

MR. GLADSTONE: The middle of March. Material support about the middle of March! Well, the time computed as necessary for the ascent of the Nile is 16 weeks, and as General Gordon had not been seven weeks on his way at that time we see the value of the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, backed by the high authority of the hon. Member for Eye, that we ought to have sent material support to General Gordon at Khartoum at a time when he himself not only did not desire, but actually disclaimed it.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I never said that.

MR. GLADSTONE: You may not have said it, but I am construing the words of the right hon. Gentleman. They are extremely dark words. I complain of him for not specifying what was the time at which we might so easily have supplied him with material support. Look at the consistency of the right hon. Gentleman. He says that at an earlier period we ought to have supplied material aid to General Gordon. He admits that we were bound to try pacific methods, and although thus bound to try pacific measures, we were to send him this material support mixed with pacific methods. He has actually told us that the sending of General Graham and a force to Suakin was totally and absolutely incompatible with the pacific mission of General Gordon. Then the right hon. Gentleman quotes a telegram from General Gordon on which I reserve my comments; but I will throw back upon the right hon. Gentleman the language and gestures with which he commented on that telegram, and in which he spoke of the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Dongola and Sinkat. Sir, after all, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman is not before the House; but the Motion is. Was there ever anything more ludicrous than the contrast between the exuberant valour of the speech and the pale and colourless character of the Motion, which speaks, forsooth, not of what we have done, but of the effect our action tends to produce, and which speaks of our delaying measures, not which are necessary, or which appear probably to be necessary, but which, in the wide range of possibility, may be necessary for the security of General Gordon? The House must give its vote on the Motion; and little as the right hon. Gentleman seems to be in love with his own Motion, of which he has not chosen to be the sponsor, even to the extent of a single remark, I must ask what it is to which he invites the House to give its assent? There is nothing clear about the Motion, or about the policy connected with it in the Motion itself, except the desire and the intention that the Motion, if carried, should displace Her Majesty's Government and—which, I admit, is a perfectly fair and straightforward proceeding—and carry over the direction of these matters into the hands of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends. I must, I am afraid, trouble the House with some examination of the Motion thus despised by the right hon. Gentleman who moved it—and not deemed worthy of a word. He said our proceedings had not tended to promote a fulfilment of General Gordon's mission. Sir, I will endeavour to test that passage, and I will say one word only by way of introduction to these observations. The Egyptian Question which we are not now discussing, except as connected with the Soudan, presents, in a degree quite unexampled in my experience, this remarkable combination. It is secondary, altogether secondary, in respect to the interests of this country, and commands little notice or attention—I am not speaking now of General Gordon among the mass of the population—and while it is thus secondary, it is attended with difficulties, such as no Government, to my knowledge, has ever been called upon to encounter. I am not now inquiring into the origin of these difficulties. I will only speak of their amount, and I will frankly own to the House that such is their amount—such is the constant necessity for taking decisions upon evidence, which we feel to be insufficient for a thoroughly satisfactory conclusion, such is the pressure of events requiring those decisions to be made, and threatening, if not made, that greater evils will ensue, that I, for my part, cannot wonder if hon. Members say we do not know how to justify this or that. It may be so, Sir. We have been confronting these difficulties to the best of our ability; we have proceeded from day to day with certain objects in view; and one of our main objects is absolutely at variance with the object of the right hon. Gentleman, for we are determined not to undertake the reconquest of the Soudan, not to place this country in conflict with a people struggling for their freedom, and not to draw this country blindfolded into any wild engagement of which it had not had due notice, and to which it does not give its full approbation. This question thus difficult we have had to carry on from day to day under the pressure of Parliamentary action, of Parliamentary interposition in every form, by Questions, by argumentative Questions, by menacing Questions, by demands for information, by Votes of Censure, made and attempted about once in three weeks in defiance of all precedents and customs of Parliament; and we have had to carry on this matter in the face of the aggravation of these difficulties produced by the persistent action of a considerable part of this House. That is what we have had to do, and that is what we shall continue to do. We shall continue to struggle, and, however you may endeavour to aggravate the position in which we stand, we believe that strong in the support of the majority of this House and of the country, we shall baffle your purposes, and prevent your action from attaining the ends it has in view. Well now, Sir, what is the Vote the right hon. Gentleman proposes? He proposes you should vote that our proceedings have not tended to promote the mission of General Gordon. I think we have a question to settle first, and that is—What was the mission of General Gordon? General Gordon, according to the right hon. Gentleman, received from us a power to make peace or war as he pleased. He received nothing of the kind. His mission was absolutely a pacific one, and it was nothing else, as far as we were concerned. He may detach himself from his mission; he may undertake another line of action—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—I am not now speaking of what is the proper limitation of his individual freedom; he is not a permanent servant of the Government—["Oh!"]—I am speaking of his freedom only, and I do not understand these exclamations. I am speaking of that only, and not of the limitations of the mission he received from the Government. What was the mission of General Gordon as described by himself? The right hon. Gentleman has quoted one of the earliest Papers General Gordon wrote upon that subject after he had reached Cairo, and had had plenty of time for consideration, and when he was on his way, and far advanced on his way, to Khartoum. He wrote a telegram, which will be found in the Blue Book, No. 12, at page 88, under date of February 11. He says—

> "I understand your desire to be the pacification of the country without bloodshed and the formation of native Governments; also that, on public grounds, I am to run no risks. I will fulfil your orders, and feel sure I am not presumptuous in assuring you that I have every hope of success, and of running no danger."

What is the evidence which is produced by the right hon. Gentleman on the other side? He states that General Gordon said in one of his letters he may fail to carry out all the designs he has in view, and in that case he hopes for our "support and consideration," and the right hon. Gentleman says "support and consideration" can mean nothing else than the licence to transform a pacific into a warlike mission; and that our having received General Gordon's application for support and consideration binds us to support him by military means in the wide and extensive projects which the right hon. Gentleman's speech unfolds. The right hon. Gentleman has been condemnatory in his language, and he will not be fastidious about the words I may apply to him. I must say that statement is perfectly absurd. To turn the words "support and consideration" into a licence to embark upon war and bloodshed is as great a licence of interpretation as I ever heard applied to a public document. And what does the right hon. Gentleman show in support of it? That General Gordon said that the Egyptian garrisons, in extricating themselves from the position in which they were, would be opposed; if opposed, they might fight; if they fought, they might be victorious; if victorious, we could not prevent them from following up their victory and putting down the Mahdi. But what has that admission to do with the monstrous contention that we, because those Egyptian garrisons might be involved in those difficulties, were to be bound to undertake the projects of conquest which the right hon. Gentleman had in view? When General Gordon went to Khartoum, he did not go there as an ordinary agent, he went there as a great personality—[*Laughter.*]—he went there as a great personality, and I hope it will not be reported in the newspapers to-morrow that two or three Gentlemen sitting behind the right hon. Gentleman received that expression with laughter. Sir, it is a very serious matter. We never said we were sending General Gordon with an apparatus of means to support him. The situation of the Soudan as to Egypt was hopeless. Egypt had no means of extricating the garrisons, and no means of pacifying the country. It appeared that the mission of General Gordon, pacific essentially in its beginning and end, might have the effect of casting a ray of hope upon that condition, and might give a chance of escape to those who otherwise would have no chance at all; and therefore we felt it to be our duty to give General Gordon every support in our power in prosecuting a mission of that character. Now, has the right hon. Gentleman, or has he not, shown that we failed in giving that support? I am very glad to find that there is now in this House on the opposite side such a vehement desire to support General Gordon. About two or three months ago I did not perceive that desire. When there came out a Proclamation of which a single term relating to slavery was capable of being construed in a manner adverse to General Gordon, then threatening Questions rained in upon us from the other side, wanting to know what we could mean—we, of course, being held responsible—by a Proclamation tending to support slavery. How did we meet these threatening inquiries and these menaces from different parts of the House? We met them by a declaration of our unshaken confidence in General Gordon; and I want to know whose conduct on that occasion tended and whose conduct did not tend, to support the mission in which he was engaged? Again, the right hon. Gentleman has told us to-night that the sending of troops to the Red Sea, with the view, if possible, to relieving Tokar, was utterly at variance with the pacific mission of General Gordon. But what happened at that time? When the desire for sending troops for the relief of Tokar was first expressed we stated that we would not undertake that enterprize without first consulting General Gordon and ascertaining whether in his view such a measure would not interfere with the pacific purpose of his mission; and I think it was from the opposite Bench that one of the leading speakers of the Opposition told me it was an insult to the House to suppose it could possibly interfere with the pacific mission of General Gordon. That was the course taken at the time when the Government could be wounded through the side of General Gordon. There was no indisposition at all to strike at that hero and bring him into disparagement, to suggest that one whose life had been a protest against slavery was going to promote slavery, and that it was ridiculous to consult him as an authority about the military measures contemplated for the relief of Tokar. Those were the measures that were taken. Then, with regard to Zebehr, what was the case there? The right hon. Baronet has stated that a great deal could be said in favour of sending Zebehr; but which of these Gentlemen said so at the time? At the first moment when the idea of sending Zebehr was broached, again there sprung up on the other side of the House the same vehement determination that he should not be sent. The question was asked both here and elsewhere—"Is it possible that you contemplate such an action as the sending of Zebehr?" I think the House should have fairly before it this matter of the sending of Zebehr. There is no doubt it has been a subject of very great importance. It was dealt with in this House in the most peremptory manner. The right hon. Gentleman says we dealt with it in an uncertain and hesitating way. The meaningof that is that we, attaching, as we did, the greatest weight to the declarations of General Gordon, even when they went against our own leanings, determined to give to General Gordon every opportunity that he could possibly desire for showing the whole case in support of Zebehr, and for meeting the arguments which had been advanced against his appointment. That is the reason why we did not presume peremptorily and at once to put an absolute negative upon the proposition; but we did not disguise from him from the first the difficulties we saw in the way. We never gave him the hope that he would get Zebehr. We told him we believed public opinion would not tolerate it; and now, forsooth, the right hon. Gentleman seems to insinuate that we ought to have sent Zebehr. Well, the right hon. Gentleman does not know anything about it. He does not give a judgment about it. He is not prepared to say either "Aye" or "No;" and if he is not prepared to say either "Aye" or "No" he ought to have a little more compassion and consideration for people who have had almost every day to consider questions on the most lightly-balanced evidence, and who were obliged to confess the difficulties under which they have laboured in discharging their duty to the country. The right hon. Gentleman says he made an admission, and I am going to make a confession. I may give offence, perhaps, to some hon. Gentlemen behind me; but, for my part, I felt a disposition to go every length not inconsistent with principle in the support of General Gordon's recommendation. General Gordon told us, and gave us his reasons for thinking so, that Zebehr, if inclined to the Slave Trade, would not be able to pursue it, and would have the strongest possible motive for not attempting to pursue it in case we allowed him to stay at Khartoum. For my part, I thought the arguments and the weight due to General Gordon so great that in my own mind it would have been a great question whether we ought not to have given way to his wish. Yes, but for one consideration; and what was that consideration? Why, that we should not have announced that intention 48 hours when a Vote would have been passed in this House not merely to condemn the Government, which is a trumpery affair, but to recall Zebehr; and I think that not improbably the right hon. Gentleman himself would have been the man to have made that Motion. Now, I think I have shown something as to who they were who supported the mission of General Gordon, and who they were who took every opportunity when that gentleman could be used as a means of attacking the Government to endeavour to enfeeble and cripple his mission. But, happily, we have upon record the declaration of General Gordon himself. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman has overlooked and made no reference to it. Knowing that this Blue Book was full of matter that might be used as evidence either one way or the other, the right hon. Gentleman took good care to quote nothing, except to piece together a number of incongruous statements to make a case against the Government. Has he read this declaration made by General Gordon on the 11th of March, telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Baring?—

> "I would like to express to you and Her Majesty's Government my sincere thanks for the support you have both afforded me since I took up this Mission, and to acknowledge that you have both given me every assistance I could have expected. It is not in our hands to command success. I say the same for the Khedive and Egyptian Ministers." — [Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 187.]

Well, Sir, that is what General Gordon said on the 11th of March. I shall be asked, perhaps, what he has said since. I am not going to pursue the conduct, for example, of the right hon. Gentleman. I am going to state the worst of what he has said since. He has sent two telegrams which signify displeasure, and even indignation. In one he tells us of the indelible disgrace—the telegrams are to Sir Evelyn Baring, although that is the same thing—of sacrificing the garrisons of Sennaar, Kassala, Berber, and Dongola; and in the other he complains that he cannot undertake to walk about the streets of Khartoum for years like a dervish. When were these telegrams written? I have shown what General Gordon thought up to the 11th of March. After the 11th of March it is now upon record from Sir Evelyn Baring that down to that time and long after the time when General Gordon wrote these telegrams he never received any of the telegrams sent by Her Majesty's Government. In these circumstances, General Gordon believed—and it was not unnatural he should have believed—that he was abandoned, and, not receiving intelligence from us—not, perhaps, asking himself whether there might not have been obstacles in the way of its arrival—the gallant General stated what he has stated in these two telegrams. Now, Sir, I want to put a point to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman pointed to me and said—"You hear of the indelible disgrace of sacrificing the garrisons of Berber, Kassala, Dongola, and Sennaar." The first question I have to put to the right hon. Gentleman is this—Are these the only garrisons in the Soudan? There are six other garrisons in the Soudan, containing, I think, a majority of the whole force in the Soudan. Are these six other garrisons to be sacrificed with safety to our own honour if we go into the country to rescue those four? Upon what principle is the distinction to be drawn between them? There is no principle at all. The only question is this—that whereas some of these garrisons are at a great distance and difficult of access, others are at a greater distance still. But when you have got to these garrisons, why not go forward to the others? What is the answer of the right hon. Gentleman? I think he has no answer to give—probably he does not want to give an answer—but I ask him now, is he prepared to say that it is the military duty of England to rescue these garrisons of Kassala, Sennaar, Berber, and Dongola? The right hon. Gentleman is dumb.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I merely wish to say that what I read to the House was General Gordon's opinion.

Mr. GLADSTONE: It was only an abstract opinion. ["Oh, oh!"] He says so. ["No, no!"] Please allow me to try and bring this matter to an issue, if I may do so, with the utmost respect to the right hon. Gentleman. Does the right hon. Gentleman adopt that opinion or not? What does he mean by quoting it if he does not adopt it? What does he mean by pointing to me—what does he mean by pointing to me to dishonour me in the eyes of my country—[*Cheers and counter cheers.*]—as these Gentlemen now echo his evident intention of doing; what does he mean unless that it was an indelible disgrace to leave these garrisons unrescued? Now, the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends will not escape from this debate without answering that question. Is it an indelible disgrace to leave them? If so, is it an honourable obligation to rescue them; and if it is an honourable obligation to rescue them, why has the right hon. Gentleman not had the courage and the manliness, instead of confining himself to big words and loud reproaches, to put something that had intelligibility, something that had force, something that had the promise of a policy, into the terms of his Motion? It is the old story—a transfer of power is the object of the Motion, the same as dictated the three previous Votes of Censure, not one of which contained an intelligible idea, when Gentlemen opposite availed themselves of the just interest which the country feels in the honour and the safety of General Gordon for the purpose of—what? Not of substituting a better policy in the Soudan or in Egypt, but for the purpose of effecting a change, which they are perfectly justified in desiring to do. So much for the tendency of what we have done; and then the Motion says—

> "That even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."

On that point I think I may say that we have failed in nothing which it was in our power to do, and which would have tended to General Gordon's safety. It is quite true that we declined to send troops to Wady Halfa. Both the military authorities and Sir Evelyn Baring were entirely against it. It is quite true that we declined to send troops under the conditions suggested to Berber and to other places; but, in so doing, we acted on the advice of military authorities; and the right hon. Gentleman quietly admits that if we had attempted to send 200 men, there would have been extraordinary military risks. But permit me also to say that, while there would have been extraordinary military risks, there would have been, as far as we could judge, very little military advantage. What would General Gordon have been the better in Khartoum for having 200 or 300 British soldiers 200 miles off at Berber? There was nobody to conquer at Berber. The whole difficulty lay in the uneasy, rebellious state—though I do not think the term "rebellious" particularly appropriate—of the tribes between Berber and Khartoum; and this small British force would have had no effect whatever in clearing the country between those places. You may say we think they might have gone on to Khartoum. That is the very thing which General Gordon has never desired, asked for, or even hinted at, though I admit an expression in a telegram might seem to lead to a different conclusion; but he has not even hinted at anything of the kind. I have shown how we supported General Gordon when he was glanced at in this House by oblique insinuations, and when those who are now so keen in his behalf appeared to take a very different view of the capabilities of his position. So much with regard to the tendency of our measures; but what with regard to the steps which the right hon. Gentleman says ought to be taken? Surely the phrase he has adopted is extraordinary. "Steps," he says, "are still delayed which may be necessary for the relief of General Gordon." Which "may be necessary." Why does he open the whole bounds of possibility? Is it the duty of every Government to take all the steps which may prove ultimately to be necessary in every given case for defence or anything else? If he wants to make charges against us with respect to the steps nécessary for the safety of General Gordon he ought not to show that we have failed to take steps "which may be necessary;" but that having had fair, rational, and probable evidence of what were necessary steps we failed to take them. And just so with regard to the tendency of our measures, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have shown that there were some measures which would have tended to the support of General Gordon's pacific mission which we might have taken and failed to take. I ask the House, did he point out a single word? He pointed to supplying General Gordon with soldiers when he did not want them, and before his pacific mission had almost begun; and that is the only reference he made to a measure which might have been adopted by us, with respect to which measure I may observe that it would have been entirely impossible, circumstances of time and place considered. The right hon. Gentleman insisted that General Gordon in Khartoum is in military danger. He proves this by showing that General Gordon has said in one of his communications—"I will not be taken alive." What General Gordon has done is this. He has never asked at any time for a British soldier. He has never stated that he was prevented from leaving Khartoum, and he has said—"If I cannot suppress the rebellion I will retire to the Equator." He has never represented that he was in any danger from without. The right hon. Gentleman gives up the case of danger from without, and he says that the great danger is the danger from within; and he proves the danger from within by showing that on the 16th of March General Gordon's troops failed in an action against the forces in the neighbourhood of the town. The right hon. Gentleman has entirely failed here, as elsewhere, to observe the consecutive order of events. It is quite true that General Gordon spoke of danger at one time from within the town. He said—

> "There remain 1,400 fellaheen soldiers. Supposing I sent down these fellaheen soldiers in a few days the town would send to the Mahdi its submission."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 150.]

It was also true that on the 16th of March there was a failure in an action, due, it is said, whether truly or not—for we cannot speak positively upon that—to the treachery of two important officers. But while the right hon. Gentleman entirely founds his supposition of danger in Khartoum on what happened on the 16th of March, and thinks that General Gordon could place no reliance in those people, he conceals, or entirely omits to observe, that on the 21st of March General Gordon describes both the people of Khartoum and the troops as having behaved themselves in a most kind and proper way, which he thinks binds him not to leave them. [*Cheers.*] Yes, the hon. Gentleman cheers "not to leave them;" but why did you not cheer the other part of the sentence that the people behaved in a most kind and proper way. The right hon. Gentleman founded his case of danger to General Gordon on the danger from the interior, and he founded his idea of danger from the interior on the action which took place on the 16th of March, whereas I say that on the 21st of March both the people and the troops were, in General Gordon's opinion, entirely trustworthy. I trust I shall not offend the right hon. Gentleman if, pursuing a totally different course from that which he has thought proper to follow, I make General Gordon his own witness, and by something like continuous testimony. My references will be extremely short; but in order that Gentlemen may be placed in no difficulty I will give them as I proceed. At page 171, on the 8th of March—that is a good while ago—General Gordon states that he has provisions for six months. On the 9th of March (page 172) he says—"As for Khartoum itself there is not any fear." In page 183, on the 15th of March, he sends out a steamer with 1,200 men to relieve Halfaya, and that steamer effects its relief. And although it is quite true that in one sense Khartoum is invested, because there are tribes enough around it to prevent strangers from going in, yet operations against these tribes are offensive, and he is in a condition to carry on these offensive operations. On the 17th of March (No. 13, page 7) he writes—"We are all right up here." On the 23rd of March (No. 13, page 8) he writes—"We have plenty of ammunition." On the 13th of March he writes—"The market is well supplied," which is not a very likely condition of a besieged town. On the 7th of April—"The town is all right, and we have plenty of provisions." On the 9th of April, when he speaks of the trumpery nature of the revolt, he says—"Be sure for the present, and for two months hence, we are as safe here as at Cairo." On another day in April, which we cannot quote, but it is about contemporaneous with the date just given, he says—

> "We have provisions for five months, and are hemmed in. . . . Our position will be much strengthened when . . . . Nile rises."—[*Ibid.*, pp. 33-4.]

Since that time we have had no direct communication from General Gordon. But we have just received, and laid on the Table of the House to-day, so that it will be in the hands of Members to-morrow, a telegram from the Governor of Dongola. The last effort we made to communicate with General Gordon was by transmitting a telegram by a considerable variety of routes, and we have no knowledge as yet of its arrival by any of those routes. But we have the knowledge from Dongola that that route has failed. The Governor writes, on the 10th of May, that the messengers whom he sent had come back and reported that they could not get into the town. Then he goes on to say—

> "They report that the rebels have invested Khartoum; that, in consequence, excursions in steamers are made on the White Nile in order to attack those on the banks; that the rebels have constructed wooden sheds to protect themselves against the projectiles; when the Government forces pursue them into those shelters, the rebels take flight into the country beyond gunshot; that this state of things makes it impossible to get into Khartoum."—[Egypt, No. 21 (1884).]

Thus the rebels seem to have for their highest ambition to keep people out of Khartoum, and when they are attacked by General Gordon's steamers they run away into the country. The right hon. Gentleman, perhaps, had not that Paper before him; but I am afraid that if he had it he would have used it as he did all others when they happened to be totally at variance with the strain of the argument which he adopted. That is to say, he would have passed it over. Sir, I will not detain the House much longer; but I will endeavour to describe the position in which the Government stand with respect to their engagements. The fundamental differences between the right hon. Gentleman and ourselves—and I am only sorry that he has not given a more manly and courageous expression to them—[*Cheers, and cries of* "Order!"]—in the Motion he has made. That appears to some hon. Members to be an undue licence of Parliamentary language; but it was not thought undue licence for the right hon. Gentleman to point to me and signify "my indelible disgrace." The fundamental differences are these. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the movement of the Mahdi must be put down by England sooner or later; and, as I understand him—and I do not think he will deny it—he has said that the sooner it was put down the easier would it be to do so. In other words, the right hon. Gentleman advises us to carry the line of conquest by British and Christian arms among the Mahommedan people struggling for their liberty in the Soudan. The next difference between us and the right hon. Gentleman is, when he contends that General Gordon had authority from us to proceed by warlike means, if pacific means should fail. I contend that he has not adduced a rag of evidence to support that allegation, and that it is contradicted by every declaration that we have made in Parliament, and by every passage in the Books we have submitted to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman is also apparently at variance with us upon many other matters; but those differences are fundamental, and establish a gap between us which it may be impossible to bridge. But the right hon. Gentleman has said that we have admitted our obligations to General Gordon. Now, Sir, we have another obligation. We are under a double obligation. We are under an engagement or obligation to the nation, and we are under an obligation to General Gordon. I must say that it appears to me that our duty is to harmonize and reconcile those obligations. We must consider the treasure of the nation, the blood of the nation, and the honour of the nation. [*Cheers from the Opposition.*] Some Gentlemen by their cheers affirm my statement that the honour of the nation is to be considered; but by their silence appear to question my statement that the blood and treasure of the nation must be considered also. We must first weigh carefully before we ever contemplate taking military measures the necessity for taking arms. [An hon. MEMBER: Alexandria.] An hon. Gentleman thrusts in the reproach Alexandria. We are not talking of Alexandria, and such references can have no other effect than to disturb the course of the observations which I am making to the House, and I am afraid to lengthen the time which I shall have to occupy. It is our duty, in opposition to the right hon. Gentleman, to consider every circumstance of climate, season, distance, and military possibility. All these things we must weigh with the utmost care. It may be our duty to plant a British force in that terrible country. It is described as a terrible country by General Gordon. It was known as a terrible country more than 2,000 years ago, when the head of the greatest Empire in the world—the Persian Empire—was quite strong enough to put down what had been the rival Empire of Egypt, but was not strong enough—I refer to the well-known case of Cambyses—to overcome the difficulties which Nature presented in the country which we now call the Soudan. It is our duty to consider all these things, and not to be in a hurry to place an army—

> "Sub curru nimium propinqui
> Solis, in terrâ domibus negatâ,"

without endeavouring to attain to some firm view in our own minds of what is possible to man and what is not. And, Sir, we have this to bear in mind—that if we fail to consider any of these things we should be pretty sharply taken to task; and we should be most sharply taken to task, not by my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and others, who are opposed to military measures in general, but by Gentlemen opposite. We have proof already that that would be so. In February I declared in this House that Her Majesty's Government, after ascertaining that General Gordon had no objection, had determined to send a force to the relief of Tokar, and that declaration was received with loud cheers by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. Time passed on, and when the expedition of General Graham, conducted by him with great ability, produced its lamentable but necessary consequence in considerable bloodshed, the hon. Member for Northampton consistently moved that there was no justification for that bloodshed; and hon. Gentlemen opposite who had urged us on—in the first place, by their questions and demands, and then, when the announcement was made, by their warm and hearty cheers—those same Gentlemen came down to the House, and in a body voted that there was no justification for the bloodshed which was the consequence of the action which they had demanded. So we are forewarned with regard to what we are to expect from so eager an Opposition if we fail to do our duty—a failure which I hope will not occur—in respect to what it is our duty to consider before committing the people of this country. But I have said that we are also under an engagement to General Gordon. The life of General Gordon is, in all circumstances, of necessity a valuable life; but, like many other valuable lives, at times his life is in a different position from that in which it would be were he only acting as an individual on his own responsibility. General Gordon is in a very different position now. He has undertaken a commission from the country, and the country never grudges any salutary and reasonable effort for the purpose of protecting its agents in the execution of its desires. In this instance the obligation to the agent is to be measured by the generosity and the self-sacrifice which that agent shows; and I need not say that I mean by that reference that the value of General Gordon's life is greatly enhanced. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman seems to think that we have been very wrong in asking General Gordon's advice and opinion as to the best mode and circumstances, and form and time, of affording him succour should the necessity arise; and he says that the probability is that General Gordon will never hear of these inquiries. Can the right hon. Gentleman seriously mean that we should have done our duty to the country if we had not made those inquiries, that we were to proceed in the face of General Gordon's declarations with regard to the military safety of Khartoum, in the face of all we hear of his operations against the people armed in his neighbourhood; that we were to engage in some great scheme, casting aside all considerations of climate and all other difficulties, and contemptuously passing by General Gordon himself, and not caring one shred as to what he thinks the best mode of operation? We thought very differently. We thought that General Gordon was by far more qualified than anyone else, from his knowledge of the country, the people, and the climate, to point out the best mode of assisting him. We may not be able to get at him. That I admit; but it was our duty to try. If we fail, we must judge according to the best means in our power, always bearing in mind the two engagements which, as I have said, lie upon us. Sir, I think the right hon. Gentleman is dissatisfied with the telegram of April 23. I must own that I was surprised at that dissatisfaction, for it appears to me that in that telegram we have entered into a solemn covenant with General Gordon, and have assured him that upon any reasonable evidence of danger—and reasonable evidence, I suppose, is what it is our duty to look for—we should endeavour to use the resources of this country for his protection. That covenant was printed in the Papers just submitted to Parliament. We thus make a covenanted Parliament and a covenanted nation. I am not aware how we can go further, unless we go the unreasonable lengths of the right hon. Gentleman, who scoffs at the consideration of season, who mocks at the mention of the month of October, and implies that it is our duty to overleap the barriers which Nature and necessity at certain times in the year may place in our way. If the right hon. Gentleman can show that there is any real lack in those assurances, let it be done; but it is not to be done by inviting us to these vast schemes of conquest, and it is not to be done by taunting us with "indelible disgrace" for not adopting proposals which the right hon. Gentleman himself is afraid to adopt, and does not care to embody in the Motion which he submits to the House. Sir, in these circumstances, with a task of almost unparalleled difficulty in our hands, with that task aggravated by Parliamentary action almost from day to day, with the necessity, which we admit, of forming practical conclusions for the avoidance of greater evils, upon evidence which we often know to be less than could be desired, we shall continue to use our best efforts to maintain the honour of the country, and to fulfil the duty of the country towards the gallant man who has undertaken the arduous task which is in the hands of General Gordon. But we will not consent, under the threats of the right hon. Gentleman, to be responsible for the consequences of a policy which may be his, but which is diametrically opposed to ours; and we appeal from the unjust and captious criticism of hon. Gentlemen opposite to the fair and the equitable judgment of the House, the country, and the world.

MR. GORST said, he felt sure that the remarks of the Prime Minister would deeply disappoint the just expectations of the country. He believed that not only the House of Commons, but the whole of the people of the country, expected that upon this occasion the speech of the right hon. Gentleman would contain some assurance of the intention of Her Majesty's Government to fulfil their duty to General Gordon beyond the vague generalities which the right hon. Gentleman had given to the House before, and which he now thought fit to give again. The Prime Minister had found fault with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), because he had not made sufficient allowances for climatic considerations; but it appeared to him that the Government sheltered themselves under the plea of climatic considerations. They were indisposed to stir in the deliverance of General Gordon; they did not even inform the House that in the month of October they would be able to take any step for the purpose of his deliverance; and the House was thus left in the exact condition in which it had frequently been left before. They had had a vague, general promise that General Gordon would not be abandoned, while the Government refused to take any practical step whatever to give effect to that declaration. Events, however, might happen in Egypt which might hasten the decision which they hesitated to take. There was one person in Egypt who would not wait for climatic considerations, and that was the Mahdi. The insurrection of the Mahdi was spreading with extraordinary rapidity down the Valley of the Nile; and the Government might, before they had made up their minds, find it necessary to undertake military operations, not for the purpose of rescuing General Gordon, but for the purpose of defending the integrity of Egypt. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire had laid great stress on that danger; but he had been met by the taunt that he was urging the House of Commons and the country to undertake the suppression of the Mahdi. While there was much in the speech of the Prime Minister to which the House had listened with pain and regret, there was one expression which they must all have heard with pleasure and satisfaction. It was the right hon. Gentleman's announcement of his return to his old sympathies with people struggling to be free. One could not help thinking, when the right hon. Gentleman gave expression to that sympathy, what a pity it was that Her Majesty's Government had not thought of that two years ago, when they entered upon the unfortunate obligation of giving an earnest support to the Government of the Khedive—[Mr. GLADSTONE: The late Government.]—and what a pity it was that the right hon. Gentleman incurred the great responsibility of suppressing the movement of Arabi and of the people of Egypt, who were two years ago struggling to be free. The right hon. Gentleman had just met him with an assertion that this was an undertaking entered into by the late Government. But whatever pledge the late Government made earnestly to support the authority of the Khedive was assumed and renewed by the present Government without any objection or protest; and the present Government took upon itself with a light heart the duty of the Suzerain of Egypt, thereby making itself responsible for the acts of the Khedive and the welfare of the people of Egypt. It was, no doubt, true that the incident of the Soudan was a mere episode in the history of the mismanagement of affairs by the present Government in Egypt; it was a conspicuous example of the failure of a course of policy which had been marked by misfortune in its beginning, and would probably be marked by misfortune to its end. The Government had, in fact, undertaken a task in Egypt which it was impossible to fulfil. The late Government was a thing of the past, and was now left to the judgment of history alone; but the present Government was before the bar of public opinion, and was liable to the censure of the House of Commons, and of the country; and its errors were aggravated by the fact that the policy it had pursued, and was still pursuing, in Egypt was a violation of its principles and its most cherished convictions. It had dragged, and was still dragging, its supporters through a series of political humiliations until even their patience was almost exhausted. Up to the time of the disaster which befel the army of General Hicks, how confident the Government were that the Soudan, at least, was outside the sphere of their operations in Egypt! How confident they were that there was no risk of any British blood being spilled in the Soudan, and no risk of any treasure being squandered there! Even after the disaster to General Hicks, the Government believed that their intervention would be strictly confined to two objects—namely, the rescue of the Egyptian garrisons and the removal of the Egyptian Government. We had seen so far the results of their attempt. The incident was not closed yet; but we had, at least, four months' experience of the policy which had been pursued. The Government had not yet rescued one single garrison. It had not yet withdrawn the Egyptian Government from one single Province of the Soudan; except in those cases where the followers of the Mahdi had saved it the trouble of withdrawing by massacre. It had already made one military expedition attended with the most frightful loss of life, and without the slightest practical result; and the concluding remarks of the Prime Minister indicated the possibility, or even probability, in the course of the present year of some further military expedition having to be undertaken, probably with equal loss of life. When the Government sent General Gordon upon his mission there were, no doubt, two methods by which their policy of rescuing the garrisons and retiring the Egyptian Government might have been carried out. One was a perfectly pacific method; the method which General Gordon was peculiarly commissioned to undertake. The second possible method by which the object of the Government might have been attained was by the employment of military force. But there was this peculiarity — that both those methods could not be carried out with any hope of success. But, unhappily, Her Majesty's Government, with the peculiar misfortune which appeared to attend all their efforts in Egyptian affairs, determined to try both methods, and both at the same time. Although warned, not only by its own knowledge of the circumstances of the case, but by the direct warning of General Gordon that the employment of the second method would render a peaceable termination impossible, the Government actually sent their expedition to Suakin before General Gordon had arrived at Khartoum. They sent the expedition, although the garrison of Sinkat had fallen, and when the case of the garrison of Tokar was hopeless. The revolt which was taking place in the neighbourhood of Sinkat and Tokar had been excited by the perfidy of the Egyptian Government. Where was the Prime Minister's zeal for people who were struggling to be free when he sent that expedition to Tokar? The first act of General Gordon, when he arrived at Khartoum on February 18, was to advise, by telegraph, that a Proclamation should be issued at Suakin desiring the Chiefs of the tribes then in arms and in insurrection to repair to Khartoum for the purpose of meeting him, and to learn from him what the destiny of the Soudan was to be. When this telegram of General Gordon was communicated to Admiral Hewett, who was in command at Suakin, he refused to issue any such Proclamation, for the reason that he could not ask the Chiefs to leave their people and meet General Gordon at Khartoum when he knew that English troops were about to be sent against the people in question. The object of General Gordon's mission was frustrated by the warlike operations of the Government. On February 23, General Gordon again expostulated with the Government on their military operations at Suakin. It was then known that the garrison of Tokar had fallen; and General Gordon said—

> "I think if Tokar has fallen Her Majesty's Government had better be quiet, as I see no advantage to be now gained by action on their part; let events work themselves out. Fall of Tokar will not affect in the least state of affairs here."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 97.]

Three days later he again telegraphed "to leave Suakin and Massowah alone." One would have thought that when Sinkat and Tokar had fallen, and when the Government had been assured by their responsible officer that nothing was to be gained by military operations, this peace-loving and philanthropic Government would have stayed their hands. But no; because General Stephenson telegraphed that the rebels were "in force on Baker Pasha's late battle-field eager to fight and confident of victory," and strongly recommended that Graham should be ordered to advance towards Tokar, the Government—although there was no object whatever to be gained by fighting a battle, and although the officers in whom it had placed its confidence for the pacification of the Soudan advised it to stay its hand—directed the General to march out to fight two bloody battles at Teb and Tamanieb, slaughtering 4,000 or 5,000 of the men fighting to be free, for whom the Prime Minister had just expressed such strong, but rather tardy sympathy. When all these people had been slaughtered, and the lives of many of their own brave troops had been sacrificed, the Government discovered that there was a military impossibility in advancing to Berber, and though General Gordon then advised such an advance, the Government declined to make it. The whole incident of the Suakin expedition was over; and the results of that part, at least, of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt could be most accurately estimated. What were they? First, they did not relieve Tokar; secondly, they did not open the road to Berber; thirdly, they had not prevented an attack on Suakin by Osman Digna, because Osman Digna had now assembled his people, and Suakin was preparing a defence against his attack. All that the Government had done by that expedition was—first to kill 4,000 or 5,000 Arabs; and, secondly, to render the peaceful mission of General Gordon impossible. There was an incident connected with the expedition to Suakin to which he would like to call the attention of the House. On the 25th of March a discussion was raised in the House by his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) on the occasion of the third reading of the Appropriation Bill. In that discussion the noble Lord pointed out to the House and to the Government the danger which the military operations at Suakin imposed upon General Gordon at Khartoum; and he asked the Government what were the precise objects in view. The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in reply, said the object of the operations at Suakin was to open up the road to Berber. It was a very remarkable declaration on his part, and it created great interest in the country. The Government succeeded for the moment in inducing the House and the public to believe that the opening of the road to Berber, which General Gordon at that time was urging, and which he and many others believed to be essential to his safety, was, in reality, the object for which so many lives had been sacrificed. This, he thought, showed in a remarkable degree the perfidy with which the Government had treated the House of Commons throughout all these transactions. At the very time when the noble Lord was giving these reassuring statements to the House of Commons, the Government were concocting the telegram of March 25, which he supposed was sent out about the time the noble Lord was speaking, refusing finally, positively, and absolutely to allow any force to advance upon the road to Berber, or to take any active steps for the opening of that road. The Prime Minister had spent a great deal of time in criticizing the particular language of the Motion which had been proposed; but he hoped the country and the House would look to the way in which the right hon. Gentleman had met the terms of the Resolution. How had he met the substantial accusation which the right hon. Baronet brought against the Government? He met it by a substantial admission of the justice of the accusation made against the Government. The substantial accusations brought against the Government were these—when they sent General Gordon to Khartoum upon a difficult and dangerous mission, when they gave him *carte blanche* to do anything that he could to rescue the Egyptian garrisons and withdraw the Egyptian Government, they refused every single proposal which General Gordon afterwards made to them. The object which led General Gordon to that view was the establishment of some stable Government for the purpose of securing the withdrawal of the garrisons and of the Egyptian officials. It was quite clear that it was impossible to scuttle out of the country without making an arrangement at least for a stable Government, which would last over the time occupied in the withdrawal. The Government appeared to have fallen into the notion that they could withdraw from the Soudan, yet that everything in the Soudan would be carried on in a way to meet with their approval. They wanted—what was impossible—to repress slavery in the Soudan, and at the same time to clear out of the country, and to escape all responsibility for what went on in it. If a policy of non-intervention was to be adopted, the Government ought to make up their minds not to be disappointed if affairs were carried on in a manner of which they did not approve. The sending of Zebehr Pasha appeared to have been the keystone of General Gordon's policy at Khartoum. No doubt when he first reached Khartoum the gallant General might have exaggerated his personal influence, and he might have considered that his presence alone would be sufficient to secure a stable Government and to restore order in the country. If so, he was very soon undeceived, for only a few days after his arrival at Khartoum he found it necessary that he should be supported by some Mussulman of ability whom he could make Governor of the Soudan, and who would be able to secure the temporary pacification of the country. Time after time, with the most obstinate pertinacity, General Gordon urged upon Her Majesty's Government that if they wished him to carry out the mission on which he had been sent, he must be allowed to summon Zebehr to his assistance. The Prime Minister said that the application for Zebehr's services was received with unfavourable criticism, both in the House of Commons and in the country. This was true; but the House and the country were not in possession of the information which Her Majesty's Government had as to the persistence with which Zebehr was sought for by General Gordon. The latter was not contented with one refusal, but continued to press that Zebehr should be sent. In circumstances of this kind the Government ought to have done what they thought right. They were advised by their officer of the necessity of taking a particular step, which would, no doubt, be unpopular in the country until it was explained, and the advice was endorsed by Colonel Stewart, by Sir Evelyn Baring, and others. Under these circumstances, one would have thought that the Government of Great Britain, supported in the House of Commons by an overwhelming majority, ought to have taken the responsibility of doing that which it thought right to be done. He confessed he had heard with shame from the Prime Minister the new theory of Ministerial responsibility as stated in the despatch which said that the public opinion of this country would not tolerate the appointment of Zebehr Pasha. For a Foreign Minister to tell his Agent abroad that he could not take a certain step which both thought to be right because the public opinion of the country would not tolerate a certain appointment was a shameful confession of the mode in which our Government was administered. But that statement was out-Heroded by the declaration which had been made by the Prime Minister at the Table of that House. The Prime Minister said, in so many words, that he thought General Gordon was right, and that he should have yielded to his importunity if he had not believed that had he done so a Motion might have been made in the House of Commons which would have placed the Government into a minority. It was, therefore, to be accepted henceforward that in dealing with matters of such unexampled difficulty as the affairs of the Soudan, Her Majesty's Government were not to be animated by the sense of what was right and by their duty to the Queen and country, but were to pursue that particular line of conduct which would secure for them a majority in that House and the retention of their Party in Office. But had the Government acceded to any other of General Gordon's demands? He had asked over and over again for troops to be sent to Wady Halfa—not to take part in military operations, but to give him the benefit of their moral support. The application was ignored for weeks and weeks; and, when the position of General Gordon had become almost desperate, was at last refused upon the advice of the military authorities. But if the Government acted upon military advice in this case, did they do the same when they refused to allow an advance from Suakin to Berber? The Prime Minister had said so in his speech; but he had been able to find no such advice in the Papers presented to the House, and he should be glad to hear where it was to be found. General Graham and the military officers at Suakin were so far from the opinion that an advance from Berber was impossible, that they were most anxious to make such an advance, and it was a remarkable thing that they actually did advance 12 miles along the road. It was also remarkable that Sir Evelyn Baring, who was in daily communication with General Stephenson, should have sent a despatch most strongly urging on the Government the recommendation to advance on Berber. The Prime Minister might induce persons who had not read the Papers to believe that the desperate condition of General Gordon was a matter of quite recent occurrence. On the 5th of April the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) moved the adjournment of the House, for the purpose of calling attention to the condition of General Gordon, and was taken to task by the Prime Minister for presuming to state that General Gordon's mission had then failed, and he gave the House to understand that the Government entertained no such opinion. We know now, however, that as early as the 13th of March Her Majesty's Government had in their possession the remarkable telegram from General Gordon of the 9th of March, a telegram in which he practically declared that he had entirely failed in his peaceful mission, and stated the imminent personal peril in which he and his friends were placed. General Gordon said—

> "You know exactly the position of the different garrisons as far as I can explain it, and that there is no probability of the people rallying round me, or of paying any attention to my Proclamation. If you mean to make the proposed diversion to Berber (of British troops), and to accept my proposal as to Zebehr, to instal him in the Soudan and evacuate, then it is worth while to hold on to Khartoum. If, on the other hand, you determine on neither of these steps, then I can see no use in holding on to Khartoum, for it is impossible for me to help the other garrisons, and I shall only be sacrificing the whole of the troops and *employés* here. In this latter case, your instructions to me had better be that I should evacuate Khartoum, and, with all the *employés* and troops, remove the seat of Government to Berber . . . . You must give a prompt reply to this, as even the retreat to Berber may not be in my power in a few days; and even if carried out at once, the retreat will be of extreme difficulty."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 161.]

Yet the Prime Minister said that Gordon was in no peril. The answer returned to this desperate telegram was as follows:—

> "Her Majesty's Government are unable to accept these proposals. If General Gordon is of opinion that the prospect of his early departure diminishes the chance of accomplishing his task, and that by staying at Khartoum himself for any length of time which he may judge necessary he would be able to establish a settled Government at that place, he is at liberty to remain there."—[*Ibid.*, p. 162.]

What a satire to send such a reply, after Gordon's statement that there was no chance of accomplishing his task unless the Government did the things which they refused to do. From the 13th of March the events which General Gordon foresaw had followed with remarkable rapidity. The Prime Minister said that, although Khartoum was surrounded and no messenger could get into it, it was not in danger. That certainly was not the opinion of General Gordon himself, nor was it the opinion of any person of ordinary common sense; and if the country had an opportunity of expressing its feelings the Prime Minister would find that it was not the opinion of the people. The Government had sent General Gordon on a dangerous and difficult mission. They had refused every proposal he had made. They had given him no assistance of any kind whatever, and they had heard from him that he, together with the garrison and civil *employés*, was in a position of extreme difficulty and danger. The invasion of the Mahdi was spreading with marvellous rapidity into Upper Egypt. Under these circumstances, what did the Prime Minister do? He took his stand on the telegram of April 23rd. That telegram expressed the Government policy, and everything beyond it was vague and general assertion. It had been sent to Khartoum by every possible route and every possible description of messenger. The messengers who went to Dongola had come back; but messengers were going from Suakin, Massowah, and every other quarter; and until that precious telegram had been communicated to General Gordon no further step was to be taken. If by any chance that telegram of the 23rd of April should reach General Gordon at Khartoum, it must grieve the brave Christian hero whom the Prime Minister so much admired. It seemed to add insult to injury. He was asked to keep the Government informed, not only as to any immediate, but any prospective, danger at Khartoum, as if he could send out telegrams, like the Foreign Office, every half-hour or so; and he was to advise Her Majesty's Government as to the force necessary for his security, its amount, its character, the route for access to Khartoum, and the time of operation. In other words, the Government asked General Gordon, cut off at Khartoum from communication with the rest of the world, to advise them what policy they were to pursue. They asked him to perform the duty which ought to be performed in Downing Street — to come to the determination which ought to be come to by the Prime Minister, after consultation with the military authorities; and they asked him to do this, abandoned as he had been most shamefully and disgracefully by the Government. A great part of the Prime Minister's speech was filled up with taunts that the right hon. Baronet who proposed that Motion did so only with the view of obtaining Office for himself and his Friends. He did not know that there was any particular danger of such result attending that discussion; but he believed that if the Prime Minister was present he would acquit him of ever having made a speech in the House on affairs of that kind from a Party point of view. He had been anxious to express on this matter opinions which were shared by many independent Members on both sides of the House. On the Ministerial side they were muzzled, and could not give expression to the feelings and sentiments which were in the hearts and the mouths of the people of this country. Those who sat on his side of the House were happily free to speak; and if the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues deluded themselves into the belief that that Motion was the mere expression of the opinion of a political faction they were miserably mistaken. The neglect of the Government to support General Gordon, the danger that he was at present incurring, and the feeling that he had been abandoned by the Government which he had so well served, had made a deep impression on the vast majority of the people of this country; and although the Government might escape a defeat by the use of their loyal and patient majority, they must not believe but that the accusation made against them by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), unless it could be answered by arguments and statements better than those furnished by the Prime Minister, would be endorsed by the opinion of the country.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, who had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

> "That this House, approving of the instructions to General Gordon to remain in the Soudan only so long as he sees a prospect of relieving the garrisons and establishing a settled Government by peaceful means, considers that the time has come when he may be relieved of responsibility by orders to leave whenever he sees any possibility of doing so,"

said, he was sorry to hear the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), because he was not usually much of a Party man; and yet his speech that evening was nothing more than a Party attack on the Government. He (Sir George Campbell) felt that he ought not to shrink from speaking a few words in the sense of the Resolution he had put on the Paper, though under the circumstances, and after the speech of the Prime Minister, he did not propose to move it. His position was like that of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and a very few others who sat in the same quarter of the House—a consistent one. They had opposed these proceedings from the first, and their only anxiety was to get out of the place as soon as they could, and with as little loss as possible to the material welfare and honour of the country. Regarding the matter in that sense, he should not vote for the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). The Prime Minister had clearly shown that there was nothing in the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and little more in his speech, than a violent attack on the Government. In fact, it was all through an attempt to make out a case of "Gordon *v.* Gladstone." There was only one tolerable card the right hon. Gentleman played, and it was so good that he played it over and over again, and that was that he had voted with the Radicals on that Saturday when the Government was placed in rather an awkward position. He (Sir George Campbell) strongly entertained the opinion that they were not bound to rescue the Egyptian garrisons shut up in the Soudan. He went further, and said that in the interest of humanity it was not desirable to make an attempt to do so. To do so would only be to endanger the garrisons and to cause a much greater loss of life than if they were left to make their own terms with their co-religionists, which experience had shown they were well able to do. The garrison of Sinkat was encouraged by the Jingo cry to hold out and were killed; the garrison of Tokar were more prudent and escaped injury, as he hoped would be the case with other garrisons. True, they were deeply engaged to save if they could the lives of General Gordon and his English companions; but in this matter General Gordon was somewhat of a volunteer. ["No, no!"] Well, he was interviewed by *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and let it be known that he thought certain things ought to be done; the Government asked his advice; his advice was that he should be sent; he had done his best, and that was a failure. The case of Colonel Stewart was different; he was in no sense a volunteer; and the Government were bound to rescue him at any reasonable cost. But it was satisfactory to hear the Prime Minister boldly say there was a limit when it came to the prospect of sacrificing thousands of lives. Even the Mover of the Motion did not deny the impossibility of sending an expedition to Khartoum at present, and he made but a childish attempt to prove that the Government had not done the best they could do in the circumstances. As to the refusal to allow General Gordon to go to the Mahdi, it was simply that the Government could not assent to his going into a trap in which he might be caught, when we should have had to rescue him. It was to be hoped that General Gordon would, after all, go to the Equator. While, on the whole, the balance of argument was in favour of sending out Zebehr on the demand of General Gordon, and it was the duty of Ministers to do what was right regardless of public opinion, the Government were probably right in believing that it was impossible to resist the cry against that course, supported as it would have been by the whole strength of the Party opposite. [Sir JOHN HAY: No!] Well, the right hon. and gallant Baronet was one of the independent Members on that side of the House. If that course had been followed, the great majority of Members opposite, and a great many on the Ministerial Benches, would have raised an outcry against it. With respect to the other measure which had been suggested—that of sending troops—he emphatically expressed his opinion that there was a bargain with General Gordon that his mission should be a pacific one. He was not aware that the Government had ever said that General Gordon had a free hand. He was sent for certain purposes only; and, knowing the bold and enterprizing character of the man, the Government had done well in putting down in writing that he was to do his best to rescue the garrisons by pacific means and not by force of arms. The Government were perfectly right in not sending an expedition in the present conditions of climate and other circumstances, and they were also right in resisting any suggestion of sending out troops at any time during recent events. It would have been madness to send Cavalry to Berber; knowing the way in which the Arabs fought, it would have been the height of madness to attempt such an expedition. It was now Gordon's duty to make his escape from Khartoum, and it would be the truest courage on his part to do so. It was with that view that he had put down the Motion which stood in his name. After the events which had happened, the Government were not bound to rescue the garrison by sending troops; nor was Gordon bound to stick to the garrison. The garrison had not shown unwavering loyalty to Gordon. Nor were the loyal civilians in danger, for there were some 2,000 refugees already at Korosko. There was no evidence to show that Gordon could not leave Khartoum. His latest telegrams pointed to the opposite conclusion. If the worst came to the worst, he might possibly still retreat to the Equator. It would be most unwise to induce Gordon to postpone leaving Khartoum by holding out any prospect of an expedition, and such an expedition would entail a fearful loss of life and a heavy burden on the taxpayers. It was Gordon's duty to escape if he could, although, if he could not, we might be placed in a serious dilemma. So far as mere money was concerned, he would vote almost any sum to save the necessity of sending troops to Khartoum. He would be prepared to offer a reward of £1,000,000 to anybody who would get hold of General Gordon and lodge him safely and securely where there would be no need of sending an expedition to his aid. In these circumstances, therefore, he should vote against the Motion, and in favour of the direct negative which had been presented by the Government.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) with no small amount of amusement. The idea in the mind of the hon. Gentleman was not to save Gordon, but to save the Government; he endeavoured to put Gordon on the one side of the scale and Her Majesty's Government on the other. Those who read the speech of the hon. Member would come to the conclusion that if that speech represented the views of the House, a great change had come over the character of that Assembly. In former days it would never have been proposed to place gold on one side of the balance, and the honour of the country on the other. He regretted to say that the hon. Gentleman's views were also expressed in very vehement terms by the Prime Minister himself. Before considering some of the utterances of the Prime Minister, he could not allow the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy's statement as to the impossibility of relieving General Gordon to pass unchallenged. Not long ago, in "another place," Lord Napier of Magdala, who had saved the honour of this country in circumstances similar to those in which it was now sacrificed, gave his opinion, as a distinguished General and a man of practical experience, that it was quite possible to send an expedition for the relief of General Gordon. His Lordship was then met by the same sort of argument to which the House had just now been treated, for Lord Kimberley answered that in taking into consideration the views of the noble and gallant Lord he must not forget that the Estimate of the Abyssinian Expedition had been understated by about £2,000,000. [SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member, by his cheer, proved that he (Baron Henry De Worms) was correct in saying that he placed the honour of the country on the one side and the gold of the country on the other. He would now endeavour to unravel the twisted skein of eloquence and sophistry with which the Prime Minister had woven a net in order to embarrass the intelligence of those who sat on the Opposition side of the House, and to entrap the political consciences of those who sat on the other side. The right hon. Gentleman appealed with considerable emphasis to Members from Ireland with the phrase that he hoped we should do nothing against oppressed nationalities. In point of fact, nobody on that side of the House had suggested that they should do anything against oppressed nationalities. If that was the argument of the Government, and if the Mahdi was the representative of the national feeling of the Soudan and the future Ruler and guide of the national feeling of Egypt, how could they justify their conduct in sending an expedition against the Mahdi's lieutenant at Suakin to massacre, not in a battle, but rather in a battue, 7,000 or 8,000 Arabs? A more illogical or absurd statement had never been advanced. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say it was absurd and Quixotic for the Mover of this Vote of Censure to urge upon the Government the relief of all the garrisons in the Soudan. In answer to that he would remark that the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) never made any such suggestion. In point of fact, that suggestion originally came from the Prime Minister himself, when he deprecated the idea of endangering the lives of 29,000 men in the various garrisons of the Soudan for the relief of the small garrison at Sinkat. The statement in the right hon. Gentleman's speech that most surprised him was the concluding one. They had expected to hear that, even at the last moment, the Government were prepared to do something to vindicate the honour of the country. The right hon. Gentleman emphatically denied that the honour of the country was being compromised by his policy; but the concluding statement in his speech proved that the charge was literally true. The House had waited with breathless expectation to hear that the Government were prepared to do something towards the relief of General Gordon, towards preserving the safety of that man, whose responsibility the right hon. Gentleman had adopted, whose success he would have taken, and whose defeat he was now to share or prevent. But all the right hon. Gentleman told them was, that when time and circumstances and weather should be sufficiently propitious, Her Majesty's Government might, perhaps, conceive some plan which might ultimately lead to the relief of General Gordon. He did not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their blind belief in the Prime Minister's infallibility, would be content to allow their political consciences to be placed in the right hon. Gentleman's keeping, and to sacrifice the honour of England to the exigencies of a Party vote. He was unable to share the view that a Government could, like individuals, be freed from responsibility by expressing contrition. The mere fact of their being induced by the shadow of a Vote of Censure to take some action could not acquit them of the responsibility of past disasters. But for the Vote of Censure, which was moved some months ago, the relief of Tokar would not have been attempted. It was unconstitutional for the Government to continue, simply by means of their mechanical majority, a policy which was not that of the country, and which had not an echo in any part of the country. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman, by appealing to the constituencies, to test the opinion of the country on the subject. The voice of the country would be found against them. This was, perhaps, the first instance in our history where a man who had been employed in the service of the country, and who would have been received with open arms if he had been successful, was to be allowed to perish because he had not been successful. He was astonished and ashamed to hear the Prime Minister endeavour to repudiate responsibility for the actions of General Gordon. The Prime Minister had said that the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire had only picked out of the despatches which had been laid upon the Table of the House just as much as would serve his purpose; but the Prime Minister had been unable to pick out of those voluminous despatches a single sentence that would serve the purposes of the Government. The composition of the Blue Books on this question was most remarkable; they were made up principally of what was known as "padding," which consisted of despatches to the Khedive which had no bearing whatever upon the case, and if the despatches had any bearing on it the answers to them were either wanting, or they were confidential and could not be produced. He denied the allegations of the Prime Minister, behind which he shirked all responsibility for the troubles in Egypt, that those difficulties were the outcome of a covenant made by his Predecessors in Office. No such covenant was ever made, and no pretence for such a statement could be alleged, unless it were an arrangement which had reference solely to Egyptian finance. The Blue Books, and the answers given in the House to Questions relative to Egypt, reminded him of the saying of a witty diplomatist —"*La diplomatie est l'art de mentir impunément.*" It was far from his intention to infer that this definition was applicable to the diplomacy of Her Majesty's Ministers; but he could not help thinking that the course which they had pursued in this matter might lead to such an inference being drawn. A few days ago the Prime Minister had denied indignantly that General Gordon was in any danger; but how did the right hon. Gentleman reconcile his assertion that the General was safe with the fact that the latter had stated that he must leave Khartoum by the Equator and the Congo? Such a journey would take General Gordon 1,100 miles out of the ordinary route. Why, he might as well be asked to escape by a balloon. This showed the difference between the meaning attached to the word "safe" by the Prime Minister as compared with that attached to it by General Gordon himself. The Prime Minister had said that if they were convinced that General Gordon was in danger the Government would probably consult together to see whether anything could be done to relieve him. The policy which Her Majesty's Government were pursuing was a vacillating, cowardly, and imbecile one. The Prime Minister had said that General Gordon had never asked for troops; but the despatch of Sir Evelyn Baring on the 11th of April showed that General Gordon asked for Turkish troops. Lord Rosebery the other day, at Hanley, in referring to General Gordon, had said, with amiable cynicism, that he had carried with him on his Christian mission the good wishes and the prayers of the nation, but that since he had left very little had been heard of him. This was all that an ex-Minister could find to say of a man who had saved the Government. It was absurd for anyone who understood the Oriental character to suppose that General Gordon could possibly make terms with the Mahdi, who deemed himself to be invested with sacred authority to perform a certain mission, and could not, therefore, in any circumstances, make terms with mere mortals. The advance of the Mahdi meant that, little by little, the power they were now supporting in Egypt—the power of the Khedive—was being supplanted by another man, who could command the masses. The advance of the Mahdi would extend down the Nile till it would arrive at the doors of Cairo and Alexandria. That wave of fanaticism would take the place of the bastard civilization which they were now holding up, and they would have a repetition on a larger and more important scale of those massacres at Alexandria which shocked the world. They were holding out a hand to the progress of barbarism over civilization, and they were encouraging the progress of Mahomedanism over Christianity, and they sooner or later would reap the benefit of that in their Indian Empire. The opinion which he held in regard to the safety of Gordon was—and he was authorized to state this—shared by Sir Samuel Baker, who, writing recently, had expressed the opinion that in the event of Khartoum falling the rebels would shoot General Gordon in revenge for the execution of the two Pashas by the General's orders. He warned the Government that if they allowed General Gordon—their emissary and envoy—to be murdered like a rat in a cage, the whole of the United Kingdom would justly hold them responsible for the transaction.

MR. LAING said, that after nearly half-a-century of Parliamentary life he had never found himself in a more difficult position; and having acted for so many years with one political Party, it was inexpressibly painful for him to have to separate himself from them upon the present occasion. But he could not, holding the opinions that he did, conscientiously share, even by a silent vote, in the responsibility for a policy which, in his judgment, had brought so much disaster and disgrace on the English name. Having spent many years in India, his acquaintance with Oriental policy and Eastern people enabled him to realize more vividly than most hon. Members could the magnitude of that disaster, and the difficulty in which they were now placed. He endorsed every word of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down as to the extreme gravity of the position, arising from the ascendancy which had been given to the Mahdi, and the outburst of fanaticism with which they would have to contend. There was universal expectation, not only throughout this country, but throughout the whole Continent of Europe, that an improved condition of things was about to follow the occupation of Egypt by the English. No one doubted that the English arms would give perfect security; that order and peace would follow the establishment of the English authority; and that the finances of Egypt would improve, and capital and credit would go into the country. Those expectations were very well justified at the time, because the same thing did happen in India; but the misfortunes which had overtaken us and the crowning disaster and ignominy of General Gordon's abandonment had arisen from the absolute determination of the Government not to look facts in the face, but to substitute phrases for realities. The whole of these evils might be traced back to allowing the hazardous and desperate expedition of General Hicks Pasha to go into the heart of Africa. Why was that done? Because the Government chose to think that by a mere verbal disclaimer they could get rid of the inevitable consequences of that expedition. But surely it did not require much statesmanship to see that, disclaim as the Government might, a disaster could not befall that expedition without being disastrous to English *prestige*. The Government had chosen to indulge in a flattering vision of making Egypt a sort of Oriental Belgium, a Constitutional country, with a pretty little Parliament, which they could support with a regiment or two of troops for a short time, and then withdraw and wash their hands of it. If the present Government had been in power at the time of the war in the Punjaub they would have constituted a pretty little Parliament of Sikh Notables, left a regiment or two there, and then withdrawn behind the Indus. He asked anyone present whether that would not have been the course the present Government would have adopted, and where would have been their great Indian Empire now? The resolute action we took in restoring peace and order to the Punjaub gave prosperity to the people, and so attached them to our rule that when the Mutiny occurred they fought on our side. It had been argued repeatedly that they could not enter the Soudan without undertaking a great expedition of reconquest and permanently annexing the country. That was not so in Afghanistan. After restoring their *prestige* in that country by the victorious march of Sir Frederick Roberts, as a matter of policy they had evacuated that territory. Granted that the policy of evacuating the Soudan was right, it was known that there were garrisons there of the Egyptian Government which they protected. They could not leave those garrisons there to be massacred one after the other without sustaining a great blow to their *prestige*, and in the East *prestige* was the only substitute they had got for bloodshed. If they did not maintain an opinion of their superiority, sooner or later they would have to fight for it, and that was especially the case when they were dealing with a Mahommedan people. They were the easiest of all people to govern as long as they felt that we were the stronger; but the moment they imagined that they were the stronger, then, prompted by all their religious feeling, if they had a chance they would fly at our throat like so many tigers, and we should have to shed oceans of blood to restore our *prestige.* After the victory of Tel-el-Kebir a dozen English sportsmen might have traversed the Desert without molestation; but time was allowed to elapse, the garrison of Sinkat was allowed to fall, and the difficulties of communication immensely increased. When the Vote of Censure was brought forward at the beginning of the Session, he considered very anxiously with himself how his duty would be to vote; and he made up his mind that it was one of those cases in which he ought to vote that black was white in order to help the Government in power. [*Laughter.*] He said so deliberately. He was not ashamed of it, and for this reason—he could not see that the Opposition had any decided policy, or any means of carrying it into effect if they had one. For a time it looked as if the Government were opening their eyes. During the short period that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) represented the Government in that House, they had speeches which, to his mind, had a great deal of resolution in them, and wonderfully different from anything else they had heard. For instance, they were told that an expedition to Suakin was justified because it was on the road to India, and that the Government were determined that no one should get possession of those stages on the road to India. That was a straightforward and intelligible argument, and it was the only one there was for their presence in Egypt at all; because if they went on the principle of the Prime Minister that they should not interfere with nationalities, why were they in Egypt now? Why did they go there? Was there any reasonable doubt that Arabi did fairly, on the whole, represent the feeling of Egyptian nationality at the time? Was there any doubt that now, if they could put it to the unbiassed *plébiscite* of the Egyptian people they would vote us out of the country, and perhaps vote him back again? The true greatness and happiness of a nation, as of an individual, consisted in noble effort, not in ignoble ease. If the Prime Minister had lived in Chatham's times he could imagine his denunciations of the victories which helped to build up the Empire; and in the interest of the independence of nationalities what denunciations they would have had of Clive's victories, and of the other successes which made their Indian Empire. The whole series of proceedings latterly in Egypt had been of a nature to injure and lower the self-respect of the English nation. What could lower the respect of the nation more than allowing the gallant little garrison of Sinkat, within sight of the English Fleet, and almost within reach of the English guns, to be massacred, when by a single word Her Majesty's Government might have saved it? If they had sent General Graham to Suakin six weeks sooner they would have saved the garrison, and probably had no fight at all, in consequence of which there would have been no danger of Khartoum being surrounded, and the torrents of blood that he was afraid would now have to be shed would have been avoided. What was their position now? Suppose they waited until October, and General Gordon was then cut off, or by a miracle had saved himself across the Equator, they would be surrounded as by a fire, and they would have to maintain in Egypt a far larger force than they ever contemplated. Considering that the Conference was to meet, he would not say anything about Egyptian finance; but he would say that if Her Majesty's Government adopted the same policy of shutting their eyes to disagreeable facts, and taking half-hearted measures, they would find themselvesl anded in as great a difficulty financially as they had been socially. As long as there had been a chance of events teaching the Government, and of their adopting a more resolute policy, he, for one, had been willing to condone the past and vote for them; but he must say that it would be giving way to illusions as gross as those which had misled the Government if he were to do so any longer, in view of the speech which they had heard from the Prime Minister. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had fallen back upon a policy which only differed from the old policy in being "Retire without Rescue," instead of "Rescue and Retire." [*Opposition cheers.*] The position in which he found himself was a painful one. He did not wish to stand there and get cheered from the Benches opposite. He was simply speaking out his own mind and conviction. He had nothing to gain by it. If he were a younger man, he might say he had everything to lose. But he was now approaching the period of life when he might look forward to retiring from political life; and if it were his latest breath he would say that, believing, as he did, that the policy that had been inaugurated in Egypt was writing the first chapter of the History of the Decline and Fall of the British Empire, he, for one, whatever might be the consequences, would not be a party to it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must, for one, offer the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down my most sincere congratulations, not only on my own account, for the very great pleasure I have derived from the very able speech he has just delivered, but I must congratulate him also upon having given up his former policy which he himself describes as voting that black is white—a policy which he has at last discovered to be profitable neither to his country nor his Party. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be followed into the Lobby upon this question by all the Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House who share his views; and if that should prove to be the case I have little fear of the results of the Division. I shall compress my remarks into a much more narrow compass than the hon. Gentleman; for I propose to confine myself not only strictly to the question of General Gordon, but also strictly to the speech of the Prime Minister. The House, I think, is justified in estimating the strength of the case of the Government by the speech which the Prime Minister has this evening delivered. But if this be so, then surely the Liberal Party has never been in greater difficulties than it is at this moment; as may be proved, if further proof is required, by the fact that so large a part of the speech of the Prime Minister was devoted not to the defence of his own acts, but to an attack upon the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman attacked, among other things, our motives. He said the motives of the Opposition in taking the course we are taking are not dictated by a desire to preserve the honour of England, but by a desire to turn out the Gentlemen who sit on the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman did not confine himself merely to an attack upon our motives in the present debate; but he went back upon our motives in the past. He accused us, among other things, of inconsistency in the manner in which we had dealt with the expedition professedly designed for the relief of Sinkat and Tokar. The right hon. Gentleman said we cheered the expedition when it was proposed to be sent out; but that, after the battle of El Teb, we cheered a Motion accusing the Government of causing the useless effusion of blood. But there is here no inconsistency. What we approved was a military expedition to relieve the garrisons; what we condemned was an expedition which produced a terrible effusion of blood, and which had not, and could not have, the result of relieving any thing or anybody. Then the Prime Minister has attacked us in this House for the manner in which we have bombarded the Government with Questions. [An hon. Member: Raining Questions upon them.] I think "bombarded" was the word, but it may have been "raining Questions on the Government." He says that that was an unjustifiable course. Not only did the Government shelter themselves under their responsibilities—of which we made no complaint—whenever they thought it inconvenient to answer a Question; but they went much further, because, undoubtedly, on more than one occasion they misled the House and the country. I am making no accusation, of course, that they deliberately misled the House and the country; but I say distinctly that some of the answers delivered in this House would not have been different had the Government desired to perpetrate a deliberate fraud. As a proof of that, I will quote the answer delivered by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in reply to a Question put to him on the 1st of April—a characteristic date, as I hear an hon. Member say. In that answer the noble Marquess said—

> "We have received news from General Gordon in which General Gordon does not appear to have made any reference to the expectation that assistance by British troops would be rendered."—(3 *Hansard*, [286] 1277.)

Earl Granville, a few days later, in "another place," stated—

> "We have not received from General Gordon any demand that troops should be sent to Khartoum, and what communications we have received are reassuring as to his position in that place."—(*Ibid.* 1611.)

Now, on the 24th of March—that is to say, six days before the noble Marquess replied to the first Question, and about 10 days before Earl Granville replied to the second Question, Sir Evelyn Baring had telegraphed to say that General Gordon was evidently expecting help from Suakin, and had ordered messengers to be sent along the route to Berber to ascertain whether any English Force was advancing. It is, indeed, worse than useless for the Opposition to put Questions to the Government if they are to receive answers such as these. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to accuse the right hon. Baronet who opened the debate of having too carefully selected and abbreviated the quotations he made use of, so as to make the case against the Government appear unduly heavy, Well, the Prime Minister himself does not always finish his quotations. One of the quotations of the Prime Minister, perhaps the most telling one which he made in the course of his speech, was this. He quoted these words from a telegram of General Gordon—

> "We are in this position: we have provisions for five months, and are hemmed in. Our position will be much strengthened when Nile rises."

Here the Prime Minister stopped; but listen to what General Gordon said directly afterwards—

> "Do you think that an appeal to the millionaires of America and England for the raising of £200,000 would be of any avail?"—[Egypt, No. 13 (1884), p. 13.]

MR. GLADSTONE: Will the hon. Member allow me to explain? I quoted what had reference to the security of General Gordon, and to the necessity for military operations.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite understand what General Gordon wanted with £200,000, or 2,000 or 3,000 men, if his position was so secure.

An hon. MEMBER: Read on.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member wants me to continue I will read the whole of the despatch. It goes on to say—

> "With this sum you might get permission of Sultan for the loan of 2,000 or 3,000 men."

An hon. MEMBER: Not British troops.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR:—

> "With these men we could not only settle our affairs here, but also do for the Mahdi, in whose collapse Sultan will be necessarily interested. I would not send many Europeans with them, as they cost too much"

Now, the hon. Gentleman was very anxious that I should finish that quotation, and I have not had the slightest hesitation in indulging him; because all I desired to show was that if the Prime Minister had finished the quotation he would have proved to demonstration that General Gordon's view of his own position was that he required 2,000 or 3,000 men, and £200,000 to smash the Mahdi and settle affairs there. There was one remarkable contention which ran throughout the whole of the Prime Minister's speech to which I specially desire to draw the attention of the House. He invariably represented the Mahdi as heading a struggle for national freedom. In consequence of that, it must necessarily be supposed that General Gordon's desire to "smash the Mahdi" was opposed to national freedom. As a matter of fact, this is an entirely new contention on the part of the Government. It is not a new theory of the Government that we ought to restore national independence in the Soudan; but, according to the old theory, this was very different from restoring the Mahdi. Their desire was to restore the local Sovereigns, and to have a settled Government at Khartoum. But the authority of the Mahdi in the Soudan was as inconsistent with that of the local Sultans, as I believe it to be with the existence of a settled Government at Khartoum. We cannot forget that one of the principal objects with which Her Majesty's Government sent out General Gordon is inconsistent with the authority of the Mahdi; because they say, in their instructions to him—

> "We trust your Excellency will adopt most effective measures for establishing an organized Government in the different Provinces of the Soudan for the maintenance of order and the suppression of all incitements to revolt."

It clearly appears from that despatch that General Gordon was expected to leave a settled Government behind him. But if any opinion may be with certainty drawn from the despatches, it is that in the view of General Gordon and Sir Evelyn Baring the only way of leaving a settled Government in the Soudan was to prevent the intrigues of the Mahdi from spreading to Khartoum and to instal Zebehr as Gordon's successor. [MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The Prime Minister cheers that remark about the Mahdi, because, perhaps, he imagines that I would shrink, as some Gentlemen on this side of the House have shrunk, from saying that I think that Zebehr ought to have been sent. I do not thus shrink. Nor do I admit that there is any inconsistency in holding this view, and at the same time deploring the necessity under which General Gordon was of issuing his original Slave Proclamation. But it is not the issuing of that Proclamation, nor is it the sending of Zebehr which will promote slavery in the Soudan. It is the abandonment of the Soudan by Her Majesty's Government. And if any proof is wanted of that I will give it to the right hon. Gentleman from one of Sir Evelyn Baring's despatches, in which he says—

> "It is obvious from the first that the revival of slavery in the Soudan would result from the policy of abandonment. Nothing that General Gordon can do in Khartoum will prevent the revival, and he knows that he is powerless to stem the tide of slavery in the future."

It is obvious that that quotation puts it beyond doubt that when the Government declared that they would leave the Soudan they gave up the whole question of slavery in the Soudan altogether. Having given it up, why did they shrink from Zebehr? Mr. Sturge, the Secretary, I believe, of the Anti-Slavery Association, wrote to Earl Granville on the 10th of March, earnestly pressing him not to appoint Zebehr, and added, on behalf of the Committee he represented, that—

> "They earnestly hoped that in the event of Her Majesty's Government making an arrangement for independent rule at Khartoum the conditions will be such as shall secure the country alike from a reign of anarchy and barbarism, and from that of the slave trader."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 147.]

The objects to which Mr. Sturge directed his hopes were admirable, and the only objection was this—that the circumstances under which the Government evacuated the Soudan rendered it impossible to carry them both out. It was possible by sending Zebehr to save the country from anarchy; but it was not possible, at the same time, to save it from the slave trader. The result of the Government policy could only be to hand over the country both to anarchy and the slave trader; and their refusal to appoint Zebehr rendered the future good government of that country absolutely hopeless and impossible. The Prime Minister was very severe upon my right hon. Friend who opened the debate. He said my right hon. Friend had no policy to suggest except that of sending an expedition in the summer months to extricate General Gordon from Khartoum. But why are we driven to the summer months for sending out an expedition? That is a question which the Government have to answer. If they had carried out the policy indicated by every single one of their advisers in Egypt, including General Gordon, they would not have had to wait until the summer months. It is the Government who have compelled the country to choose between sending a military expedition under most dangerous and difficult circumstances, and sacrificing the national honour. The Government have in truth sent out General Gordon in order to get rid of their Parliamentary difficulties; and now that they have sent him, and that he has served their purpose, their sole desire seems to be to get rid of him too. They have not given him, as far as I know, any advice; they certainly have not given him any assistance; but they have restricted the whole of their functions to refusing every single request he has made to them *seriatim*. But no! I did the Prime Minister an injustice. The right hon. Gentleman did claim to have done one thing for General Gordon. He said he had defended that eminent man against the attacks which have been made against him on this side of the House. I am afraid that the attack which General Gordon has to fear is the attack of a very different and more dangerous enemy; and unless the Government can send out assistance against those more formidable foes I think they will find themselves mistaken in believing that they have the support of the country in the policy they are pursuing.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON said, he would promise to delay the House but for a very few moments. His hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and his hon. Friend the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), had shown more clearly than some hon. Members what the real question before the House was. The hon. Member for Hertford had not only spoken in favour of the employment of Zebehr, but had spoken against the evacuation of the Soudan. The hon. Member had also referred to the Anti-Slavery Association. Now, the Anti-Slavery Society, instead of having taken active steps to arouse the country and induce it to speak out against the perpetration of the horrors of slavery in the Soudan, had remained almost absolutely silent throughout the whole of this Egyptian Question. Why had they done so? ["Hear, hear!" *from the Opposition.*] Hon. Members cheered, perhaps, because they knew. They had done it for this reason—the Anti-Slavery Society held that it was not the Soudan which was at the root of all the evils of the Slave Trade, but that the Soudan was merely the route for the passage of slaves who were seized and carried off from the district of the Congo down to the Red Sea. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members might say "Oh!" but if they would appeal to the officers of the Anti-Slavery Society they would find that that was the opinion held by the Society. He thought the speech of the hon. Member for Orkney showed more clearly than anything they had yet heard what was the real question before the House at the present moment. The hon. Member spoke strongly, and without any hesitation, in favour of our not only remaining in Egypt, but of remaining in the Soudan. He had been very sorry to hear the speech of the hon. Gentleman; and he regretted to think that such a speech should have come from a Member sitting on that side of the House. He believed that the hon. Member would never again venture to contest a Liberal constituency. He (Mr. Francis Buxton) would not be sorry, for many reasons, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) were able to carry his Resolution that night, so as to necessitate an appeal to the country upon this question. They could then have brought distinctly before the country the great question which the hon. Member for Orkney had raised—whether or no we were to remain permantly the masters of Egypt? He, for one, was not in any way in favour of such a policy as that. He was in favour of withdrawal not only from the Soudan, but also from Egypt; and he heartily supported the Government in the views he had heard expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. The Resolution submitted to the House was—

> "That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."

He was very glad that the Resolution did not go behind General Gordon's mission. It started with that as its main point. He must confess that if the right hon. Baronet had worded his Resolution somewhat differently, and had found fault with the mission, then he should have been in a very much more difficult position, because he should have felt tha the could not vote against such a Resolution. But the right hon. Gentleman had started with General Gordon's mission as his standpoint, and had by the terms of the Resolution admitted that such a mission was a wise and correct one. ["No!"] He did not think himself that it had turned out that the mission was wise. He thought the Government had narrowly escaped making a mistake in sending General Gordon; and it was also something very near a mistake to have sent out the expedition to Suakin. He thought both were mistakes; but they had been brought about by one reason, and one reason only—namely—the extraordinary outcry got up by the Conservative Party for more active measures to be taken. If the Government had made mistakes it was wholly in consequence of the course taken by the other side. Much had been said that night about the mission of General Gordon. The Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman found fault with the Government for not having done more in respect of General Gordon; but he thought it would be very difficult to find from the speech of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) what he would have had the Government do in regard to Zebehr. The hon. Member for Hertford said that he himself would have recognized the sending of Zebehr; but if he had followed the advice of General Gordon, his advice was not only that Zebehr should be sent, but that when sent he should receive the moral support of the British Government. To his mind, that gave a very serious complexion to the whole of the question; and if General Gordon's opinion were taken as being a good one on the other side of the House, his recommendation was not only that Zebehr should be sent, but that he should receive the moral support of Her Majesty's Government. He, for one, had never joined in the outcry against the sending of Zebehr. He fancied that if the Soudan were to be given up, it was to be given up altogether, and that Zebehr might have proved himself to have been a good buffer as between the Native population of Egypt and the barbarians beyond. But when they came to read the Papers, and found that General Gordon was backed up by Sir Evelyn Baring in his view that Zebehr, if sent, should receive the moral support of the Government, would right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the other side contend that the Government ought to have followed General Gordon in all his opinions? Certainly that was an opinion that he (Mr. Francis Buxton) could not support for one moment. Colonel Stewart, whose opinion was even more valuable than that of General Gordon, wrote at the time an able despatch on that question from Khartoum; and he said—

> "As to the sending of Zebehr it is a most difficult question. The whole question rests on whether the Government are going to remain permanently in Egypt, or whether they are going to withdraw. If they intend to withdraw from Egypt there is no question that they ought not to send Zebehr. Further than that, I say that they ought not to send any Governor in any part to whom they would have to give the moral support of the Government."

He looked upon that opinion as a very valuable one. As to General Gordon, whom right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House said they ought to have followed in all his opinions, what would they have said when he recommended that this country should send Zebehr and give him the moral support of the Government? He should like, in the course of the debate, to receive an answer to that question from one of the Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. Would they have followed the advice of Gordon in asking them to send five British officers, as he asked them to do on the 5th of February, or would they have followed the advice contained in the postcript of the same letter not to send any officers at all? Would they have allowed Gordon to go himself to the Mahdi into the centre of Africa, and put himself in the way of being made one of those dervishes of whom he spoke in his letter? He thought the right hon. Gentleman, if he pinned his faith upon the opinion of General Gordon, would find it a somewhat difficult path to follow. He had no doubt the Government did the best they could in sending out General Gordon. It was in compliance, to some extent, with an extraordinary outcry in the country; but to his mind, after reading the Papers very carefully, he could not help thinking that the opinion of General Gordon had been absolutely unreliable ever since he went to Khartoum. These were strong words; but he used them advisedly, after careful study of the Papers which had been issued. He believed that the opinions of General Gordon since he had been at Khartoum, as gathered from his letters and despatches, were absolutely unreliable. He did not think that hon. Gentlemen opposite could say that they were reliable. If this were the case, and the opinions of General Gordon turned out to be absolutely unreliable, he thought the Government had not only been right, but that they were in duty bound, to consider first the interests of their own nation before the interests of General Gordon alone. The right hon. Gentleman who opened the debate said he was inclined to think that an expedition ought to be sent to relieve General Gordon; but at this time of the year nobody could doubt that such an expedition would be attended with fearful risk of loss of life, and might lead to grave complications beyond that. Further than that, on reading the despatches very carefully, there was evidence, as the Prime Minister had shown, in almost every despatch that General Gordon was satisfied of his own safety. He only wished he could read to the House some of the quotations he had made. From the very day General Gordon left Cairo he wrote that he was convinced of success; that "we need not fear any longer for the garrison of Khartoum." That was written on the 12th of February; and although down to the very latest date, which was, he thought, the 16th of April, and, indeed, whenever they had any message from General Gordon, he said he was perfectly happy about the safety of Khartoum. On the 16th of April he telegraphed to Sir Samuel Baker, and in that very despatch he used the words—"All goes well at Khartoum." He (Mr. Francis Buxton) would ask the House were those the words of a man in great peril of his life? What the other side maintained was that he was in such grave peril of his life that they ought to send out an immediate expedition. He was glad to think, from what the Government had said that night, that there was no doubt about their not sending an expedition. At the same time, they maintained that they were responsible for General Gordon's safety; and he sincerely hoped that General Gordon himself would relieve them from the necessity of taking further action by taking the best route he could find for leaving Khartoum immediately. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, and other speakers, had used brave words about remaining in the Soudan. Perhaps they would allow him to use a few words of General Gordon's as to his opinion of the Soudan. In a Memorandum of the 22nd of January, General Gordon said—

> "It would be difficult to reconquer these people and to hand them back to the Egyptians without a guarantee for their future good government."

Therefore, according to General Gordon, we should have to reconquer this people; and if we did not stay in the Soudan we should have to hand them back to Egypt without any evidence of future good government. General Gordon added—

> "It is evident that this cannot be secured without involving an inordinate expenditure of men and money. Nobody who has ever lived in the Soudan can avoid coming to the conclusion—what a useless possession this land would be."

He thought those were very strong words on the part of General Gordon. This was the third Vote of Censure which had been moved during the present Session. [An hon. MEMBER: The fourth.] Some hon. Member said the fourth, and it really seemed to him that they had been forced to discuss Votes of Censure ever since the Session began. His own impression from the action of the other side was that they were thinking not so much of the abandonment of General Gordon as of the abandonment of the Reform Bill. That he supposed was behind this Motion. Under all the circumstances, he should gladly vote with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in opposition to the Resolution; and also against what he believed to be the object of the Opposition—namely, a return to a policy of aggression, annexation, and aggrandisement.

MR. GIBSON: I will tell the hon. Member and the House one thing, at all events, that we are satisfied is behind the Motion which has been moved to-night, and that is the conscience of the entire country and of the whole civilized world. I venture to think that to-morrow morning, when on the wings of the Press the speech of the Prime Minister is read, in many a home it will be read with bitter disappointment. Many people have been looking forward to to-night for a possible vindication or assertion of what England had a right to expect in the way of a manly utterance in unmistakable tones from a responsible Minister of the Crown; and I feel confident that the utterances actually made, when read to-morrow, will be read with a pang of bitter disappointment. After all that has been written, and all that has been said on this subject, on which, practically, all England is united, we are treated to the same weary round of words clothing the same policy of uncertainty and vacillation. The tone of the Prime Minister was not the tone which we had a right to expect from the Prime Minister of this country, bearing in mind that this is a Motion which deals with the safety of a brave and trusted English General, who accepted a service of peril—it may be of deadly peril—at his own bidding, and at the call of public duty. The only attempt of the Prime Minister to make a diversion on this question was his statement of a charge which broke down almost before he completed the utterance of it—a suggestion that has been made feebly, haltingly, and more than once—that my right hon. Friend was advocating a policy of conquest, and was animated by a desire to involve us in widespread engagements. There is not a solitary syllable in his speech which gave the slightest countenance to an assertion of so remarkable a character. When these two speeches are read to-morrow by the English public, the fearlessness combined with the moderation, logic, and patriotism of my right hon. Friend will contrast favourably with the speech of the Prime Minister, which lacks every one of those characteristics. There is, from beginning to end of the speech of the Prime Minister, nothing like a frank assertion of the future action of the Government—not thing like a clear recognition of the responsibility that rests upon them. The highest level of decision that can be gained from that able and laboured performance of the Prime Minister is that possibly at some time—he was cautious not to fix the date—at some time or other—[An hon. MEMBER: At the proper time.] Sir, I am not aware that even in the mouth of the best trained and best brought up moralist the expression "proper" can be said to be a very definite one, and the highest precaution I have been able myself to gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman is this—that at the time he puts as not being improper the Cabinet may possibly be prepared to decide upon doing something or other. What are the dates? They speak with trumpet-tongued vehemence in condemnation of the wretched indecision and the clear and obvious determination not to decide that exists in the Government. Why, Sir, it is a month since they have had tidings of General Gordon. It is over a fortnight since they sent the last despatch of the 23rd of April—a despatch that, let us hope for the sake of morals, at some time or other—at some proper time—Gordon will receive; but which, from the despatch the Prime Minister referred to to-night of the Governor of one of the beleagured garrisons, it is perfectly obvious that he has not received up to this moment. What a change there is in the tone of the Prime Minister and the method of his address to-day compared with a month ago or longer. I do not dwell upon it, but I will point out this. In February, the Prime Minister relied upon General Gordon as his guardian angel. Then, no words of eulogy were too—I must not say extravagant—but no words of eulogy were too extreme to be used by the Prime Minister in praise of the heroism, the chivalry, the devotion, the noble, the splendid, and the resourceful qualities of General Gordon. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] Yes; but the Prime Minister leaves me to use these words to-night, and cheers me when I use them. What is the mission of General Gordon? The right hon. Gentleman made some criticisms upon the manner in which my right hon. Friend has performed an important duty. My right hon. Friend presented those portions of the Blue Books which he thought material, and did not endeavour to confuse the issue by mixing up with them immaterial references. The Prime Minister to-night, when he referred to the mission of General Gordon, attempted to dwarf the importance of that mission by picking out a brief reference to some of the duties. General Gordon was sent out with clear and specific instructions from the Government. The Government sanctioned the widening of those instructions when he went to Egypt, and the position of General Gordon and the avowed instructions of the Cabinet were these—he went out as the authorized Agent of England to effect the evacuation of the Soudan by extricating the garrisons, and to reconstitute in that country a Government by substituting a settled form for that which was removed. There can be no possible doubt about that, because I have the words of the Prime Minister himself spoken with almost unusual plainness and directness on the point. ["No, no!"] I would not quote anything in my remarks but for the fact that the right hon. Gentleman dissents. If it is not so, I will not quote his words; but I will assert that I have here the words of the Prime Minister corroborating the statement I have given of General Gordon's duties —that he went to the Soudan with an express mission and authority from the Government, and with the sanction of the Government, to extricate the garrisons there — not a garrison, but the garrisons—and to reconstitute the Government of the country on the evacuation being completed. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister shakes his head, and so I must read his words, and the words of the right hon. Gentleman on the 12th of February were these—

> "That General Gordon went for the double purpose of evacuating the country, by the extrication of the Egyptian garrisons, and of reconstituting it by giving back to those Chiefs their ancestral powers."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 724.)

[Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] Then, why did the Prime Minister contradict me? He went there, as I have pointed out, for the double purpose I have indicated; and, more than that, he was told, permitted, and authorized to accept such further duties as the Khedive should give him. Those duties were communicated through Sir Evelyn Baring, and he was told throughout that he was trusted in the discharge of those difficult and arduous duties with the widest possible discretion. Now, what were the agencies given to this great and heroic man? The agencies placed at his disposal were summarized forcibly to-night by the Prime Minister in his description of General Gordon—that he went to Khartoum as a great personality, clothed with great and special influence following from the strength of that personal character. Well, he went there as a great human personality, as it were, to work by human agencies, and not by miracles, spells, and incantations; and, accordingly, we find that the great personality of General Gordon was permitted and sanctioned by his instructions to retain as a human agency the Egyptian troops as long as he thought necessary. More than that, in his own statement, before he arrived in Egypt, on the possibilities before him, he intimated that the Mahdi's troops might possibly make an attack on the retreating garrisons, and in that case he might not be able to act up to the letter of his pacific policy. That is to say, on the Egyptian troops being attacked and defending themselves, they would be defending themselves under the authority and by the command of the General under whose orders they were acting, that General being General Gordon. Another thing is this, we have got a mass of correspondence in these deplorable Blue Books. I have never been at the Foreign Office, and I am bound to say that I have not much ambition to go there; but, speaking as an outsider, if any method can be suggested in order to introduce a glimmering of common sense into the manner in which the Foreign Office prepare their Blue Books, it would be of the greatest possible comfort to the outside public. We find a question in one Blue Book, and the answer in another; and you would require the aid of the cleverest man who ever made cross references in order to enable you to find out what is the nature of the narrative all through. The mission of General Gordon, of course, was a pacific one. Every one of his objects was pacific. There can be no doubt about that. More than that, it was pacific in the means by which it was sought to effect those objects as far as it was humanly possible. There is no question about that; but in all human affairs, and in affairs of State particularly, it is needful to contemplate that there may be a point where the best pacific intentions require aid, and where an appeal to force is necessary. Of course, that was the condition under which General Gordon went in these circumstances. Now, the great difficulty of General Gordon was to try and conciliate the Mahdi, because it was impossible to have a pacific policy without some effort at conciliation. The Government unquestionably—I care not what their motives might be—did not assist in the pacific solution of General Gordon's mission by their operations in the Soudan and on the Red Sea Coast. It is not the way to conciliate most men—even if it be a false prophet—by slaughtering 5,000 of his followers. I do not care what you call your motives, whether for self-defence or for the defence of Suakin. You said, after Tel-el-Kebir, you were only seeking peace through war; but I care not what your motives were, you could not expect that that action on the Red Sea was in the slightest degree calculated to advance the pacific mission of General Gordon. The natural effect of the great slaughter at El Teb was, as has been pointed out by my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), that which actually did occur—namely, to exasperate the Mahdi and to render the pacific solution of General Gordon's mission practically hopeless. Well, I would forgive a great deal of that slaughter if you had absolutely saved Sinkat or Tokar; but you did neither the one nor the other. You waited until Sinkat and its great Egyptian hero — its Egyptian Gordon — had fallen. You waited until Tokar fell; and then you only interfered with the slaughter on your own account when it was too late to save either of those garrisons, and when there was only time to hamper and thwart the action of General Gordon. At all events, General Gordon left you in little doubt as to what his opinion was when you did appeal to him. When Sinkat and Tokar had fallen, he said—

"Send the Chiefs here to meet me in friendly conference at Khartoum."

When that message was sent to Admiral Hewett, what answer was returned by Sir Evelyn Baring? It was—

"Hewett says he cannot ask the Chiefs to meet General Gordon at Khartoum when he knows that English troops are about to be sent against the people."

Therefore, you find your own operations actually exasperated the Mahdi, and your accredited Minister did not — I think, for sufficient reasons—carry out the policy which General Gordon had directed and advised. Now, I should think the affair at Tamanieb annoyed the Mahdi very much. He may be a very logical man, although a very disagreeable person; and a logical man may possibly forgive a victory over himself if he is satisfied with the reason of it. But the Mahdi is one of the oddest men on the face of the earth if he is satisfied with the slaughter of his troops for no reason whatever. The only possible justification for the slaughter of the Mahdi's troops at Tamanieb would have been the intention to open up the road to Berber, in order to relieve General Gordon. I thought that the Prime Minister, when, in the course of his speech, he pulled out of his pocket that piece of paper containing the telegram which he read to us, was going to cite to us some grave military document which he had got some of our Generals to sign, stating that there was no better or quicker course than that adopted by the Government. But this debate has gone so far, and the Prime Minister has not demonstrated to the satisfaction of anybody why that battle was fought, or why, having been fought, it was not utilized. The Prime Minister has said, and said it more than once, that General Gordon was not in any military danger at Khartoum. What is the meaning of that? Did he expect that General Gordon, a a man brave to the point of chivalry and heroism, would go whining about saying that he was afraid, and demanding relief in every telegram he sent? Why, you do not guage the dimensions of your own hero. You might perceive from passage after passage of his despatch that he saw he was in danger, and recognized that that danger was extreme. In one sentence that he used he said—"Even if I were mean enough"—he seemed to think, poor man! the Government were always trying to sound the depth of meanness in his composition—

> "Even if I was mean enough to escape, I have no power to do so."

When he wrote that, did you think he meant to escape? In another sentence he said—"I will never be taken alive." Do you think a man like General Gordon, being a brave and capable man, simply makes use of idle expressions that can be only used to indicate the extremity of danger? We had to-night a document read by the Prime Minister from the Governor of Dongola, showing that at the present moment General Gordon is hemmed in and surrounded, and that no communications can either reach him or come from him; and to tell me that a man hemmed in so that he cannot send a message or receive a message is not in danger is trifling with the meaning of the English language. He was anxious for the safety of those in Khartoum who were loyal to him, and of the troops who were faithful to him; and in a despatch of March 3, he put the matter with great plainness and fairness to the Government. He says—

> "It may have been a mistake to send me up; but having been done, I have no option but to see evacuation through;"

and then come the words I have previously quoted—

> "for even if I was mean enough to escape, I have no power to do so.—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 156.]

Will anyone say that the officer, the right-minded man, who wrote these fair and generous words, is a man to be deserted or put aside by quibbling excuses? He was anxious throughout, not for his own safety, but for the safety of those whom he would not desert. I greatly suspect the purposes of the Government in this case. You can judge of them by their suggestions. Some of their suggestions to General Gordon were—"Desert and save yourself." And does not the House suppose that those who make such a suggestion to a brave and courageous public servant may think that the time may come when it would be wise and prudent in them also to desert? General Gordon suggested that a small force of 200 men should be sent to Wady-Halfa. That explodes the ridiculous suggestion of the Prime Minister, with which he tried to blind the eyes of the House and the country, about Gordon embarking on the conquest of the Soudan. The supposition is nonsense on the face of it. General Gordon asked for a demonstration of 200 soldiers, who were to be sent to Wady-Halfa, and he remarks that—

> "The revolt will collapse if I can say that I have British troops at my back."

And you expect this man, with his great personality, to sustain not only his own courage, but the belief in his power and courage which must have pervaded those who had hitherto trusted in him, when he is not allowed to feel that he can say he has British troops at his back. One word about the Berber and Suakin route—a point that certainly was not put in a clear light by the Prime Minister. General Graham, as will be readily found in Blue Book, No. 12, after his victory at Tamanieb, was ready and willing and quite prepared to open up that route unless he was checked, discouraged, and prevented. Of course, the Government have an Intelligence Department, and I am not surprised if at some point they made some effort to obtain intelligence; but remember that General Gordon is, in himself, an entire intelligence department rolled into one man. He was Governor of the Soudan for three or four years; he has a thorough knowledge of the locality; and if there be any doubt on that, I can perform once more a labour of love—that is, quoting the Prime Minister, who said—

> "General Gordon is better qualified than anyone else to point out the best mode of assisting himself."

That is the tribute and belief of the Government in reference to General Gordon. Well, General Gordon's opinion was that he could be relieved by the Berber and Suakin route; and it rests with those who have paid that clear and justifiable tribute to General Gordon to prove by overwhelming military reasons why they overruled his clear opinion; and not his opinion alone, because Sir Evelyn Baring—whose correspondence I am bound to say is the production of an able and capable man—pointed out later in these transactions that, bearing in mind that the question was how to get General Gordon and Colonel Stewart away from Khartoum, he thought the effort should be made if it was possible, wise, and statesmanlike caution. He referred the question to his military advisers, General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood; and they said that, although there were risks to the troops and risks from the climate, unquestionably it was possible. So that you have got General Graham, as I assert, General Gordon, the highest authority of all, and Sir Evelyn Baring, a high political authority, supported by his military advisers in Egypt, all pointing out that this route was available, and could be made available. We are not to be frightened by being told that there are difficulties. What is the use of putting capable men in the Government if they are to evade all criticism by telling us they have had difficulties to face? If Ministers are not to face difficulties, a dozen men of even inferior capacity could govern the country just as well. In one part of the Blue Book it is said that 35 pilgrims were able to make the journey from Berber to Suakin in 14 days. I am quite aware that pilgrims do not invite attack, and that they do not make attack; but they only saw a few unarmed men in the whole transit during these 14 days, and they saw nothing to indicate the smallest particle of danger to anyone attempting to open up that route. The Prime Minister has tried to place some reliance upon a mere complimentary telegram in which General Gordon expresses his thanks to him for the support of the Government. I do not know whether General Gordon is a man given to irony; but assuredly if he is, and assuming that the man he was addressing would understand that figure of speech, I think that that was one of the most ironical and remarkable telegrams that was ever sent to a Minister. But, however, in the desperation of his position the Prime Minister appeared to be pleased with that telegram. On the 11th of March of the present year, on the very same day, it will be found that General Gordon reiterated his request that troops should be sent to open up the route from Suakin to Berber. So that I venture to think the gratitude which General Gordon expressed was that human form of gratitude which expresses a hope more than a memory. General Gordon is, I am sure, a man of deep religious feeling; but a man of the very strongest religious feeling has limits to his patience, and General Gordon unquestionably has had his patience worn out. Can any man in this House, I care not how extreme his views may be, wonder at that? General Gordon got indignant at his abandonment; if he had been an angel in Heaven, and if it were possible for an angel to feel anything at all of an earthly or unworthy passion, I have a strong suspicion that there would have been a decided suggestion of indignation. Unquestionably, General Gordon used words which were very grave to be addressed by a public servant to those who employed him—words which they had no right to submit to unless they were completely justified by facts; unless he was using words which were absolutely true, seeing that he was suggesting that their policy was the climax of meanness, they were words which were insubordinate and not to be tolerated. He said that the Government had indicated to him a course which involved indelible disgrace. I should like to know what Ministry of England ever before had such words addressed to them calmly by one who was their servant, by one who had been chosen by them to perform an important mission, and yet, at the same time, you are bound to submit to such words because they are absolutely true? One who is your servant tells you that your policy involves the very climax of meanness, and yet, in your next telegram to him, you tell your Minister there to express your respect and gratitude to the man who has thus spoken to you. On the 16th of April, in the last message received from General Gordon, but which, from evidence on the next page, seems to have been sent out on the 9th of April, he used the words "indelible disgrace" with reference to the policy you proposed; and then, in your last message to him, you use this phraseology of cheap eulogy—you request Sir Evelyn Baring "to add expressions of respect and gratitude." Respect is a very good thing, and has value according to the source from which it proceeds; but I do not gauge at any great measure of value the respect to which you are entitled after your action towards General Gordon. I leave General Gordon himself to appraise the value of your message; but with regard to those words "indelible disgrace," I do not think that anyone ever heard anything like the special pleading of the Prime Minister. It was perfectly startling. He says that there was no principle involved. What on earth was the meaning of that? Gordon was sent to extricate the garrisons. He says to his employers—"You indicate to me, in reference to four of those garrisons, a course of conduct which I denounce as an indelible disgrace;" and the Prime Minister, specially pleading in a way, I hope, was intelligible to himself, says the letter involves no principle. Then, gathering a little more force as he went on on that point, he said it might be put aside as abstract. What part of it was abstract? This man was dealing with four definite towns and definite garrisons which it was his duty to extricate; he was dealing with a Cabinet that was not an abstract thing. I decline to go into the case of each of these garrisons. You have sent General Gordon to extricate the garrisons with your own estimate of his capacity, the highest that could be given to mortal man, clothed with the highest possible discretion, to carry out your views. You have no right to blame the man if he accepts your instructions as plain English, conveying to him a clear meaning. My right hon. Friend has put the case with unanswerable plainness. What help, from the beginning to the end of this transaction, have you given to Gordon? You sent him on a service of deadly peril, such as no man unendowed with high heroism and splendid courage could undertake. What help have you—the English Government—given your trusted servant from the first moment he reached Khartoum up to the present moment, when he is hemmed in there awaiting your assistance? Every proposal he has made has been refused. When General Gordon and Colonel Stewart concurred to make a proposal, it was refused. When, in addition to General Gordon and Colonel Stewart, Sir Evelyn Baring gave the great weight of his authority to a proposal, it was equally refused. You are not able to point to any solitary proposal coming from Khartoum, made either by Gordon, or Gordon and Stewart, or Gordon, Stewart, and Baring, to which you have not said a barren and despicable "No." The policy of the Government is one of barren negatives and incapable sterility. The Government are responsible for the life and liberty of General Gordon; and they are, therefore, deeply responsible for every refusal which they have given, and for interfering with the exercise of Gordon's discretion, when he was sent out with nothing but discretion to help him. Gordon's mission has been blighted and cursed by the persistent vacillation that has marked every particle of the wretched thing which you call Egyptian policy. The Government had not the manliness to assume responsibility themselves at any stage of their transactions in Egypt. The same miserable hesitation has marked their conduct with regard to General Gordon. They were responsible for Egypt after Tel-el-Kebir; but they hid their responsibility from themselves in a petty way that deceived nobody; and now that they are responsible for General Gordon locked up in Khartoum, you see it in the half-hearted suggestions they offer, and in even the more mean and despicable statement that he is largely and mainly answerable for his own safety. Ask any reasonable man, either in or out of this House, whether Gordon has been fairly treated, and see what the reply is. If any man in this House had accepted a mission like General Gordon, and had gone out at 48 hours' notice, throwing up a high appointment with a great philanthropic Ruler in Europe, at the bidding and calling of his own Prime Minister—if he had rendered this service and been treated as Her Majesty's Government have treated Gordon—I should like to know what his sentiments would have been? Has he had that support which an English officer in a service of deadly peril has a right to expect? Are the Government not mean in making as they do sham pretences to-night of not having as yet actually deserted him? What language has the Prime Minister used this evening that will reassure General Gordon or the country? I have often heard the Prime Minister make good speeches; I have heard him often make good speeches when he had a good cause; and I have heard him make very good speeches when he had a bad cause. He had a bad cause to-night; and it is not for me to characterize the speech he delivered in regard to it. But I ask, in reference to that speech, and to those who heard it, has the right hon. Gentleman's speech satisfied the House that there is any real intention on the part of the Government to save Gordon? If there is, I should be glad to know on what special part of the speech any hon. Member bases his trust? The Prime Minister used the expression —"A covenant with the nation and with Gordon." Now, "covenant" is a very technical expression; and bearing in mind the meaning which the Prime Minister endeavoured to attach to an isolated passage of a conversation between two Ministers before he came into Office, which passage he christened a covenant, when anyone can see it is not even an engagement, I am disposed to question the right hon. Gentleman's meaning of the term, especially when I turn to the poor, wretched, cunning despatch of April 23. What is that despatch? The House have it before them. It is the last despatch the Government have sent in reference to these transactions. Will Gordon ever get it? Why was it written? Supposing, however, that he does get it—hoping against hope, credulous in difficult circumstances, let us suppose that the Government mean that he should get it, and that he does get it. What then? What is that despatch? This is the last despatch sent by the Government, containing the deliberate decision of the Cabinet in reference to Gordon, and we had hoped that it might have been eked out to-night by some frank and manly English words. But we have been thrown back on this wretched despatch of the 23rd of April, and we are asked to be satisfied with the Prime Minister's statement that it is a covenant, which is surrounded by a number of qualifications and modifications, which the Prime Minister's mastery of language enabled him to wreathe around it? What is it, and how is Gordon to interpret it? It is a very strange document; but I suppose that every Member of the House has read it more than once—

> "Gordon should be at once informed that he should keep us informed to the best of his ability."

We do not even know whether he has received that telegram. And are you going to tell us that nothing is to be done until Gordon keeps you informed as to the danger he is in at present? How are you going to act if you get no answer? We have not yet been told that, either by the Prime Minister or by anybody else. On the contrary, we have always been told, in answer to Questions, that you are waiting for a statement from Gordon as to what he wishes and desires. Well, you ask a man who cannot inform you to tell you if he is in any immediate or prospective danger. Is there any man in the House who does not know that you are endeavouring by that to throw dust in the eyes of the

English nation? Then General Gordon is asked to advise you as to the force necessary to secure his removal. He has been advising all that for the last two months. He has asked you for English troops, for Indian troops, and for Turkish troops, sometimes backed up by Sir Evelyn Baring, sometimes by Sir Evelyn Wood, and at others by General Stephenson; and then, when you have persistently refused all his advice, is it not a farce, if it were not so near being a tragedy, to ask this man to advise you what course he would recommend? The tone of this despatch shows the depth that can be reached by a Cabinet of men, each of whom I have no doubt is a brave and courageous Gentleman, but a regard for truth would prevent me from applying those epithets to them in their collective capacity. Nobody has a higher respect for the individuals composing the Cabinet than I have, and for their personal honour, dignity, and courage; but it is a different thing to criticize their actions in a public and collective form. And what is the last statement in this miserable document? It goes on to say—

> "If with this knowledge he continues at Khartoum, he should state to us the course and intention with which he so continues."

How is the man to get away? You ask him in the beginning to tell you how he would like to get away, what forces would be necessary, and you ask him at the end to explain why he does not get away. I do not know which Member of the Cabinet has the privilege of making the rough draft of these curious documents; but I am bound to say that this is one of the most wretched and painful documents ever turned out by an English Government in the face of the English nation. If the Government do not mean to protect Gordon, they should do one or the other of two things boldly and frankly. A man can be courageous even in his meanness. It would be frank for the Government to say at once to General Gordon—"We have hitherto thwarted every one of your plans; we have refused all your proposals; you are hemmed in now and in danger; we mean to do nothing for you; save yourself if you can, and accept our expressions of respect and gratitude." That would be mean, but there would be a certain courage and frankness in the meanness. Then there was another thing they could have done, and that was this. If, instead of making what the Prime Minister called to-night a covenant, to be possibly executed at a proper time under certain qualifications and modifications not clearly intelligible to the untrained intellect, they had used one manly, straightforward English sentence to a gallant and straightforward Englishman—"Hold out as long as you can; we know your difficulties; we mean to save you; and if you hold out as long as you can, we will help you as soon as we can"—that would have been clear, intelligible, and frank. But there was something of even a lower depth than cowardice, and that was to leave this man in doubt whether you really meant to betray him, and only pretended to save him. I should like to know what will be the result to this country—I will not talk of Europe—if General Gordon, falls at Khartoum, and those he is trying to save fall with him? Does not everybody know it will be one of the most disastrous stories that was ever told of this country, costing this country more blood and more money than many a war that was bigger and was entered into with far more deliberation? Ah! I could not help noticing to-night, when the Prime Minister was stating so slowly and so painfully the topics which the Government would have to consider before they prepared themselves for practically considering how they would begin to think of saving General Gordon, that he mentioned several things, and put the honour of the country last. Vacillation is certainly not a glorious policy. Cowardice is a very ignoble policy; and I believe myself that vacillation and cowardice combined make the dearest and most disastrous policy that England has ever seen. You may, in its process, tarnish the honour of the country; but I speak but the language of sober common sense when I say that before the nation has compelled you to disentagle yourselves from the meanness of such an administration, you will have found that you have largely drained the National Exchequer. The Prime Minister appealed to-night to the vote that would be given on this Motion. I do not know what that vote will be. Many a man who will give it is glad that he can give it in silence and with bowed head; and I shall be surprised if, in the progress of this debate, we have any independent Member on the Government side rise in his place and say that he is prepared to sanction or approve, in word or in detail, any portion of the Government policy with regard to General Gordon. I know not what the vote of to-morrow night will be. I shall vote, without hesitation, for the Motion of my right hon. Friend; and I am satisfied, that whatever may be the result in this House, the vote will express the conviction of every man in it who has studied the question with an earnest desire to act according to his conviction. More than that, I say that the Motion of my right hon. Friend expresses the convictions of the whole civilized world, and will command the sympathy and the support of the united nation.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: the right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down commenced his oration, and he has concluded it, by asserting that he represented the voice of the whole civilized world. I have always observed that in the course of the speeches which the right hon. and learned Gentleman makes in this House he nearly always does claim to represent the whole voice of the civilized world.

Mr. GIBSON: I have only done so once or twice.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The right hon. and learned Gentleman says he has only done so once or twice. I am very glad, indeed, that he recollects the phrase; and if he remembers using it once or twice, he must excuse us for recollecting that he has used it a great deal oftener than once or twice. That being so, and as we are familiar with his rather turgid style of declamation, we need not be alarmed at his having come forward again to-night and told us that he represents the voice of the whole civilized world; or because, in addition to that, he has used all those various flowers—perhaps I ought to say those primroses of rhetoric—which are in familiar use on the other side of the House whenever the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government is to be called in question. We have been told, in the course of this evening, almost in the famous language of O'Connell, that we are base, brutal, and bloodthirsty. We have been told that we are cowardly; that there is hardly any mixture of meanness and atrocity that we are not capable of; and, on the other hand, the right hon. and learned Gentleman in the early part of his speech, drew a beautiful picture when he declared that his Party was the Party of prudence, logic, and moderation. Perhaps we may some day see a great historic group representing the three right hon. Gentlemen whom I see opposite to me, sculptured by the hand of some kind sculptor, to represent prudence, logic, and moderation; but I am not inclined to think that so long as the right hon. and learned Gentleman indulges in language of such extraordinary vehemence, not to say violence, when that group comes to be formed the sculptor will assign the figure of moderation to him. I am glad to be able to say that there was one little break this evening in the course of the violent stream of denunciation from the other side. That was afforded by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst); but I am sorry to say I think that was only because the hon. and learned Gentleman desired to pay compliments to himself. He said he represented truth and candour; that he always had represented truth and candour; and that it was a well-known fact—one, indeed, to which it was almost unnecessary for him to allude—that he was the representative of truth and candour. I was very glad to hear that; but I should have valued his observations on truth and candour a great deal more if, before he made them, he had not grossly misrepresented a speech of mine. I am sorry to say that he misrepresented that speech not for the first time this evening, but for the second time; because, not long ago, he made the same observation, and I corrected him at the time. He then misrepresented a statement by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War; and, not satisfied with that, he has returned to the charge this evening, and repeated it with regard to myself; and having done so, poses on his own account as the representative of truth and candour. He accuses me of having stated in the debate in this House on the Appropriation Bill that it was the intention of the Government to open up the road to Berber by sending a force of Cavalry, or even a stronger Force—at all events, that that was the half-formed intention of the Government. Now, it is a notorious fact that I never said anything of the kind. What I said was, that it was the object of General Graham to open up the road to Berber by means of certain negotiations with the heads of the neighbouring tribes; and if any hon. Member has any doubt upon that subject, he can refer to the Papers laid before Parliament covering the period to which I am alluding, in which he will find a telegram and a despatch from Sir Evelyn Baring upon this subject, stating that the machinery by which this attempt was to be made had been arranged. The method adopted was the sending of certain officers well acquainted with the language and habits of the people, whom we trusted would be able to open up the road. In connection with this question of the Berber and Suakin road, the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) made a very extraordinary statement. He said—"Have you not seen in your own Papers that a certain number of pilgrims went down that road?" Yes, we have seen that; but we are not inclined to think that, because on a particular day one or two pilgrims went down that road, that would afford a justification for risking an English Force. If I may draw a comparison from the Middle Ages, everybody knows that when the roads were most insecure, pilgrims were almost the only people who were able to travel along them at all. Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman think that because we found that on a particular day a body of pilgrims went down a particular road, we, knowing that the road was insecure, should be justified in sending a British Force along it? It is notorious that these pilgrims, who probably were going across the Red Sea to visit some holy shrine, were precisely the persons who would be respected by the followers of Osman Digna, who were not merely in arms through discontent with the established order of Government, but were animated by religious motives. There were some other points put forward by the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but I do not desire at this late hour of the evening to detain the House with what I may call minor points. I rather desire to avoid the example of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and not to bring forward a great number of scattered extracts from the Blue Books, couched generally in the shape of some interrogation. I rather desire to place before the House once more the main position in this matter — the principal answer of the Government to the charges which have been made against them. Now, Sir, the charge which has been brought forward by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) falls, if I may say so, under three principal heads. He first of all charged the Government — having, I think, made a more careful perusal of a newspaper which has taken a strong line on this subject, than of the Papers presented to the House — with having prevented General Gordon, at an early stage of his proceedings, from carrying out his wish to go to the Mahdi. The plain truth is contained in a Parliamentary Paper, from which, if the right hon. Gentleman had read it, he would have seen that General Gordon disavowed having any such wish. The evidence of General Gordon having that wish to go to the Mahdi is hearsay evidence. It is something that somebody has been told by someone else. Nevertheless, the Government thought it desirable, in view of the gravity of this alleged intention, to inquire into the matter, and therefore they asked Sir Evelyn Baring to ask General Gordon whether he had such an intention; and here is the brief telegram General Gordon sent in reply—

> "With reference to my despatch of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received a telegram from General Gordon stating, as regards the message conveyed to me by Lieut. Rhodes, that he has no intention of visiting the Madhi."—[Egypt, No. 16 (1884), p. 3.]

[An hon. Member: What is the date?] That is a favourite observation of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They seem to think it shows great observation. The date is February 11th; but I do not see that that in any way invalidates my argument. Therefore, that head of the indictment falls to the ground. The second count in the indictment which right hon. Gentlemen opposite have brought against Her Majesty's Government is that after General Gordon had left England the Government did not support him in any of the proposals which from time to time he made to the Government. Now, it seems to me that any Agent who takes service under the

Government, however delicate the position which he occupies, however great the sacrifice which he makes, cannot expect that whatever proposals he makes, no matter what their character may be, are to be adopted as a matter of course. That is not in any way whatever the condition upon which members of the Diplomatic or Consular Service are engaged by the Government. There are questions as to time and place, and what is desirable and possible, as to which the Government alone must be the judges. They are the judges, and naturally they take the responsibility—and they do not shrink from it. Her Majesty's Government do not shrink from it to-night; nor will they on any future occasion shrink from bearing the full responsibility for the advice they have given, and the decisions at which they have arrived. The right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire says to me across the Table, that he does not think they know what responsibility means. ["No, no!"] The right hon. Gentleman may say he said it to the right hon. Gentleman next to him; but he said it loudly, and I thought it was addressed to me, and I think it would be better and more courteous if interruptions of this kind were not made. I believe that in the course of these debates, whatever differences may unfortunately separate the two sides of the House, no one as yet attempted to show that the Government have in any way shrunk from bearing the responsibility for the various courses of action which they have had from time to time to take with regard to this Egyptian Question; and I am inclined to think that when such a charge is made it had better in any case be made in public speech than in an observation of the kind the right hon. Gentleman has just made. Now, what were the instructions to General Gordon—for that is what the whole matter turns upon—before he left for Khartoum? It is much more convenient for right hon. Gentlemen opposite to give their own versions and paraphrases of the matters before the House than to give the facts. Therefore, I desire to call the attention of the House to the actual words of the final instructions given to General Gordon by Sir Evelyn Baring, dated January 25th. The instructions ran as follows:—

> "You will bear in mind that the main end to be pursued is the evacuation of the Soudan. This policy was adopted, after very full discussion, by the Egyptian Government, on the advice of Her Majesty's Government. It meets with the full approval of His Highness the Khedive, and of the present Egyptian Ministry. I understand, also, that you entirely concur in the desirability of adopting this policy, and that you think it should on no account be changed. You consider that it may take a few months to carry it out with safety. You are further of opinion that 'the restoration of the country should be made to the different petty Sultans who existed at the time of Mohammed Ali's conquest, and whose families still exist;' and that an endeavour should be made to form a confederation of those Sultans. In this view the Egyptian Government entirely concur. It will, of course, be fully understood that the English troops are not to be kept in the Soudan merely with a view to consolidating the power of the new Rulers of the country."—[Egypt, No. 6 (1884), p. 3.]

Now, these instructions are governed specially by the first paragraph I have read—

> "You will bear in mind that the main end to be pursued is the evacuation of the Soudan."

I can very well understand that hon. Gentlemen opposite are very desirous of losing sight as much as they can of that first paragraph, because they are unable to keep back the fact, but from time to time they allow it to slip out, as it were, that they are in favour of an active and forward policy in Africa, as they were in Central Asia and other quarters of the globe. But that is not the policy of Her Majesty's Government; and with regard to part of the question, I do not hesitate to say that as between this side of the House and that side of the House there is an unalterable difference of opinion. General Gordon went upon his mission with these instructions. He arrived, as the House is aware, at Khartoum on the 18th of February, and he had not been long there when he commenced to make those proposals and suggestions with regard to the employment of Zebehr Pasha, and the expedition to Berber, which have been the staple of a large portion of this debate, forming what I may call the second count of the indictment against the Government. I must say that, in the course of this debate, I have felt a great deal of commiseration for the position of certain hon. Members with regard to Zebehr Pasha. How they must regret that they made those speeches against his appointment! [An hon. MEMBER: What speeches?] An hon. Member opposite asks what speeches. Is he unaware that the Leader of his own Party in "another place" almost bounded to his feet the moment he thought that Zebehr Pasha was to be appointed, and said it was a thing so horrible that he desired at once that it should be disowned? Is he unaware that numerous Questions were asked of myself and the Prime Minister with regard to the alleged appointment of Zebehr Pasha; that one hon. Member who spoke to-night—the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms)—was conspicuous in asking those Questions—that he was as ready to abuse General Gordon about the recommendation in connection with Zebehr Pasha and the Slave Trade Proclamation, as he is now to praise him sky-high?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I am sure the noble Lord does not wish to misrepresent me. I never abused General Gordon at all. I merely criticized the possibility of the Government adopting a policy which would encourage the Slave Trade.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Then I suppose I must take the hon. Member's observation in a Pickwickian sense. At the time they were not understood in that sense; and it was not only once, but more than once, that the appointment was opposed; and it was not only by the hon. Member, but by the hon. Member supported by his Friends; and in any case, even if he is able to exculpate himself from that, I do not know how he will get rid of that awkward and inconvenient speech made by the Leader of his own Party in "another place." That being so, the right hon. Gentleman opposite and hon. Members opposite, in the course of this debate, have not ventured openly to condemn the course which the Government had pursued with any force or any unanimity with regard to Zebehr Pasha. They are obliged, owing to the position which they themselves have assumed, to acknowledge that that recommendation was one for which, to say the least of it, there was a great deal to be said. The right hon. Baronet who introduced this Motion to the House was not himself very clear on the subject; and it was difficult to see exactly what his views on the subject were. He was evidently very anxious—and that was clear all through—to condemn the Government about everything; but with regard to Zebehr, even he assumed an attitude of prudence and moderation. But when he arrived at the other part of this portion of the indictment against the Government—I mean as to the Berber expedition—he was very strong indeed as to the wickedness of Her Majesty's Government in refusing to send this expedition; but he did not condescend to enter into any particulars. He did not show in what way Her Majesty's Government would have been justified in disregarding the clear warnings they had received from military authorities of great eminence, as to the immense risk of such an undertaking; and I venture to say this—if Her Majesty's Government had decided otherwise; if they had ventured at a period when the great heat of that country was making itself felt, although not yet in its full strength, to imperil, however small a portion of the British Army, at once there would have come from right hon. Gentlemen opposite a chorus of condemnation as to the wickedness of running the risk of losing even a single British life in an expedition which from the very first they would have denounced as dangerous and as foolhardy. The fact is, that hon. Gentlemen opposite are consistent only in one thing, and that is in condemning whatever course is adopted by the Government. They hounded us on to send an expedition for the relief of Suakin and Tokar; but when the expedition was gone, and when those battles had taken place, you might almost have imagined that the Bench opposite was a Colony of the Society of Friends; that it was a Peace Society that had sat down there; for at once there began exclamations about the horrors of war, the awful sacrifice of human life, and the wickedness of wasting the life of a single British soldier in a quarrel with which we had no concern. Why is it that those observations did not occur to hon. Gentlemen opposite sooner? The fact is that they thought that in certain sections of opinion in this country—in certain sections represented chiefly on this side of the House—the terrible slaughter that did take place in these battles had occasioned a certain amount of feeling; and they at once thought, with that short-sighted policy which distinguishes their Party, they could drive a wedge in between the different sections of the Liberal Party and posture as Quakers—as Members of the Society of Friends—and make the Government odious to a large section of their own followers. But the fact is, that those whom they desired to take in by that rather absurd manœuvre were persons of much too solid a character and too sound an intellect to imagine, when they saw the Party opposite masquerading in the garb of the Society of Friends, that they were anything at all but our old friends the Conservative Jingoes out for a holiday. The third count in the indictment is that the Government were fully aware for a long time of the position of General Gordon, that they knew, or in any case ought to have known, that General Gordon was asking for assistance; and that they, knowing all that, deliberately refused such assistance when he asked for it. The Prime Minister has shown with perfect accuracy that no specific request for troops to be sent to Khartoum itself was made by General Gordon; but no doubt that is not by itself an answer to the whole charge made by hon. Gentlemen opposite; and I desire, therefore, to point out that the general charge made by them will not bear examination. It is a matter of dates; and I should have thought that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are so fond, at Question time especially, of showing their great acuteness by calling out "Date" whenever a telegram is mentioned, might have condescended to examine the dates in this matter. If they had done so, they would have found that the charge they bring forward is one which is entirely baseless. It was on the 9th of March, as has been pointed out in the course of this debate, that General Gordon asked that if he could neither have Zebehr Pasha nor troops sent to Berber, he should be allowed to come away. The telegram sent by him to Sir Evelyn Baring was only delivered to the Government on the 13th of March. What happened then? Was there any delay—and that is a point of great importance—in answering General Gordon? It was on the 13th of March—on the day upon which that telegram reached the Government—after the consideration of that telegram by the Cabinet, that in the evening the telegram, which is numbered 244 in Blue Book No. 12, was sent; and that telegram, with the telegram sent on the 16th of March immediately following, may be said to be the Charter of the policy of the Government. I have read to the House just now what were the instructions to General Gordon; and the House will see that these two telegrams are based upon the adherence by the Government to those instructions, which, as I have shown, were given to General Gordon. For what is it that Earl Granville, in the telegram on the 13th of March, says? He says to Sir Evelyn Baring—

> "I have received your telegram of the 13th instant on the subject of General Gordon's suggestions with regard to the appointment of Zebehr Pasha as Governor of Khartoum and the dispatch of British troops to Berber. Her Majesty's Government are unable to accept these proposals. If General Gordon is of opinion that the prospects of his early departure diminishes the chance of accomplishing his task, and that by staying at Khartoum himself for any length of time which he may judge necessary he would be able to establish a settled Government at that place, he is at liberty to remain there. In the event of his being unable to carry out this suggestion, he should evacuate Khartoum and save that garrison by conducting it himself to Berber without delay. Her Majesty's Government trusts that General Gordon will not resign his commission. He should act according to his judgment as to the best course to pursue with regard to the steam vessels and stores."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), pp. 162-3.]

Then, on the 16th of March, in reply to a further communication from Sir Evelyn Baring, Earl Granville says—

> "While the objections of Her Majesty's Government to Zebehr are unaltered, the prospect of good results attending his appointment seem to be diminished. The instructions to General Gordon to remain in the Soudan only apply to the period of time which is necessary for relieving the garrisons throughout the country, and for affording a prospect of a settled Government. If General Gordon agrees with you that the difficulty of establishing a settled Government will increase rather than diminish with time there can be no advantage in his remaining, and he should, as soon as is practicable, take steps for the evacuation of Khartoum in accordance with the instructions contained in my telegram of the 13th instant. On evacuating Khartoum, he should exercise his discretion as to what is to be done with the steamers and stores there."—(*Ibid.* 166.)

I ask the House whether the Government could have given instructions to General Gordon with regard to the removal from Khartoum consequent upon their refusal to meet his views with regard to the two particulars of Zebehr Pasha and an expedition to Berber with any less delay? In fact, is there any delay at all? I assert that not only was there no delay, but that the Government acted with great promptitude in the matter. But right hon. Gentlemen say—"Your telegram never reached General Gordon." Was that our fault? The whole case of the Party opposite, when closely examined, comes to this—that we are to be condemned because at a certain period the telegraph between Berber and Khartoum was cut, and that at a slightly later date it was therefore impossible to send through a message. I assert that a charge based upon such a substructure as that is preposterous, and one which not even the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), speaking to-night, as he says he does, for the consciences and in the name of the whole civilized world, could support even before a small fraction of the British public. I am aware that in this debate it has been the object of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), by departing from the historical order of dates, so to mix up the dates and jumble up the despatches that they may keep the attention of the House from the order and sequence of these events; and I must say I have a fair ground of complaint against the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, because, having done so, he attempted to shield himself by saying that the Foreign Office Blue Books were issued in such order that it was not easy to follow them. To a certain extent the Foreign Office Blue Books have departed from strict historical order. But why? Because of the constant pressure by hon. Gentlemen opposite for Papers, and by nobody more so than the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin. The right hon. and learned Gentleman made special complaint that the Paper on General Gordon, which is contained in Egypt No. 7, was published as a separate Paper, thereby anticipating earlier Papers. Why, it was published as a separate Paper in consequence of the reiterated demands from the Front Bench opposite for its immediate production. I speak within the recollection of the House, and I ask, is it not a notorious fact that almost every day at Question time I am asked to lay on the Table separate telegrams, and thereby break the continuity and order of the Foreign Office Papers? When I resist the applications made to me, I am met with something very nearly approaching to abuse; and when, from a desire to meet the wishes of right hon. Gentlemen opposite as much as I can, I present these Blue Books as rapidly as possible, I am told by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin that the Foreign Office publishes its Papers in such a way as to make them difficult of comprehension by the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman must take his choice; he must either give up his constant demands for Papers in anticipation of the ordinary course, or he must take the Papers as they are presented. Then the case of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was very much strengthened by a certain number of haphazard quotations from the Blue Books with regard to the position of General Gordon. I am very unwilling, indeed, at this late hour of the night—1 o'clock—to trespass upon the attention of the House by reading any extracts from Blue Books; but so much has been said upon this question that I feel I should not be doing justice to the case if I did not point out to the House that all through the months of February and March, and through much of the month of April, we received in a regular sequence telegrams from General Gordon showing that with regard to the military position of Khartoum he was under no apprehension. The position of right hon. Gentlemen opposite in this matter is very peculiar. They like to use dates and quotations, but they like to use them in their own way. I recollect that only a very short time ago I was told by hon. Members opposite that I had contradicted the Prime Minister with regard to the position of General Gordon, because I had said that Mr. Power, who is with General Gordon at Khartoum, had been congratulated by the Foreign Office for his devotion and self-sacrifice in remaining at Khartoum at a period of danger; while, on the other hand, the Prime Minister said that General Gordon was in no immediate danger. There was a good deal of capital made out of the alleged contradiction; but I assure right hon. Gentlemen opposite I did not mind it. It, in reality, amused me a great deal; because I was conscious of the fact that the congratulations to Mr. Power upon his gallant conduct in remaining at Khartoum related to a period when General Gordon had not only not arrived at Khartoum at all, but when General Gordon was not even in Egypt. The House will see that there is no divergence between the views of the Prime Minister and myself; and it will see, also, that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are not very much given to reading the Blue Books which they are so exceedingly anxious should be presented. Sir, in the month of February General Gordon telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Baring that there was no chance of the Mahdi advancing personally from Obeid to Khartoum. On the 13th of March he said Khartoum was quiet and well supplied; and on the same day he said again—

> "Khartoum is quiet, and the people are volunteering for Government service."—[Egypt, No. 18 (1884), p. 9.]

On the 16th he said—

> "We are all right at Khartoum, and have plenty of provisions if steamers come up."—[*Ibid.*, p. 14.]

On the 17th he said—

> "Two most important tribes are bitterly inimical to the Mahdi."—[*Ibid.*]

Again, in March, in an undated telegram, he said—

> "I think we are now safe, and that as the Nile rises we shall account for the rebels."—[*Ibid.*, p. 16.]

Later he announced that a steamer had come up; and on the 29th of March he used very remarkable language indeed with regard to the rebels. He said—

> "They do not appear to number more than 1,500, and of these, perhaps, there are not 150 determined men."—[*Ibid.*, p. 23.]

On the 31st of March he said—

> "I wish I could convey to you my impressions of the truly trumpery nature of this revolt, which 500 determined men could put down. . . . . . Be assured, for the present and for the next two months, we are as safe here as at Cairo."—[*Ibid.*, p. 24.]

Later he said—

> "Khartoum is all right."

In April he said—

> "The Mahdi evidently distrusts rebels here, and will send no aid to them."—[*Ibid.*, p. 30.]

And then he added this most important statement—

> "We have provisions for five months, and are hemmed in by some 500 determined men and some 2,000 rag, tag, and bobtail Arabs."—[*Ibid.*, p. 33.]

It is, therefore, clear from General Gordon's own telegrams that, in the first place, he did not believe that outside Khartoum he had the main force of the insurrection to deal with; that, secondly, he did not believe the Mahdi would advance personally; and that, thirdly, he had, from a military point of view, the very lowest opinion of the force by which he was confronted. I have dealt now with the main points of the case brought forward against Her Majesty's Government. I am inclined to think that the House and the country will, as the Prime Minister has said, consider that the position is one fairly open to much discussion; but not one which can at all justify the violent language and extreme denunciations used in the House, more especially with regard to the Prime Minister. I recollect that during the last Parliament hon. Members opposite used to complain that their own foreign policy was subject to a considerable amount of discussion. Discussion on foreign policy as well as home policy is, of course, the life and essence of our Parliamentary institutions; and nobody on this side of the House or upon the Treasury Bench will complain for a single moment of any amount of discussion. But what we do feel is, that we have a right to ask for a calm and independent judgment in regard to the policy of the Government—a judgment founded upon considerations of truth, and logic, and moderation, of real truth, true logic, and genuine moderation, and not one animated by the violent and denunciatory tone which has run through the speeches on the other side of the House. I feel assured of this—that whatever may be the views of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, the feeling of the vast majority of the House would show itself; that Her

Majesty's Government will again receive the support of a substantial majority; and that that majority in this House will form a faithful reflex of the public opinion of the people of this country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Postponed Resolution [5th May] *considered.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £57,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Divine Service, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885."

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER said, that before this Vote was reported he would like to explain to the hon. Members for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) and Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) had been enabled to make an arrangement which might be satisfactory to them. In consequence of the debate which took place some days ago in respect to the provision of Roman Catholic Chaplains for the Carrickfergus Militia, the Treasury had consented to allow one guinea for each Sunday service. This sum would be granted irrespective of the number who attended the service, and the priest's travelling expenses would also be allowed. The General Officer commanding in Ireland had been communicated with, and he had every desire to provide for the services at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. BIGGAR considered the grant insufficient.

Mr. SEXTON said, it would be necessary for a clergyman to leave Belfast for Carrickfergus on the Saturday night and return on the Sunday night. If he (Mr. Sexton) and his hon. Friends were to understand that, in addition to the guinea, travelling expenses under the circumstances he contemplated were allowed, he apprehended the arrangement would be quite satisfactory.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, that all travelling expenses would be allowed. The arrangement concluded with the Treasury was the one which was suggested in debate.

Resolution *agreed to.*

BANKRUPTCY FRAUDS AND DISABILITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[Bill 179.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Stewart Clark.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Mr. WHITLEY said, he did not oppose the Bill; but he wished for some explanation from the Lord Advocate as to the last clause, which, as it seemed to him, excluded Members of Parliament from the operation of the Bill.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, the object of the Bill was very well stated in the Memorandum which accompanied it; and there did not appear to him to be any objection to the objects of the Bill, or to the manner in which it was to be carried out.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Notice being taken that 40 Members were not present, and the Committee being counted, and 34 Members only being present,

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair:—House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 13th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Public Libraries Acts Amendment * (95).

Second Reading — Public Notaries (53), *negatived;* Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment (78).

Committee—Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment * (60-94).

*Committee—Report—*Electric Lighting Provisional Order * (75); Settled Land * (52).
*Report—*Marriages Legalization (76-93).
*Withdrawn—*Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878, Amendment (16).

PUBLIC NOTARIES BILL.—(No. 53.)

(*The Lord Aberdare.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord ABERDARE, after presenting four Petitions from solicitors in favour of and against the measure, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it seemed to him to be the natural and logical outcome of the legislation in the direction of important reforms for the better administration of the law which for the last 30 years had been carried out. These reforms had never been made Party questions, but had been supported by both sides of the House; and notably by the Lord Chancellor and the noble and learned Earl who preceded him (Earl Cairns). Not the least important of those reforms was that which abolished the distinctions which formerly prevailed between doctors and proctors on the one side and barristers and solicitors on the other. Now, they had established one High Court of Justice and one general body of practitioners. In the same way, the object of the present Bill was to get rid of the separation at present existing between the professional duties of solicitors and notaries. The duties of a notary were such as could be duly and properly discharged by duly admitted solicitors, although, as regarded their Profession, they were officers of great antiquity. In old times they were appointed by the Pope, and since the Reformation by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In Scotland, where the Reformation was of a more extreme character, the appointments were transferred to the Lords of Session and the Writers to the Signet. There certainly was no reason in these days, whatever there might have been in the past, for the exercise of such a jurisdiction by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The present duties of notaries he found to be divisible into six parts—the first was protesting bills of exchange and promissory notes; secondly, drawing shipping protests; thirdly, entering statements and preparing certificates in shipping matters; fourthly, the control of foreign bonds and similar instruments; fifthly, translating documents; and, sixthly, giving advice on questions of foreign law. There were three classes of notaries—those who resided within three miles of the Royal Exchange; those who resided between three miles and ten from that locality; and those who resided outside the last-mentioned limit. Of the first class, he found there were 33 practising members; of the second, only three; of the third, there were 12 notaries proper; but in addition several hundred solicitors. The functions of these gentlemen were defined in three Acts of Parliament—the Public Notaries Act, 1801, and the Public Notaries Acts, 1833 and 1843. The present system caused great inconvenience to solicitors who did not practise within a mile of the Exchange, and to solicitors and merchants in the Provinces—for instance, at Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Swansea, and other important seaports. He had a Petition from solicitors at Liverpool in favour of the Bill which put the case very clearly, and recited the inconveniences caused by the present system. They stated that the reason which formerly existed for the separation of solicitors and notaries had long ceased to exist, and the duties were wholly such as could be well discharged by solicitors. Admitting that the City of London was well served by the notaries, he doubted whether notaries in the large Provincial towns, who were appointed without much examination, were quite so satisfactory. The Bill proposed that the power of appointing persons to perform the duties of notaries should be transferred from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that any person who had obtained from the Incorporated Law Society a certificate that he had passed a notarial examination, and any person who had been admitted a solicitor and produced a certificate that he had served with a notary, could apply to the Master of the Rolls for admission to the roll of notaries, who should thereupon make the appointment. He might be allowed to state that the late Master of the Rolls expressed himself in favour of the Bill. In 1877, he submitted to their Lordships a Bill for transferring from Her Majesty's Judges to the Incorporated Law Society the duty of conducting the examinations of solicitors. He might say, without any imputation on Her Majesty's Judges, that up to that time the examinations had been performed in a very perfunctory manner; but in the course of the last seven years an immense improvement had been effected, and the Incorporated Law Society had shown an ardent desire to purify the Legal Profession. They knew exactly what was required in the profession of a notary, and would impose on candidates an examination. This, he believed, had never been done by the notaries themselves, except, perhaps, very recently since the present Bill had been floating in the air. Perhaps the noble Earl who had given Notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill would be able to inform their Lordships what kind of an examination had been lately instituted. At all events, it was only within the last year or two that there had been any examination at all. The next provision in the Bill was that the rights of existing notaries should be saved, and compensation was given to the officials of the Court of Faculties. The Bill did not apply to the Colonies. The examinations of candidates for the office of notary would be vested in the Incorporated Law Society, and there would be a Registrar of Public Notaries, and the roll or book would be open for inspection at all reasonable hours without the payment of fees. No persons would be allowed to act as notaries unless they were duly admitted and enrolled. He would now move the second reading of the Bill, and, in doing so, would ask their Lordships to pass it, as giving effect to principles which had been accepted over and over again.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ᵃ."—(*The Lord Aberdare.*)

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that it proposed that every solicitor should be admitted as a notary without any examination, and every notary a solicitor. He opposed the second reading on the grounds—first, because it was unnecessary; second, because it was uncalled for; and third, because it would be mischievous. There was no public demand for the measure, and no compensation was proposed to be given to the notaries whose office was intended to be abolished. When the proctors had their rights taken away they were given ample compensation; and, why should the notaries have their rights taken away, with no compensation whatever? At present, the London notaries had to pass an exhaustive examination in the general and elementary principles of the law of real property, of mercantile law, and of International Law, and the principal work of the public notaries' office. Notaries were of great use to the commercial public, and they held that the Bill was utterly unnecessary. If the office were thrown open to all solicitors the greatest possible confusion and inconvenience would be thereby created in the machinery of the mercantile world. Inasmuch as notaries were required to be familiar with the commercial technicalities of all the European languages, it was absurd to suppose that any ordinary solicitor was capable of performing this function. It would be a great misfortune if, in this City, which was the commercial capital of the world, this most valuable professional class were practically abolished. Even without adducing any other arguments, he thought it was almost sufficient to say that the Bill had been petitioned against by the merchants, bankers, and traders of the City of London, who would be the chief sufferers in the event of the existing law not acting in a satisfactory manner. He also protested against the outrageous proposal, which was simply a coarse bribe to the notaries to accept the Bill, that all notaries were to be made solicitors without passing any examination or paying any fees. It took five years' apprenticeship and the passing of two severe examinations to qualify a candidate to practise as a solicitor; and yet it was now proposed, by a clause in a Bill, to qualify a number of gentlemen who might be utterly ignorant of even the rudiments of their Profession. With regard to the nominal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury, if they were beginning *de novo*, they would probably not now create it; but it had existed ever since the Reformation without any complaint being brought against it; and in the absence of abuse there was no reason for abolishing an old and time-honoured institution. The noble Earl concluded by moving the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, he did not think sufficient reason had been shown by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Milltown) for rejecting the Bill. Of course, if the noble Earl had shown that it would, in action, prove mischievous, that would have been an answer to the Bill, and would have justified its rejection; but that had not been shown; and, putting it aside, the other grounds of objection to the measure—namely, that the Bill was unnecessary and uncalled for, were purely matters for argument, and rested mainly on the views which people interested in and having knowledge of the subject took of it. He would admit, as a matter of fact, that, as far as he had been able to ascertain, there did not seem to be any large public demand for the measure; but it came before Parliament on the recommendation of the Incorporated Law Society—a Body whose services to the public were certainly entitled to grateful recognition. He could not, however, but think that their Lordships must regard it as a singular anomaly that a Body, exercising important legal functions, in connection more especially with Commercial Law, should be in London under the control of the Scriveners' Company, and elsewhere under the control of an officer. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction in all other civil matters, both in testamentary and in matrimonial causes, having been already abolished by law, it seemed to him (the Lord Chancellor) to be a little out of date that such an officer should have the superintendence of public notaries, rather than, as was proposed by the Bill, the Master of the Rolls, who would, with regard to them, be put in the same position as he already occupied with respect to solicitors. He thought it would be advisable to change an obsolete system by placing the notaries under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Rolls, and that the business of the necessary examination might be left with perfect safety in the hands of the Incorporated Law Society, who were really the Body now fulfilling those functions with respect to legal practitioners which, in the Reign of James I., may have been considered to belong to the Scriveners' Company. On the whole, though granting that there were provisions in the Bill that required consideration in Committee, he did not think any sufficient reason had been advanced for its rejection.

Earl CAIRNS said, he had examined the Bill very carefully, and he had listened carefully to the reasons given in support of it; but he was bound to say that he could not persuade himself that any case whatever had been made out for the passing of this measure. It was said that its object was to remove certain anomalies existing in a branch of the Legal Profession, and that it was a very anomalous thing that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be the official person to admit notaries to practise. He (Earl Cairns) did not suppose, if they had to begin again, they should have selected him; but there it was, and the question was, had it done any harm? It was said that this Bill was promoted by the Incorporated Law Society. He wished to speak of that Society with respect; but it was unfortunate that the Society had certain professional prejudices; and although a measure, introduced with the sanction of the Government, for intrusting the appointment of notaries to the Master of the Rolls, and providing for an admission examination, would be entitled to fair consideration, yet the main object of the Bill was to transfer what, for the reasons which had been given, was an exclusive Profession—that of the practice of notaries—to the body of solicitors at large. That Profession and that practice were, at present, open; there was no power of excluding anyone from them; but it was not found worth while for more than 36 people in the City of London to enter them. But it was worth their while. They made it pay. The leading members among bankers and men of business came forward to say that at present they were very well satisfied with the arrangement that existed, and they preferred it to the one suggested by the Bill. Was it possible that they were going to be asked to fly in the face of the merchants and bankers of the City of London by throwing open the business of a notary to every solicitor in the country? The suggestion was monstrous. That of the merchants and bankers was not the only testimony he had received against the proposed innovation; even the solicitors of the City themselves, largely concerned in mercantile matters, to the number of 115, had expressed an opinion unfavourable to the transfer, and had signed a document to that effect; and among those names were many of the most considerable and eminent firms in the City. They came forward, not in, but against, their own interests—for the work at present performed by the notaries would come to them if the Bill were passed—to say the scheme was inexpedient and impracticable; and he ventured to agree in that proposition. It was quite impossible that the ordinary solicitor could, with any safety, undertake the duties in question, requiring, as they did, the most accurate and intimate knowledge of foreign languages, foreign law, and of commercial matters, with reference particularly to bills of sale and bills of lading; and to transfer that work to other hands which were not thoroughly well experienced would be a most dangerous thing to do. It had been suggested that there was no force in the argument of the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown), who, in moving the rejection of the Bill, said that it would be to the interest of the notary, being also the solicitor, to foster litigation, because many notaries at present were solicitors. That was true, but they were not the solicitors to the cause; and, without desiring to impute motives, he thought it better that the two offices should be kept apart. Then, too, some claim for compensation might be urged on the part of the notaries, if the Government were going to hand over their business to the whole of the practising solicitors. The Bill was not asked for—it was deprecated; no one wanted it except the Incorporated Law Society, who were the persons who would benefit by it; and, under these circumstances, he would oppose a second reading of it.

On Question, "That ('now') stand part of the Motion?"

Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 30; Not-Contents 92: Majority 62.

Resolved in the *negative.*

Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months.*

COLONIAL ATTORNIES RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 78.)

(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of ABERDEEN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was to remove certain disabilities under which solicitors in the Colonies suffered. The Bill had been approved by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Colonial Office, and the Incorporated Law Society, and he believed that there was no objection to it. He would move the second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL.

(*The Lord President.*)

CONSIDERATION OF COMMONS' AMENDMENTS.

Order of the Day for the Consideration of the Commons' Amendments to the Bill read.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON said, that the Bill came back to their Lordships in much the same shape as it left them, and he hoped they would accept it in its present form, with the Amendments made by the Commons. In his opinion, they seemed to have amended the Bill in the sense in which it was sent down from their Lordships' House, and had carried out the alterations he had suggested. He trusted that his noble Friend opposite (Lord Carlingford) would carry out the provisions of the measure with stringency and vigour, and that the Bill would be successful in the object at which it was directed; indeed, so much so, that in no long period cattle disease would be unknown in the country.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council) said, he had hoped that the Bill would have come back to their Lordships' House in the form in which it was originally introduced; but that had not been the case, He was glad, however, to hear the way in which the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) had received the Commons' Amendments, and to find that the conciliatory spirit of the other House had enabled a satisfactory arrangement to be arrived at. He could not, however, agree with the noble Duke that the Bill was the same as it was when it left their Lordships. In his view, the words of the 1st clause, as they now stood amended by the Commons, undoubtedly left the Privy Council considerably greater discretion as to the working of the measure. He hoped it would have the desired effect. There was, happily, little foot-and-mouth disease in the country, and for the last six months there had not been a single case imported. What they now wanted, and what he hoped the Council would have, was the hearty co-operation of local authorities in stamping out the disease.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he fully concurred in the closing phrase of the speech of the noble Lord opposite (the Lord President); but he hoped that it meant that the noble Lord would impress upon the local authorities the necessity of stamping out the disease as soon as it appeared in any district. He was glad to see the Amendments made in the Bill; but he could not agree with the noble Lord that the 1st clause, as amended, enlarged the discretion of the Privy Council. On the contrary, he took the same view of it as that taken by the noble Duke near him (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon), that the clause as it now stood was even more stringent than it was when it left their Lordships' House.

Commons' Amendments *considered* accordingly, and *agreed to.*

MARRIAGES LEGALIZATION BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 76.) REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to order).

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, he wished to call attention to the fact that marriages sometimes took place in the English Border counties which were thoroughly *bonâ fide,* but yet were liable to great doubt, and more than doubt, owing to certain irregularities. Suppose a man in Scotland, who was a Presbyterian, came over the Border to marry a young lady who was a Churchwoman in Carlisle. Her banns were duly published. The man brought with him a certificate that a certain process had been gone through, and this would be tendered to the clergyman in England as a certificate of the publication of the banns. But this was held not to be a publication within the meaning of the Act of George IV. regulating marriages in England, and the consequence was that marriages so celebrated gave rise to grave doubts on the part of the parties so married. He had no doubt that the Bill of the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack was intended to cover cases of this kind; but it hardly seemed to him that it did so. He would therefore suggest a verbal alteration in the Bill which would cover such cases; and he trusted that the noble and learned Earl would, before the third reading, see his way to amend the Bill so as to cover those cases which did not at present seem to be covered, and so place the law in a more satisfactory position.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he was obliged to the right rev. Prelate for calling attention to the subject. It was, as the right rev. Prelate had said, the object of the Bill to cover all cases which properly came within its principle, and so prevent the necessity for Marriage Legalization Acts for particular places. He (the Lord Chancellor) did not understand precisely the cases to which the right rev. Prelate had referred; but if he would be good enough to send him a statement of them in writing, he would do his best to meet the views of the right rev. Prelate.

Amendments *agreed to.*

Bill to be read 3^a on *Tuesday* next.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 16.)

(*The Duke of Richmond and Gordon.*)

REPORT. BILL WITHDRAWN.

Moved, "That the Bill (by leave of the House) be withdrawn."—(*The Duke of Richmond and Gordon.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that he was bound to say that the Government were distinctly of opinion that the alterations made by the Commons in the Government Bill had enlarged the discretion of the Privy Council, and that was the view upon which they were prepared to act.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON said, he took an entirely different view of the Amendments made to that of the noble Lord opposite (the Lord President), and he quite agreed with the Amendments, and that they made the Bill more stringent than when it went down to the Commons. He did not agree with the assertion of the noble Lord that no disease had come into the country within the last six months; because he thought it had been satisfactorily proved that the disease of the animals found in Cambridgeshire was traced to Liverpool, and that they had come from Canada.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he had not the smallest reason for thinking that the disease came from Canada. There was really no evidence, and, so far as they knew, Canada was absolutely free from disease. As to the form in which the Bill had come back, he might say that the Government would not have supported the Amendments, if they had taken the same view of them as the noble Duke appeared to do.

LORD HARLECH asked the noble Lord if he was able to state where the disease came from?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) was understood to say that there was no doubt those animals caught the disease in this country.

LORD DENMAN said, he was of opinion that the Amendment to which their Lordships had just previously agreed was a very useful improvement of the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether the equestrian statue of the late Duke of Wellington is to be removed before Thursday next?

LORD SUDELEY: In reply to the noble Duke, I have to state that the order was given for the removal of the Wellington Statue to Aldershot immediately after the Division which took place in the other House on the 1st of May. As your Lordships are aware, there was the very decisive majority of 111 in favour of the Vote which was taken in Committee of Supply. That Division confirmed the Division taken by this House on the 24th of March, and the Government considered that the question was finally settled by Parliament. Although the necessary steps are being taken for the removal of the statue, it must, of course, take some weeks, and the noble Duke need have no fear that it will have disappeared on the road to Aldershot by next Thursday.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to call attention to the answer reported to have been given by the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone on Friday, 9th May, with regard to the basis of the proposed Conference; and to ask Her Majesty's Government for some explanation of its meaning, said: I am very sorry to have to revert to a question which on previous occasions I have brought before your Lordships' House; but, considering the very great importance of the question, I trust I shall be pardoned if I, for the third time, renew the consideration of it, and endeavour to obtain some explanation, if not as to what Her Majesty's Government propose to do, at least, as to a very singular utterance which was made by the Prime Minister in "another place." On the 1st of May I asked the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what the subject-matter of the Conference was to be; and that noble Earl gave me, so far as that point was concerned, what I thought was a very satisfactory reply. He stated that the proposed Conference was to consider whether there should not be some change made in the Law of Liquidation; and, if so, what that change should be. For the reasons I shall presently give, I thought it necessary to renew that Question a few days afterwards. The noble Earl opposite gave me, perhaps, a rather less definite and distinct answer; but, at the same time, he said nothing whatever to vary the statement of the 1st of

May. Although I desired more I acquiesced in the answer of the noble Earl, because I always accept everything said by him with perfect faith in its natural sense. But the noble Earl is united in the Cabinet to a Gentleman whose abilities we all recognize, but who is emphatically a doctor of casuistry, and a dialectic disputant who will succeed, not only in persuading other persons, but himself also, on every conceivable subject which is presented to him, and who has a power which is almost matchless of analyzing, dividing, differentiating, and extracting senses and meanings, subtle, recondite, and abstruse from almost every single question placed before him. If I ask the Question for the third time the fault is not mine, and perhaps the fault is not that of the noble Earl opposite, but that of Mr. Gladstone, who has placed his gloss upon the pretty plain statement of the noble Earl. Let me, in a very few words, point out to your Lordships how this case stands. We have had the despatch, containing the invitation to the different Powers, laid upon the Table. That despatch is dated the 19th of April. How does it run? The noble Earl says—

> "I transmit to your Excellency herewith a brief statement of the present condition and prospects of the finances of Egypt. Her Majesty's Government wish to invite the careful attention of the Great Powers of Europe to this question."

The noble Earl goes on to say—

> "It appears to Her Majesty's Government that to meet the charges necessary for the peace and good government of the country. . . . . some change in the Law of Liquidation is required;"

and the despatch concludes thus—

> "Her Majesty's Government would, therefore, propose that a Conference should meet . . . . to determine whether such a change is necessary, and what shall be its exact nature." —[Egypt, No. 17 (1884), p. 1.]

I do not think that we need quarrel as to the clearness of that language, or that anyone can doubt what the scope and object of the Conference was to be. This was on the 19th of April. My Question to the noble Earl was on the 1st of May, and his answer was in these terms—

> "We propose a Conference to consider whether there should not be some change made in the Law of Liquidation, and, if so, what that change should be."

That seems to me to be very plain. I had a reason for repeating my Question three or four days afterwards; and, as I have already remarked, the noble Earl's answer, although not quite so explicit as before, varied in nothing from what he had originally said. But this did follow. My noble Friend the noble Marquess behind me (the Marquess of Salisbury) complained of the noble Earl's answer as being very reticent; and he said that if the noble Earl was so unwilling to state what the object and scope of the Conference were to be there must needs be some mystery behind. My noble Friend the Secretary of State for India (the Earl of Kimberley), rising immediately after that, said the noble Marquess had made a speech imputing motives to Her Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I could not hear in silence the assertion that there was a dark design.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: Yes; my noble Friend said something of that nature. Although between the 19th of April and the 6th of May Her Majesty's Government became less and less explicit on this point, still I do put it to the House, whether the common-sense inference from the words used was not that the object and nature of the Conference was to be a financial one, and that the question of the administration and government of Egypt was not to come before it? About that time, however, or immediately afterwards, reports appeared in various papers stating, with more or less distinctness, that Turkey would decline to enter the Conference except on certain conditions, one of those conditions being the discussion of points which would not be embraced under the head of finance. It was also stated that France took up the same position. Therefore, on the 8th May, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was interrogated on the subject in "another place," and this is what he is reported to have said—

> "That the introduction of any other matter would be the introduction of a new subject, and would be equivalent, in fact, to calling together a new Conference."

A Member of the House having further asked whether, if other important political matters in which British interests were paramount were introduced, Her Majesty's Government would distinctly decline to discuss them? Mr. Gladstone's answer, and it is a reasonable one, was—

> "It would be highly inexpedient and exceedingly disparaging to the other Powers, as well as ourselves, to enter into a discussion of them."

The right hon. Gentleman did not reply in the negative to the Question, but he delivered one of those remarkable fencing replies in which he excels so greatly. This reply, however, did not satisfy the Members of the House of Commons, and the following day, May 9, the Question was renewed, and this was the answer which Mr. Gladstone then gave to it—

> "I have to say that the basis of the Conference is really settled by the indication sent out by Lord Granville, which has been laid on the Table of the House. What I have already said amounts to this—that a discretionary power remains to raise any other question than that proposed by the Government; but no other question is within the actual range of the Conference; and if any other question should be raised it would be a new question, and it would be like calling a new Conference. We cannot undertake that the Conference shall forego the opportunity of raising a new question at a given time."

If we look at this last answer given by the Prime Minister, it is one of the most Sphinx-like and oracular answers I have ever heard given by a Minister. What does it mean? Does it mean either that the Members of the Conference will be able to raise questions other than those relating to Egyptian finance, or that they will not be able to do so? If they are not at liberty to do so, may I ask, in all humility, what the meaning of this most casuistical answer is—whether it is intended to modify, in any way, the statement which has been made in this House in answer to Questions by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and, whether the substance of that answer has been conveyed to the different Powers in a public despatch; or, whether we have to deal with the cunning fence of some casuistic gladiator? We are told that the Conference is to be called together only for one purpose; but what I wish to know from Her Majesty's Government in the meantime is, whether they are to stand by, and, if they do not initiate, will, at all events, allow other questions of vital and paramount importance to be raised by others? If that is the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's answer, then I say that the request to the other Powers to attend the Conference is a tacit invitation to those Powers to raise other questions, and I shall be greatly surprised if they do not take advantage of it. We wish to know distinctly whether the inquiry of the Conference is to be limited to financial questions; or, whether its Members are to be at liberty to enter into more general questions? If the Conference is to be a general Conference, then the financial question, which has served as a pretext for calling it together in the first instance, will be set aside, and all that our Army and money have won in Egypt will be abandoned, and we shall make our position in that country dependent upon the will of the other Powers. The noble Earl opposite can, if he pleases, this evening, by a single word, remove the evasive ambiguity of language used in "another place," and relieve the public anxiety on this subject; but if, on the other hand, the noble Earl—I do not think that he will descend to take refuge in the ambiguities I have referred to—wraps himself up in silence, there is but one interpretation that can be placed upon his language, and the country will believe that Her Majesty's Government, under cover of this financial Conference, really intends to permit other questions of great importance to be raised. Against such a course as that I, for one, must place upon record my most earnest and emphatic protest.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) has asked me a Question of which he has given me Notice. I wish to avoid, in the most particular way, making the slightest criticism on anything that passes "elsewhere;" but I imagine it is a fact, which everyone will admit, that latterly a habit has sprung up, not only of questioning Ministers on most important matters, but sometimes on matters of no importance whatever, and not only of questioning, but of examining and cross-examining them in a way that I have not the slightest recollection of in past years. The noble Earl opposite has read the words of Mr. Gladstone's answers; but I am not sure whether he has quoted them correctly or not. I should prefer hearing the words from Mr. Gladstone himself. But it appears to me that, taken as a whole, the matter requires no explanation; and I do not see any difference between the statements of Mr. Gladstone in the other House and the statements I have made here. I decline to become an accomplice to creating a new precedent; and if these cross-examinations and re-examinations are to be continued from House to House, and the Ministers in one Assembly are to be called upon to answer any incidental Questions of that kind, I decline to assist in them. I perfectly admit that the noble Earl has a right to put Questions to me, and I answer them in the best way I can; but I will not answer them when prefaced in a manner which I think the noble Earl ought not to have adopted, and when they are couched in personal language directed against Mr. Gladstone behind his back, and contain references to casuistry and other most offensive expressions. I think that it would be better for the noble Earl to request some of his Colleagues, with whom he is again reconciled, to ask the Question in the presence of Mr. Gladstone, who, I imagine, is a person perfectly capable of answering for himself. I repeat that the noble Earl has a right to put these Questions to me, and I should be glad to answer them again; but, as the noble Earl has himself stated, I have already twice answered them. Although he says there is, I did not intend that there should be the slightest difference between the answers I gave to the two Questions which were put to me, and those answers I am perfectly ready to repeat and abide by. What the noble Earl has said has been singularly illustrated by what has fallen from him—namely, that when Ministers on their own responsibility decline to go into details as to present negotiations, every sort of charge should be made against them, and every sort of question should be put to them, in order to force them from their reserve, which they do not hold for their own comfort, but which they think is for the advantage of the public service.

EARL CAIRNS: I think that the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) will see that this is a matter of very grave importance, and that it is one which, more than any other, is at this moment engaging the attention of the country; and we have an absolute and a perfect right to have full and frank information with regard to it from Her Majesty's Government, or otherwise the country, which is anxious and disquieted, will not be satisfied. I must at once take exception to the observation of the noble Earl that we, in this House, are not at liberty to ask for an explanation of the answers which have been given in the other House by the Prime Minister to Questions which have been put to him on this subject. Whatever the Prime Minister says in his official capacity, whether in one House or in the other, whether at a meeting, or at Charing Cross, is public property; and, if what he says is at all ambiguous or doubtful, the public have a right to an explanation. If Mr. Gladstone had a seat in this House, we should demand an explanation of his answers from him; but he is not here, and we cannot, therefore, put any Questions to him with reference to them. Happily, however, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is here; and he, above all Members of Her Majesty's Government, is in a position to give us the information we ask for. I will tell the noble Earl what it is that disquiets me. I take it for granted that the answers attributed to the Prime Minister are substantially correct; because, on each occasion, he appears to have gone over the same ground, and there is no serious difference between them. But what I wish to ask is this—the Prime Minister states, in the first place, that the basis of the Conference upon which we are entering is that indicated in the despatch of the noble Earl. His second proposition is, that it will be open to any Member of the Conference to raise any other questions besides those relating solely to finance as proposed by the Government. Then, in the third place, the Prime Minister says, that the raising of any other question will be tantamount to calling a new Conference. How shall we test this matter? How are the two answers to stand together; the one saying that there will be a discretionary power to raise any other questions; and the other saying that the exercise of such a discretionary power will be tantamount to calling a new Conference? It is on this point that the public require further information. If you say that it will be mechanically or physically open to raise such other questions, but that to do so would be wrong, and that the moment it was done there would be an end of the Conference, because our Envoy or Representative would withdraw, that would be a sufficient answer to our inquiries. But that is exactly what we and the country want the Government to tell us. Will you tell us that the moment any new questions are raised at the Conference, you will at once protest, and will withdraw your Representative? If you will tell us that, you shall not hear another word from us on the subject, and you shall have no further cross-questioning from me in reference to it. But we have a right to clear and distinct information upon the point. If that is not the noble Earl's view then our worst fears are realized. But if that is the view of the Government, then it would be much better to state the basis of the Conference, not only affirmatively, but negatively also. If so, you would prevent a great deal of misapprehension and annoyance when the Conference meets. If the Conference meets and you take that attitude you cannot depart from this question, because that would be tantamount to calling a new Conference. How is it possible to tell what questions would be raised by the other Powers? No objection could be raised to their bringing forward any question in view of what the Prime Minister had said—namely, that it would be discretionary to produce a new Treaty, and even to speak about Gibraltar. The noble Earl has said that the Government relies on despatches; but I would ask what despatches? The one which was sent to the Powers was essentially different from that which was sent to Turkey, or rather to Lord Dufferin.

EARL GRANVILLE: Is the noble and learned Earl not aware that the Porte is not a party to the Law of Liquidation?

EARL CAIRNS: The Conference is the same whether the Porte was a party to the Law of Liquidation or not. The Powers have been invited to discuss the Law of Liquidation; but there is no word on that question in the despatch sent to Turkey; indeed, the only construction to be placed on the despatch to that Power is that the Conference was to discuss the whole question of the government of the country. And yet, in all this state of confusion, the noble Earl seems to think that we are to sit here with our hands folded, and not to press for answers to our Questions. That is a course which I will not entertain, and one which I do not think the country will in any way approve. I regard the noble Earl's answer as unsatisfactory; and he will make a mistake if he thinks the Opposition and the country will desist from asking an explanation of the difference between the two despatches.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: It is, of course, impossible to doubt that the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) thought some useful public end would be served by bringing forward this matter; but I must confess that I am at a loss to understand how such a view can be held by men who have had the responsibility of government on their shoulders, and who expect to bear those responsibilities again. As far as the despatches which have been referred to are concerned, I maintain that they both point to the same thing, and that there is perfect consistency between them; because, while that to the Powers mentioned the Law of Liquidation, that to the Porte spoke of the financial difficulties of Egypt and the pressing necessity for concerting some measures, if possible, for relieving those difficulties. The proper place to ask for an explanation of an answer given in Parliament and the person of whom to ask it is the place in which the answer is given and the person by whom the answer is made; and I am happy that the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) has not given his direct countenance to the idea that explanations should be asked in one House of answers and statements given and made in another; and the fact that no explanation was asked by the Friends and Colleagues of the noble Earl in the other House is to me a complete proof that those who asked the Question understood the meaning of the words used by the Prime Minister, and did not seek to put upon them the extraordinary construction now sought to be put upon them by the noble Earl. If they had not done so, I must presume they would have given the Prime Minister an opportunity of making an explanation there. As to the matter in question, the plain, common-sense view of it is that we are in communication with the Great Powers of Europe. The preliminaries of the Conference are not yet settled; and if we intended to do any good by our Conference, Ministers must, in answer to Questions, speak with that respect and reserve towards Foreign Powers which they have a right to expect from us. It is plain, therefore, that if Questions are put, concerning matters beyond the basis of the invitation, there is no other answers which, with due respect to the Powers, and in ordinary common sense, could be given, than to refer to the only basis on which the Conference has been called, and to say that matters which are outside the invitation, if they are to be dealt with at all, must be dealt with as being outside it. I cannot perceive why there should be any misunderstanding by those who have the will to understand.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, it is precisely because we have held Office, and know something of the meaning of these things, that the language of Her Majesty's Government fills us with disquietude. I know that the Foreign Office, whoever may be at its head, is an admirable machine, and I am quite sure that it was not by any carelessness or inadvertence that the double version of this invitation was recorded in the Circular to the Powers and that addressed to Turkey. The difference must have been made by some special order, and there must have been some reason for it. The noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack seems to think that it may be sufficient to say that Turkey was not a party to the Law of Liquidation, and that, therefore, that law could not be mentioned in the invitation addressed to her; but that does not alter the character of the words in which the invitation was conveyed. The references to the arrangement of the bases of a good Government for Egypt, which are contained in the invitation to Turkey, must be held to have the same meaning, and to be equally useful to other Powers, whether the Law of Liquidation is or is not mentioned, as a proof that Her Majesty's Government really mean, under cover of these words, to introduce considerations which far transcend the scope of any financial matters or international arrangements. Well, we shall see. The noble and learned Earl also complained of our asking for an explanation in this House of words used in the "other." It was not so much an explanation of words used in "another place" that we wanted, as to know how those words were to be reconciled with the assurances which we have received in this House. Therefore, it is here that we ought to ask for the explanation. As for trying to extract from the Prime Minister a clear, explicit, and satisfactory explanation of his own words, the noble Earl opposite knows it is a sheer mockery to recommend that to us. He knows that neither we, nor anyone else, has ever yet been able to accomplish that Herculean task. In the course of the debate this evening, obscure utterances on grave questions, in connection as they are with issues plain and simple, such as have been made tend rather to increase than to dissipate the apprehensions which the country has conceived upon this subject; because, whether we go to the cautious acuteness of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, or the dramatic indignation of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville), got up for the moment, both are parts of the same circuitous mode of proceeding adopted by them, and which enables them entirely to avoid giving a plain answer to the question before us. There is, however, one assurance which they could give, which would dissipate all apprehension on this subject. If they will say that—"If any other Power seeks to introduce any matter not within the bases of the conditions we lay down, we shall decline to discuss it." If they will give us that assurance, then all difficulties and apprehensions will be at an end. But in the midst of the cloud of words to which we have listened, there is no assurance of that kind, and nothing would induce Her Majesty's Government to give it. Now, the object we have in view is to know whether we can look upon the conditions that have been laid down for this Conference as a security to us that nothing else than the finances of Egypt shall be dealt with in the Council Chamber. If there is such a security, we may approach these negotiations without disquiet; but we now know that no such security is contained in these words; and, if they are not a security, they are a screen. If nothing but the finances of Egypt are to be discussed, we might have a fair issue; but, if they do not give us that pledge, we may have a very shrewd idea that, under very slight pressure from other Powers, other and far wider questions may be introduced, conclusions may be come to with respect to the future condition of Egypt which will not be honourable to us, not profitable to the British Empire, and which will be arrived at behind the back of

Parliament, and against which Parliament, after it is done, can only enter an empty protest.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, there is one point in the remarks of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) to which I may refer before I proceed further. He imputed to the Government that they disingenuously, and by way of a screen for what they are about to do, devised certain words in the despatch addressed to the Porte different from the words addressed to the five Powers. This we are charged with doing, in order that other matters may be brought forward for discussion in the Conference which are not in the invitations sent to the Powers.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What I said was, that there was a difference in the terms of the invitations, that it was intentional and meant something, and that it might have a disastrous effect. I never said that by this means other Powers would be allowed to introduce other matters; that was an observation I should not have ventured to make.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I understood the noble Marquess to say there was an intention on our part, under cover of these words, to introduce other subjects. On that I give a complete assurance, and I am glad to hear the denial of the noble Marquess. It would be entirely erroneous to ascribe any such motive to Her Majesty's Government, and I can assure him no such difference was intended. The difference between the two despatches has been already fully explained. The Turkish Government and the Governments of the five Powers stand upon somewhat different footings. The latter are concerned directly with the Law of Liquidation. The Porte has a connection with it very close, but not the same. There is no other reason for it. The noble Marquess tells us it is a mockery to ask Mr. Gladstone for any explanation of his words. I would, in reply to that, tell the noble Marquess, as regards the declaration which he made that if the Government gave a certain assurance, all their doubts and fears would be dissipated, if the noble Marquess thinks it a mockery to ask Mr. Gladstone for any explanation, I think it is a perfect mockery to ask the Government to make any declaration with the view of dissipating the fears and apprehensions of the noble Marquess and noble Lords opposite, because we are perfectly well aware that, whatever the Government say, those fears and apprehensions will still remain exactly the same.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Public Libraries Acts—Was *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª. (No. 95.)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 13*th May*, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*Report*—Turnpike Acts Continuance * [No. 173].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) (Unions of Clonmel and others) * [198]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 3) (Union of Tullamore) * [199]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (New Streets in the City of Dublin, &c.) * [200]; Shannon Navigation * [201].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Bandon Waterworks) * [188]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Districts of Dorking and Hendon, &c.) * [190]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) (Parishes of Ashen, &c.) * [191]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) (Parishes of Charley, &c.) * [192]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) * [193]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) * [194].

Third Reading—Commons Regulation Provisional Order * [172], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he intends to introduce the promised measure relative to the Purchase Clauses of the Irish Land Act, and increasing the facilities and encouragements for the purchase and sale of land in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I hope to be in a position to introduce the measure referred to towards the end of next week.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COUNTY OF TYRONE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that, with the exception of one gentleman, who is a confirmed invalid, there are no magistrates within a radius of four miles of Beragh, county Tyrone; that prisoners have to be marched to Sixmile Bridge; and that it would be to the convenience of the inhabitants and the police if there were a justice on the spot; has a Memorial been presented, asking for the appointment of a Catholic and a Presbyterian gentleman; and, what action do the Government propose to take upon it?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that it is the case that the only magistrate who resides within four miles of Beragh is an invalid. Sixmile Cross—which is probably the place referred to in the Question as Sixmile Bridge—is two miles from Beragh Police Barrack, and it is occasionally necessary to march prisoners for this distance. I understand that some steps were taken with the object of presenting a Memorial for the appointment of additional magistrates; but I have not been able to ascertain definitely that it was forwarded to the Lieutenant of the county.

Mr. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that Sixmile Cross, which is only two miles from the place named in the Question, is only used on the petty sessions day twice a-month, while the other is used four times a-month?

[No reply.]

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—TIPPERARY COUNTY AND THE KING'S COUNTY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, early in the present year, the Catholic clergy of the Poor Law Union of Roscrea applied to Lord Lismore, Lieutenant of Tipperary, to appoint five gentlemen named to the commission of the peace, and also applied to Mr. Dames Longworth, Lieutenant of King's County, to appoint one gentleman named to the commission, and that the members of the Roscrea Catholic Club, by unanimous resolution, supported both petitions; whether it is the fact, as stated in the applications, that there is no Catholic magistrate in the entire Union of Roscrea, comprising three Petty Sessions districts, and inhabited almost wholly by Catholics, and that the gentlemen recommended are all persons of education, and of independent position, who reside in the district; whether Lord Lismore and Mr. Dames Longworth not taking any action, the applications in question were sent on to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland; and, at what conclusion his Lordship has arrived?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I believe that it is the case that applications, as mentioned in this Question, were made to Lord Lismore and Mr. Dames Longworth, who did not adopt the recommendations made to them. The Lord Chancellor informs me that the applications have been sent on to him, and that he will in due time consider the qualifications and status of each of the persons mentioned in the applications. I understand that it is doubtful, if it is correct to state, that there is no Roman Catholic magistrate in the entire Union of Roscrea; but I shall make further inquiry on the subject.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MANORHAMILTON BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that at a meeting of the Manorhamilton Board on the 1st of May, the majority consisting of ex-officio guardians refused to sign the minutes of the previous meeting, and proceeded to cancel the appointment of committees elected at that meeting; was this legal, and can a resolution of a board be cancelled without fourteen days' notice; have the Local Government Board recognised the validity of the proceedings on either day; and, what do they intend to do in the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Some of the proceedings of the Board of Guardians on the 24th of April in regard to the appointment of Dispensary Committees, were illegal; and the Local Government Board having, by letter dated the 30th of April, called the attention of the Guardians to the state of the law on the subject, the committees were revised by the Board on the 1st instant. The correction on the 1st instant of anything illegally done on the 24th of April was a proper and legal proceeding. But the action of the Guardians in regard to the appointment of committees still requires amendment, and the Local Government Board are in communication with them on the subject. The majority of the Guardians, on the 1st instant, did decline to allow the minutes of the previous meeting to be signed, some of the proceedings on that day having been ascertained to be illegal.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—CARRICKASLANE NATIONAL SCHOOL—DISMISSAL OF MISS FITZGERALD.

MR. KINNEAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. John Ranson, who assumes to be the patron of the Carrickaslane National School, near Castleblaney, county Monaghan, having been appointed to that position by his late father, without the sanction of the committee, has given Miss Fitzgerald, the present teacher, notice to leave the school; and, whether, since Miss Fitzgerald is a thoroughly trained and efficient teacher, being classed first of the second class under the Board's rules, and possesses the entire confidence of all the parents, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian, whose children are attending the school, who went in a body to Mr. Ranson, asking him to withdraw his notice of dismissal, anything can be done to prevent the removal of Miss Fitzgerald from her present position as mistress of the school?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that Mr. Ranson was regularly appointed by the Board as manager of the Carrickaslane National School in 1877, in succession to his father, who had been manager for the 21 years preceding. No School Committee is recognized, and none has made any claim for recognition during the last 28 years. It is within the manager's powers to dismiss the teacher on giving her three months' notice, as appears to have been done in this case, and the Commissioners of National Education have no right to interfere.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—MILITARY RIOT AT ATHLONE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What has been the result of the report made to the Colonel in Command at Athlone respecting an attack upon a dwelling house in that town by certain officers of his regiment; whether, with reference to the statement that Captain Beckett, R.M. had no concern in the affair, and did not know of it till some days later, it is true that Constables Leddy and Mahoney, of the Local Constabulary Force, escorted him home from the scene of the outrage immediately after its commission, and stayed knocking at his door for a considerable time before he procured admission; whether Captain Beckett went, at a very early hour the following morning, to the house which had been attacked, arranged that no complaint would be made of the outrage, gave the servants ten shillings each as the price of their silence, recovered possession of the laced cap which one of the officers had left upon the street, and restored it to the owner; whether Captain Beckett paid the cost of repairing the broken fanlight and drawing-room window; and, whether the Government will institute an inquiry on oath into all the circumstances of the case?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am unable to answer for the military authorities. Any inquiry as to their action should, I think, be addressed to the Secretary of State for War. With regard to the rest of the Question, I have received a further report from Captain Beckett, in which he says—"I can only indignantly repeat that I know nothing whatever of the matter;" and he goes on to characterize in strong terms as utterly unfounded the imputations made against him. The Government place implicit confidence in Captain Beckett's denial, and there are certainly no grounds for instituting an inquiry on oath on the strength of what, as far as appears in the Question of the hon. Member, is an anonymous accusation, the truth of which is empatically denied. Should the hon. Member adduce any reliable truth of the allegation, of course I shall be always ready to give it attention.

MR. SEXTON: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman upon what principle he, in reply to a definite Question, will accept the unsupported word of Captain Beckett without interrogating the two police constables mentioned in the Question, a number of servants, and some ladies residing in the town who are acquainted with the circumstances?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Since no information has been laid before the Government from any responsible person, either through an hon. Member of this House or otherwise, they could not well proceed to make an inquiry. Without such information the Government cannot proceed with an inquiry into the conduct of any public servant.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to give the right hon. Gentleman Notice that I shall not upon any account allow this question to drop.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—PROTECTION OF TELEGRAMS.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Labouchere) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is his intention to take any action with a view to make the milking of cablegrams to this Country by the officials of Cable Companies illegal; and to ensure, so far as is possible, the secrecy of all cablegrams sent to and from this Country over land lines belonging to the Post Office?

Mr. FAWCETT: Although the public is sufficiently protected by the existing law against messages passing over wires belonging to the Post Office being divulged, I fully admit the importance of, if possible, providing similar protection to foreign telegrams passing over the wires worked by private Companies. The question is not free from difficulty; but I should be very glad to consider whether a clause could not be framed to be inserted in the Post Office Protection Bill to meet such a case as that referred to by my hon. Friend. It has been intimated by some of the most important Cable Companies that they would be glad to see such a clause passed by the House. The Post Office Protection Bill, which now stands for second reading, is at the present time blocked, and, this being the case, I am prevented, until a second reading is obtained, from putting on the Paper any new clause that it may be intended to move in Committee to carry out the object desired.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of introducing into that Bill a provision that in the despatch of such messages no precedence should be given to the Chairman or Directors of Telegraph Companies?

Mr. FAWCETT: If I can only get the second reading of this Bill, which is a purely administrative Bill, passed, I shall put at once on the Paper the form of clause, and shall then be glad to receive any suggestion.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. MATTHIAS M'MANUS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been drawn to the fact that, in reply to a resolution of the Tullamore Board of Guardians, recommending Mr. Matthias M'Manus, a member of the Board, for appointment to the Commission of the Peace, Sir Benjamin Chapman, Lieutenant of Westmeath, has written to the Board, informing them that he had forwarded to Mr. M'Manus a "set of queries" to be answered, one of those queries being whether Mr. M'Manus is a member of the National League, and another, whether he has been a member of the Land League; if the Lord Chancellor of Ireland approves of the putting of these queries; if the Lord Chancellor of Ireland regards ex-membership of the Land League, or membership of the National League, as constituting any bar or impediment to appointment to the Commission of the Peace; and, if it has been, or is, the practice of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland, or the Lieutenants of Irish counties, to inquire, before appointing persons to the Commission of the Peace, whether they were, or had been, members of the Freemason or of the Orange Society?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Lord Chancellor has no authority to control the Lieutenants of Counties in respect of any inquiries they may think it right or proper to make in respect of gentlemen whose names are recommended to them for the Commissoin of the Peace, nor does his Lordship think it desirable that any rules in respect of such inquiries should be laid down. It is essential that both the Lieutenants of Counties and the Lord Chancellor should be entirely free in each case to make any inquiry whatever which they or he may deem right.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DR. O'NEILL, MEDICAL OFFICER, ATHY.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps the Government have taken, or proposes to take, with reference to Doctor O'Neill, who holds the three offices of Medical Officer to the Fever Hospital and Union Infirmary of Athy, of President of the Local Land League, and of Coroner; and, whether, in case a patient in the Fever Hospital dies in consequence of Doctor O'Neill's absence in pursuance of his duties as Chairman of the Land League, the inquest, if a charge of neglect be preferred, will be held by Doctor O'Neill in his capacity as Coroner?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board do not propose to interfere in regard to Dr. O'Neill unless any case arises in which his attendance at the workhouse is neglected by reason of his employment as Coroner, or in which a patient in the workhouse or hospital suffers from his absence. If such a case should arise, it will be necessary to consider the question of requiring him to resign his appointment as Medical Officer. The provisions of Section 2 of the Coroners Act, 1881, would prevent Dr. O'Neill from holding an inquest in such circumstances as are suggested in the last paragraph of the Question.

INLAND REVENUE—HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCES.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his proposed reduction of the licence charge on hackney carriages to fifteen shillings per annum is intended to include carriages kept for hire by hotel proprietors?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, Sir; if the fares are fixed by statute or by local regulation, but not otherwise. We have no intention to reduce the tax on the owner of a carriage who can charge what he likes for its hire.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—DONGOLA.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Governor of Dongola has telegraphed that the position of that town is very critical, and has urgently asked for reinforcements; and, whether such reinforcements will be sent to Dongola?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: On the 10th instant, Mr. Egerton reported that the Governor of Dongola asked for reinforcements, and it had been decided to advance a battalion of Egyptian troops from Assouan to Wady Halfa and to Korosko. Subsequent news from Dongola is to the effect that the troops there are unfavourably affected by the news of the position of affairs at Khartoum and Berber.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Have you no later news?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No.

POST OFFICE—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. EWART asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is able to state to the House any proposal which he may have to make for the more rapid carriage of the Mails to Belfast and the North of Ireland, by way of Stranraer and Larne; whether he has been able to give the short sea route the favourable consideration anticipated from his replies last year; and, whether he has observed the inevitable risk to the Mail communications with Ireland which results from possessing only one route, liable to delay, such as has been shown to be probable from the accident to the Mail steamer, *Leinster*?

Mr. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, Whether, before the new time table for the Irish Mail Service between London and Holyhead is finally settled, he will state to the House whether it will secure the maximum practicable acceleration by providing for an earlier start of the night mail from Euston, as proposed in his letter of last year to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce?

Mr. MOORE asked the Postmaster General, Whether, considering the great interest felt in the acceleration of the Irish Mail Service, he will give the House the earliest possible information as to the proposed time table, and allow Members an opportunity of discussing it before it is finally approved?

Mr. FAWCETT: As the three Questions standing in the names of the hon. Members for Belfast, Carlow County, and Clonmel all refer to the subject of the Irish mail service, I think it will be convenient if I answer them together. It is the case, as stated by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), that it was at one time contemplated, as stated in the letter written to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in January, 1883, that the Irish night mail train should leave London at an earlier hour—namely, 8 o'clock, instead of 8.25; but on examining the subject more closely it was found that much inconvenience would result from this arrangement. In the first place it would render necessary an earlier closing of the post for Irish letters posted with a late fee than for any other letters. This want of uniformity would, I think, be inconvenient. Moreover, the earlier departure of the Irish night mail would disarrange the time of posting of Irish letters in many of the Provincial towns, these letters being taken by cross trains to fall into the Irish mail service. In these circumstances it is proposed that commencing on the 1st of July the mail trains should leave London and Dublin at the same time as they now do, but that they shall arrive in London and Dublin half-an-hour earlier. This earlier arrival of the mail from Holyhead will be very important, because it will enable Irish letters to be delivered earlier in London; and it will secure with greater certainty than now that the Irish letters will be in time for the Continental mail and some of the English country mails. The earlier arrival of letters in Dublin will also be very important as having a bearing upon the accelerated delivery of letters through the Provincial towns of Ireland. This is a question to which I attribute much importance, and will be immediately taken in hand. With regard to the Stranraer and Larne route, I have been asked to receive another deputation, and this I have consented to do.

Mr. GRAY: Will the right hon. Gentleman afford any opportunity of this arrangement being brought before the House, so as to avoid the repetition of the fiasco of last year?

Mr. FAWCETT: I am very anxious to bring the accelerated service into operation as soon as possible. I have no other object in view than to make the best service possible.

Mr. BIGGAR: I beg to give Notice that if any alteration proposed in the Larne and Stranraer route involves any increase in the Estimates I shall oppose it.

Mr. MOORE: I beg to give Notice that I shall oppose the Estimate for the Post Office unless we are allowed some opportunity of discussing the time table.

Mr. GRAY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the decision which he has just announced will involve the delay of every mail service leaving Dublin, and will he be kind enough to inform the House who are the persons who allege that inconvenience would be caused by the earlier posting of letters in London?

Mr. FAWCETT: Well, I do not know any particular person. The practice hitherto in London has been to have a uniform hour of posting, and I think that is a very great convenience. All sorts of mistakes would occur if a person were to take a bundle of letters and find that the Scotch letters were to be posted at 7, and the Welsh letters at 7.40, and the Irish letters at a quarter to 7. Certainly I should not be prepared, unless for very strong reasons, to depart from this principle of uniformity. I do not want to enter into any arguable matter; but I do not understand on what ground the hon. Member alleges that the arrival of the mail in Dublin half-an-hour earlier than now——

Mr. GRAY: No, no.

Mr. FAWCETT: Well, I did not understand what the hon. Member said.

Mr. BIGGAR: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to make any arrangement for the earlier starting of the mail trains from Dublin for other parts of Ireland?

Mr. FAWCETT: I explained that the matter of accelerating the letters to Provincial towns, as I have always stated, is far more important than it is to Dublin. Having secured this half-hour's acceleration the letters will arrive half-an-hour earlier. Without giving any promise this gain of half-an-hour will be an important thing to get the letters into the Provincial towns earlier, MR. GRAY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, before he changed the decision which he indicated that he had come to by a formal letter to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce last year, he consulted any representative Irish body, or, in fact, any persons except officials interested in the Irish mail service; and whether the reasons which he has stated against the earlier starting of the mail train from Euston did not all exist last year in exactly the same strength as they exist now? I wish to explain to the right hon. Gentleman what I meant by "delay." I meant that the delay of half-an-hour from London, which the right hon. Gentleman is now about to sacrifice, will involve that the Irish service from Dublin cannot be started by half-an-hour earlier, which otherwise could be done.

MR. FAWCETT: I am anxious to correct the misapprehension in the mind of the hon. Member. I never gave a promise that the mail should leave London at 8 o'clock. Knowing that in many quarters there was a strong desire it should leave earlier, I stated I should contemplate it. [Mr. GRAY: No, no.] I refer to the letter; that is the expression I used. I certainly never intended a promise; and on looking into the matter more closely I found, to my great regret, that the arrangement was not possible. I carefully considered various Memorials and the views of the deputations which waited on me on the subject.

MR. GRAY: I am very sorry to rise again, but I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman this one very simple Question. Whether, before he changed the determination which he had indicated in the formal letter to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, he did or did not consult any Irish representative body, or any of those practically interested in Ireland in this important matter?

MR. FAWCETT: I had all the advice before me of representative bodies in Ireland. I knew their views they were stated to me, and I consulted persons who were in no way interested. [Mr. GRAY: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member seems to think that I have some motive in arriving at a decision. All I can say is, I took every step and did everything I could to come to a different decision, and I have already stated the reasons why I do not think it would be advisable to alter the present hours of departure from London

EGYPT—(EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—MISSION OF ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can inform the House where Admiral Sir William Hewett is believed to be at the present time, and what was the date of the last communication from him; and, whether the Government are yet in a position to give the House any information as to the objects and purpose of the Mission to the King of Abyssinia?

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What escort, if any, Admiral Hewett has for his protection during his mission to King Johannes at Adowa; whether, when he started from Massowah he was escorted by a body of Bashi-Bazouks, who were such a terror to the inhabitants that they were not allowed to cross the frontier into Abyssinia?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: According to a telegram from Captain Hastings from Massowah, Admiral Hewett expected to reach Adowa on the 26th of April. I explained the general objects of the mission in the debate on the 15th of March, and I have no further statement to make at present. No reports have yet been received from Sir William Hewett, and I have no information on the subject of the escort mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked if the Government had any information as to where Admiral Hewett was?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Government have no knowledge of the position of Admiral Hewett at this moment, but information is expected from him every day.

MR. W. H. SMITH: What is the latest date on which a communication was received from him?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not think the Admiralty have received any report from him since his departure.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Just before I left the Admiralty this morning I was told that a letter had come in from Admiral Hewett, dated April 18, but that it did not add much to the information already in possession of the Admiralty.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked whether Admiral Hewett had been relieved of his command in the Red Sea?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the command in the Red Sea was to be transferred for a time to the Commander-in-Chief on the Mediterranean Station.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—COUNTY INSPECTOR FRENCH.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the nature of the informal inquiries instituted by Colonel Bruce respecting the charges against County Inspector French; is it true that three District Inspectors of Constabulary were questioned on the subject, and that their evidence established a primæ facie presumption of guilt; if so, why was not a prosecution for felony instituted in conformity with section 407 of the Code; and, what was the report as to French's mental condition of the medical Commission appointed by the Government to examine him?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I do not feel myself bound to state the details of an inquiry which I have already described as informal. The result was that, having learnt that Mr. French was about to institute proceedings with the object of vindicating his character, the authorities determined to await the issue of those proceedings. The report as to Mr. French's mental condition is that he is suffering from mental disease described as softening of the brain.

Mr. HEALY: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary whether he himself said Mr. French insisted on his bringing these proceedings?

Mr. TREVELYAN'S answer was inaudible.

Mr. HEALY: Was he obliged to do so by the right hon. Gentleman's distinct instructions and orders, and subject to his leaving the service?

Mr. TREVELYAN: What took place passed between the Inspector General and Mr. French.

Mr. O'BRIEN: On this day month I hope to have the opportunity of calling attention to the conduct of the Government in screening this felon for the purpose of injuring a political opponent.

LAW AND JUSTICE—ARRANGEMENT OF THE ASSIZES.

Mr. RATHBONE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he can give an assurance that no scheme involving the taking away of the Assizes for Civil and Criminal business from Anglesey and Carnarvon will be sanctioned by the Lord Chancellor or the Privy Council without affording those interested an opportunity of stating their case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that the matter was under consideration; but, at the same time, any representations which the hon. Member might be good enough to make on behalf of his constituents would be most fully considered.

Mr. BULWER asked if any scheme dealing with the alteration of the Assizes would be laid before Parliament, and whether there would be an opportunity of considering it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that some schemes, of course, would require legislation, while others would be effected by Orders in Council.

Mr. BULWER asked whether the Judges or the Privy Council had the power to take away the Assizes from a particular place without the sanction of Parliament?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that was a very peculiar point; but the better opinion was that there was no power except by legislation to deprive a particular place of the Assizes.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE BROTHERS DELAHUNTY.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the dying declaration of Patrick Slattery, of Derrynapila, set forth that, actuated by spite, he procured a boy named Markham to give false evidence against the brothers Delahunty, sentenced to penal servitude for life at the Cork Winter Assizes of 1882, for the alleged offence of firing at one Donnellan; if he will state why the Delahuntys were secretly conveyed from Ennis Gaol to Killaloe, some thirty miles, in order to be returned for trial, without any notice being given to the solicitor whom they had consulted, and although Kilbarron (the scene of the alleged outrage) is as near to Ennis as to Killaloe; if it is a fact that P. Slattery was liberated from gaol in order to enable him to procure certain evidence against the Delahuntys, and also that there was an effort made to induce him to go to Cork to corroborate the evidence of Markham; if it is a fact that Patrick Slattery, in his dying declaration, has stated that it was in consequence of the inducements and solicitations of Sergeant O'Halloran that he procured Markham to swear falsely, and that Sergeant O'Halloran said to him, immediately before the trial of the Delahuntys, that "now was his time to be even with them," O'Halloran knowing that personal enmity existed between Slattery and the prisoners; if he will state the rewards, either in rank or money, conferred upon O'Halloran for his action in the case, and the amount of money given to Markham for his evidence, and for his expenses also to the other witnesses; upon what grounds does the Irish Government discredit Slattery's statement, and will they inquire into the conduct of Sergeant O'Halloran; will any further action be taken by the Government to sift the evidence in the case fully; and, if it is true that three of the Crown witnesses have since fled the country?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The declaration of Slattery in substance states as mentioned in the Question. The Delahuntys were not secretly conveyed from Ennis to Killaloe. Their friends were informed some days before of the intention to hold the investigation, and witnesses for the prisoners, and a solicitor on their behalf attended. It is not the fact that Slattery was liberated from gaol in order to enable him to procure evidence against the Delahuntys, and no effort was made to induce him to go to Cork. Slattery does state in his declaration as referred to in paragraph 4 of the Question; but no importance is attached to his statement. He was a man of bad character. He was not a witness for the Crown. Markham, who gave evidence which is believed, was the least important witness for the Crown. The man who was fired at swore he saw the shot fired by one of the prisoners. Another witness heard the shot, and saw the prisoners running from the scene; and a third proved he heard one of the prisoners frequently say he would shoot Donnellan. Sergeant O'Halloran, who bears a very high character in the Force, obtained a favourable record for his exertions in the case, and a reward of £5. Neither Markham nor any other witness was paid for his evidence. He received his expenses as regulated by the Crown Solicitor. None of the witnesses have fled the country in the sense mentioned in the Question. They left out of consideration for their personal safety. The Government is satisfied that the conviction was right and obtained on unimpeachable evidence, and there is no intention of making further inquiry.

Mr. KENNY: Is it not the fact that the solicitor for the prisoners was not informed of their being conveyed to Killaloe, and that another solicitor had to be obtained at Nenagh, and had only a few hours to be instructed? I would also inquire whether application was made to Mr. Burke, R.M., to liberate Slattery from gaol?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will give Notice of those Questions.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked whether the Government found out this man's bad character when they were utilizing him for the conviction of these men?

[No reply.]

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE CHANTRY BEQUEST.

Sir ROBERT PEEL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the manner in which the President and Council of the Royal Academy are applying the fund bequeathed by Sir W. Chantry "for the purchase of works of fine art," in the words of the sculptor's bequest, "of the highest merit;" and, whether steps cannot be taken for giving effect, in the interest of English art, to the express wishes of the founder?

Mr. GLADSTONE: With regard to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I should wish to state that, as far as I am aware, we have no power whatever to interfere in any matter connected with the administration of the Royal Academy of any trust that may have been placed in the hands of the Council. I only saw the Question this morning, though, perhaps, it was my own fault, I have, however, made a communication to Sir Frederick Leighton on the subject, and if he should supply me with materials I will let the House and my right hon. Friend know what he says on another day.

Sir ROBERT PEEL said, he would ask the Question again on a future occasion.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—ESTIMATE OF LOSS OF LIFE.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he could give approximately an estimate of the loss of life that had been incurred in the course of the military operations in Egypt and the Soudan since the bombardment of Alexandria?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think the hon. Member had better ask that Question of the War Office.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he thought that he was entitled to an answer to the Question, and therefore he would put it to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question asked by the hon. Member is obviously one requiring Notice.

Mr. MAC IVER: I will ask the right hon. Gentleman the Question on Thursday.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice that when the hon. Member asks that Question I shall also ask the Prime Minister whether he can give an estimate of how many people would be likely to be killed, approximately, in the event of his following the advice of the Opposition, and sending an expedition in the middle of the summer to relieve General Gordon?

PARLIAMENT—THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS, in view of the meeting of the Standing Committee on Law on Thursday next, asked the Attorney General, Whether it was intended to appoint 15 Members under the Standing Order in addition to the usual number of 60?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that he understood, from a communication he had received from the Chairman of the Committee of Selection, that 15 additional Members would be appointed for the sitting of the Committee on Thursday.

MOTION.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND ORDERS OF THE DAY.—RESOLUTION.

Ordered, That the Adjourned Debate on General Gordon's Mission have precedence, this day, over all Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION.

VOTE OF CENSURE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th May],

"That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. CHAPLIN: Sir, I shall not detain the House except for a very short time. I have no desire to make a speech on this occasion. I have already had an opportunity of stating my views publicly on this question, especially with regard to the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. As far as I know, those views have never been questioned since; and it is quite unnecessary, therefore, to repeat them to-day. I desire, with the permission of the House, to make one or two comments upon the debate, as far as it has proceeded up to the present time; and, in the first place, I desire to offer my sincere congratulations to my right hon. Friend the Member for Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) upon the powerful indictment he has brought against Her Majesty's Government. If I congratulate him upon that, I congratulate him still more upon the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; for a lamer, a more impotent, or a more unhappy contribution to a great debate on the part of the right hon. Gentleman when called upon to vindicate the honour of his Government and his country, has assuredly never been heard before from an English Prime Minister within the walls of the English Parliament, and I sincerely hope it will be many a day before such a reply is heard again. Why, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman hardly wrung a cheer throughout the whole of that debate, even from his own supporters sitting thick behind him, except when, in reply to the charge—not of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire, remember, but the charge of General Gordon, the hero, the Christian hero, the man of genius. This remarkable man—the importance of whose mission the Government could not possibly overestimate—in reply to his charge of indelible disgrace, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister turned upon my right hon. Friend and put to him this question. He said—

> "If it be an indelible disgrace not to rescue these garrisons which are mentioned, then it follows as a matter of course that it is an honourable obligation upon you to rescue all the others which are not mentioned?"

The Prime Minister put this question to my right hon. Friend, and exulted over him because he was dumb. But I think the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten some previous proceedings on this question. It was a most necessary question to put to the right hon. Gentleman; the Prime Minister had answered it himself before. It was a very old device of his, and he had tried it on a previous occasion. I remember, not very long ago, moving the adjournment of this House in order to try and persuade Her Majesty's Ministers to take some steps, at least, to save the garrison and population of Sinkat from being massacred. What did he say to me in reply? He said—

> "The hon. Member is quite ignorant upon this subject. He does not recognize the importance of the appeal made to me. Sinkat and Tokar are not the only garrisons which demand the attention of the Government; but it is equally the duty of the Government to consider all the other garrisons in the country."

Well, now, Sir, I want to put a question in turn to the right hon. Gentleman himself upon the subject. What was the object of General Gordon's mission? That has been pretty freely stated already in the course of this debate. Amongst other things, it was to rescue the garrisons of the country. "Yes," says the right hon. Gentleman; "but it was to be done by pacific means." What does he mean by that? Does he mean to tell the House that if it was impossible to accomplish that object by pacific means he had all along determined to desert them? That is the only logical conclusion which it is possible to draw from the right hon. Gentleman's observations last night, and he has been met already by the indignant replies of the gallant English gentleman now beleaguered in Khartoum, when he told the Prime Minister that whatever the views of his Government might be it was an act which, as an English gentleman, he would never consent to commit. Now, Sir, I want the House to consider for a moment what has been the pith of all the charges which have been made against the Government during the course of this debate. The object of General Gordon's mission has been plainly stated. It was to accomplish the evacuation of Khartoum, the safety of the Egyptian garrisons, and especially of the European population of Khartoum; and the duty of the Government was correctly and accurately described by my right hon. Friend last night. That duty, in a word, was not to interfere in any way with General Gordon. I think it has been pointed out pretty plainly that on four or five distinct occasions propositions of great importance, which have been made by General Gordon, have all of them either been thwarted or refused, or not complied with. There was, first of all, the proposal on the part of General Gordon to go possibly to the Mahdi. Then there was the demand for the appointment of Zebehr; and then there was the request that at least, if that could not be granted, some 200 Indian troops should be sent to Wady Halfa; and, finally, there was the appeal for the opening of the Berber and Suakin road. Now, the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs last night disputed the assertion with regard to the proposition of General Gordon to go to the Mahdi himself; but I should like to call his attention to two despatches which we have before us. They are to be found in Egypt, No. 16, and the despatches are Nos. 1 and 2. Sir Evelyn Baring had already sent messages to General Gordon by telegraph—I may say here the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister split a good many straws last night between what he called dissuasive and negative telegrams—but Sir Evelyn

Baring concludes his first despatch in these words—

> "I hope you will give me a positive assurance that you will on no account put yourself voluntarily in the power of the Mahdi."—[p. 2.]

Then comes this message to Lord Granville—

> "I venture, therefore, to request that your Lordships will inform me as soon as possible whether I may give General Gordon a positive order from Her Majesty's Government that he is on no account to visit the Mahdi."—[*Ibid.*]

And now listen to the reply. It went back the same night at a quarter-past 11 o'clock—

> "Your message to General Gordon, referred to in your telegram of to-day, is approved, and you are authorized, if you think it necessary and desirable to do so, to convey to General Gordon our approval of it."—[*Ibid.*]

In the face of that despatch the Government have the assurance to get up and say General Gordon has not been prevented from going to the Mahdi himself. Well, now, as to the second point, what have the Government to say about the demand for the appointment of Zebehr? They refer to speeches that have been made by Conservatives on this question, and they asserted that if Zebehr had ever been appointed my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would probably have moved for his recall. I do not remember those speeches myself; but, even if they had been made, I beg to remind the House that they were made when we had seen none of the despatches on the subject. What do those despatches disclose? Why, this fact, that the Government, having persuaded General Gordon to undertake this tremendous task, thereupon insisted upon a policy of their own, and which General Gordon very soon discovered was absolutely impossible, except on conditions of his own. All his conditions, I maintain, were refused, and yet the Government still insist upon their policy being fulfilled. Now, what were those conditions? Over and over again Sir Evelyn Baring, the Representative of the Government, pressed upon them the appointment of Zebehr. Sir Evelyn Baring said—"He is the only possible man." Now I want to call the attention of the House to a despatch of General Gordon upon the subject. What did he say in regard to his mission, the importance of which cannot possibly be over-estimated? He said—

> "The co-operation at Khartoum of Zebehr and myself is an absolute necessity for the success of my mission."

In fact, it came to this, that if the Government insisted upon the policy on which they first embarked, there were only two alternatives left to them—one, upon the showing of General Gordon and, I think, of Colonel Stewart, was absolute anarchy in that country; and the other was the adoption of General Gordon's plans. The Government declined to do either, and I am bound to say I think they have not the smallest right to place General Gordon in a position from which these consequences must entail; and there is not the slightest doubt in the world that the whole of this extreme and exceptional difficulty is owing to their policy to evacuate Khartoum, and to the cardinal fault which lies at the root of all this difficulty on the part of the Government—namely, the refusal of the Government to have anything to do with the affairs of the Soudan, and when they have taken upon themselves the control and the practical government of Egypt, their declaration that the affairs in the Soudan were entirely beyond the sphere either of their military or political operations—a policy which everyone connected with Egypt at the time, and everyone most thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the country, declared to be absurd and impossible. I need not dwell upon the third request which was made by General Gordon, moderate as it was, that 200 Indian troops should be sent to Wady Halfa; but, lastly, I want to call attention to what was said by Her Majesty's Government with regard to General Gordon's demand that the Berber and Suakin road should be opened. The right hon. Gentleman made two statements upon this question last night. First of all, he said—"It is quite true that we declined to send troops to Berber and other places, and, in so doing, we acted upon the advice of the military authorities." ["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Member says, "Hear, hear!" I think we might have been told who those military authorities are. That is a fact which up to the present time has been carefully concealed from the House and the country. We have the highest military authorities, on the other hand, giving precisely an opposite opinion. We have General Stephenson and General Wood in Egypt, and I think I read somewhere the other day the opinion of Sir Lintorn Simmons, who is usually considered a high authority on military matters. On the 8th of May, Sir Lintorn Simmons said—

> "I am one of those who believe that diplomatic and military operations may still, even at this late stage, be available to prevent the indelible disgrace which must fall on us as a nation if Gordon and his faithful companions should be added to the countless list of lives which have been sacrificed since our occupation of Egypt in 1882."

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "You may say we think you might have gone on to Khartoum. That is the very thing which General Gordon has never desired, asked for, or even hinted at, though I admit an expression in a telegram might seem to lead to a different conclusion."

I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman, under these circumstances, how he is able to explain some paragraphs in the despatch No. 301? One of them was quoted last night by my hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour); but, inasmuch as the Government have resorted to their usual practice of taking no notice whatever of questions which appear somewhat difficult to answer, I have no hesitation to press it on their attention again. In that despatch, dated Cairo, March 24th, 1884, from Sir Evelyn Baring to Lord Granville, I find the following passage:—

> "General Gordon is evidently expecting help from Suakin, and he has ordered messengers to be sent along the road from Berber to ascertain whether any English force is advancing."

Well, now, I think that some explanation of that despatch is due from the Government to the House and the country. "Under present circumstances," the English Representative adds—

> "I think that an effort should be made to help General Gordon from Suakin if it is at all a possible military operation."

And then, in support of its being possible, he gives the authority of General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood, who—

> "While admitting the very great risk, are of opinion that the undertaking is possible."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 186.]

I call upon the Government to depart from their usual practice, and when plain questions of this importance are put to them, to explain them to the House without any further delay. The right hon. Gentleman made a further statement last night. He said—

> "General Gordon has never asked at any time for an English soldier."

I think it may be true, according to the letter, that General Gordon is too proud, perhaps, to appeal to an English Government for the assistance which is withheld from him; but I wish to remind the right hon. Gentleman of the despatch dated April 16th. I am afraid I have not got it with me; but what General Gordon said is this—"As you refused to send relief up here, or to Berber, I leave to you the indelible disgrace, &c." Relief up here! What does that mean? Relief up to Khartoum. It is possible to suppose, from what we know of the heroism and gallantry of General Gordon, that he is a man to go whining for relief at Khartoum unless he really desired the help of English soldiers? That is another question which I hope the right hon. Gentleman is studying now. I trust some Member of the Government will, at last, receive the commission to give plain answers to plain questions, answers to questions upon which the heart of the country is stirred at the present moment.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am reading the despatch which the hon. Gentleman says he had not with him. I will read the passage—

> "You state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zebehr. . . . . I shall hold on here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator and leave you indelible disgrace," &c.—[Egypt, No. 15 (1884), p. 1.]

Mr. CHAPLIN: Yes, Sir; and although, upon the showing of the right hon. Gentleman himself, General Gordon was evidently anxious for relief at Khartoum, and intensely disgusted because he did not receive it, the right hon. Gentleman has not scrupled for weeks and weeks to convey the impression that General Gordon never wanted an English soldier. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman was deaf and dumb to the appeals of such a hero; but I must say I was astonished that the author of the Bulgarian horrors should be deaf to another appeal which was made to him from the inhabitants of Berber. That appeal is to be found on page 32 and in Despatch No. 18. What is it that they tell the Prime Minister of England, who drove his great Predecessor from Office on the grounds of the atrocities that were being committed in Bulgaria, for which Lord Beaconsfield was never responsible for a single instant, and because he refused to interfere to prevent them? This is what they say—

> "The Egyptian Government and the other Powers are aware of the condition of ruin, murder, pillage, rape, and other illegal atrocities of which the Soudan is the theatre. . . . We Europeans, Turks, Egyptians, Hedjazites, Algerians, came to the Soudan relying on the support and protection of the Government. Now, if it abandons us to-day, through indifference or weakness, its honour will be everlastingly tarnished in thus handing over its servants and subjects to death and dishonour. If Egypt has given the Soudan up to England, we implore that great, chivalrous, and humane Power to come to our help, for it is full time. Can it raise us again after our death? We await help from England, from our Government, or from any charitable Power, for if the same state of things continues for ten days or a fortnight more our country will be ravaged and we shall be lost. We implore you, then, to quiet our minds by announcing to us the immediate despatch of a force to our assistance. If not, certain death awaits us."

Let me contrast the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on this occasion with the language which he addressed to Lord Beaconsfield at that time. He was speaking of the horrors in Bulgaria, and he called upon the English Government to take certain steps without delay with reference to them. This is what he said—

> "There are two great objects in view. First, to put a stop to the anarchical misrule."

I think we have been warned by General Gordon that if Zebehr is refused, anarchical misrule is the inevitable result. "Anarchical misrule (let the phrase be excused)"—I am not prepared to excuse it on this occasion—

> "the plundering, the murdering, which as we now seem to learn upon sufficient evidence still desolate Bulgaria. Second, to redeem by these measures the honour of the British name, which in the deplorable events of the year has been more gravely compromised than I have ever known it to be at any former time."

I leave it to the English public to judge between the right hon. Gentleman and the man whom he traduced. I doubt not that the verdict of the people of the country will be that the right hon. Gentleman has in the last sentence I have quoted most accurately described his own career on that Bench. I think, moreover, they will be able to measure and gauge exactly the depth of the sincerity, aye, I will say, the cant, of all the proceedings of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister taunted my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) for having ridiculed the Government, because they had thought it necessary to wait for information. What have they been about for the last five months? Why have not the Government all the information? Nothing was easier than for them to acquire it. I remember that in the very beginning of this Session my right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) and my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) called particular attention to the position, and requested the Government to inform the House what was to be their policy, and what preparations they were making in the event of danger to General Gordon, as both my right hon. Friends believed at that time not only possible, but probable. No answer whatever was made by the Government. Their appeals were treated, I will not say with contempt, but the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was dumb. On the following night, deeming this question to be of great importance, I made a second appeal to the Government. I said to the right hon. Gentleman—"Suppose General Gordon finds himself hemmed in and surrounded by the Mahdi?"—which is admitted to be the case now—"have the Government made, or are they making, any preparations whatever to assist him, and, if they are, will they be good enough to inform the House what course they intend to take, because they may depend upon it, that if anything happens to General Gordon, they will be held accountable by the English people?" Last night the right hon. Gentleman taunted us on this side of the House by saying that the course we are now taking is nothing but an attempt on our part to gain a transfer of political power from them to us, and some few hon. Gentlemen are foolish enough to believe that. Why, is it possible to suppose that any body of men in their senses, with the legacy which the right hon. Gentleman after four years of Office would leave behind him, would care to take his place unless they were compelled by a sense of overwhelming duty? I can imagine nothing more distasteful, more repugnant to any political Party in the country, than to be compelled to succeed to the position which the splendid policy of the right hon. Gentleman, after four years of Office, at the head of his great majority, would leave to whoever might be so unfortunate as to be his successor. Well, now, what is to be done? That is the question of all others which is stirring deeply the heart of England at the present time, and upon that point the right hon. Gentleman has told us next to nothing. Last night he told us it may be our duty to plant a force of British troops in the Soudan, and that we may have to endeavour to use the resources of the nation to accomplish the rescue of General Gordon. Half-hearted language of this kind, at a juncture such as this, will not be sufficient for England. There must be no "mays" in this case, no more "endeavours" to use the resources of the nation. Of this I am quite satisfied, that the English people are determined that all and everything which is within the power and the might and the resources of the Empire must and shall be done, and done without delay, for General Gordon; and then, if, happily, we should succeed in rescuing that gallant hero from his present dangerous position, the English Parliament and the English people—no thanks to this Government—will at least have accomplished something to wipe away the stain which you on that side of the House have placed on the bright lustre of our country's name—no thanks at all to this Government, whose policy in this matter has been a veritable outrage upon English feeling, a discredit and slur upon the English name, an undying disgrace to themselves, and a deep dishonour to the country of which one and all of us belong.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, he had listened with great attention to the speech which had just been delivered, and the impression which he had received from that speech was that they were not making any progress in elucidating the important question involved in the Motion of the right hon. Baronet. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) was good enough to characterize the speech of the Prime Minister as a speech which had failed to grapple with the complaint alleged against the Government; but he (Mr. O'Connor Power) was bound to say that he had formed a totally different opinion of that speech. He regarded it as a complete vindication of the policy of the Government; and he thought the hon. Member would have established a better title to their gratitude if he had endeavoured to prove the description he had given of the Prime Minister's defence of the Government. A very important part of the hon. Member's speech was that in which he said that all the difficulties arose from the determination of the Government to have nothing to do with the Soudan. Well, he wanted to know what was the exact significance of observations of that kind? If the hon. Member and those who agreed with him entertained the idea that the Government should adopt the policy of going into the Soudan, remaining there until the whole country had been pacified, and substituting for the disorder which now existed an organized and settled form of government in every part of that wild country—if they meant this, why did they not say so? Why did they not enlighten the British taxpayer as to the cost which would be involved and the responsibility which would be incurred in assuming so tremendous an undertaking? Many of the communications sent by the Government to General Gordon had never reached him; and some of the telegrams which he had sent expressed opinions formed in total ignorance of the desire of Her Majesty's Government to help him in every efficient way, and of the circumstances by which the whole question was surrounded. Perhaps the most touching part of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire's speech was that in which he quoted the complaint of a number of persons in the Soudan, who described themselves variously as Turks, Egyptians, and others, that they were subject to all the dangers of murder and pillage, and cried out in vain for assistance. Now, he asserted on the authority of travellers who knew and had seen them, that those very people who thus complained had been perpetrating murders and pillage in the Soudan for many years; and as long as they were successful in carrying desolation to the homes of the brave Arabs whose only crime was that they fought for their country's independence, there was no one found in the rank of the Conservative Party to appeal to the sacred cause of outraged humanity. He denied that the British Government had assumed any responsibility for the pacification of the Soudan. All their declarations in telegrams to Sir Evelyn Baring and General Gordon went entirely to prove the contrary proposition. The complaint of the Opposition was, in the first place, that the policy of the Government had not tended to the success of General Gordon's mission. But was it not fair to inquire what the Government could have done which they had neglected to do, that would have been better calculated to induce the success of General Gordon's mission? The second complaint was that measures were delayed for Gordon's protection and safety. One would think that there were no natural difficulties in the way—and that the climate and everything affecting the movements of a large Army were matters of no consequence and no consideration at all. It was clearly pointed out by the Prime Minister that no measures which could be adopted without further delay for the protection of General Gordon had been neglected up to the present moment; and they had from the right hon. Gentleman the assurance that any further necessary measures would be adopted as soon as they were physically possible of adoption. The hon. Gentlemen who censured the policy of the Government were not among the number of those who censured their policy at the time when the origin of these great difficulties came about. He opposed the policy of Her Majesty's Government at that time, because he was opposed to the interference of the British Government in the domestic affairs of the people of Egypt. He occupied precisely the same position today; and if he had to choose between a policy which, while fully discharging any responsibilities that had been incurred, sought to minimize that interference with a strange people, and a policy of unlimited interference and unlimited sacrifices, he had no hesitation in preferring the former. This country was now suffering for the bombardment of Alexandria, which he regarded as a great national sin; but he acknowledged that the Government had, since that deplorable event, done the best in their power to limit their interference with Egypt; and it was their desire to restore to full working order the principles of self-government in that country which had freed them, in the judgment of Europe, from any responsibility for the disasters which befell the Egyptian Army in carrying out a policy which Her Majesty's Government had repeatedly condemned. It had been hoped that the occupation would be temporary and the sacrifices limited. They now, however, saw the evil consequences of interfering in the domestic affairs of other people. He understood the position of the Government to be simply this—they recognized fully their responsibility for the safety of General Gordon, but they emphatically disclaimed responsibility for the whole of the Soudan. As a believer in the doctrine of nationality, he rejoiced in the success of the Soudanese in defending their homes against Turkish and Egyptian invaders. If the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire and his Friends had the courage of their convictions they would invite the House to sanction the task of pacifying the Soudan; but such a task would be an enormously costly one. The expedition to Magdala with an Army of 3,000 cost £15,000,000 sterling. Probably an Army at least three times as large as that would be necessary for the pacification of the Soudan, and with the reconstruction of its Government it would be likely to involve an expenditure of £25,000,000 or £30,000,000. Nor would it stop there. When they had conquered the Soudan, the Conservative Party, in their thirst for aggrandizement, would be looking out for more deserts to conquer, and for new fields on which to shed human blood, and sacrifice the resources of the people of this country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite blamed the Government when it did not fight, and still more when it did fight, when they attacked it on the ground of the money and the blood expended. What interest had the hard-working, peace-loving taxpayers of this country in the settlement of the Soudan? No hon. Member had shown that they had any. He was bound to say that this Gordon scare was, in his judgment, one of the most impudent impostures of the day; and to say that the opinion of this country was affected by it was to say what was not in accordance with fact. He did not look upon the opinion of St. James's Hall as public opinion. He had himself, perhaps, had as many opportunities recently as Gentlemen on the Conservative side of feeling the pulse of public opinion. [An hon. MEMBER: In Mayo.] He could undertake to say that in Mayo the public opinion of St. James's Hall was looked upon simply as the opinion of a few London newspapers, who, perhaps, fancied that they were entitled not only to reflect the opinions of yesterday, but to mould the opinion of to-morrow. He had been at a meeting of thousands of people where the sentiment that "the Government of this country were too often involved in war, and in extending the responsibilities of the Empire" was cheered in the most enthusiastic fashion. He supposed he should be told that the people of London were represented by the unmannerly but well-dressed mob who misconducted themselves at the opening of the Health Exhibition. Those persons were just as much the representatives of London as those at St. James's Hall were the representatives of England. He was glad that the Government had resolved to pursue a policy which would commend itself to all who believed in the doctrine of humanity; and he approved warmly what the Prime Minister had said last night—that he was not willing to war against people who were fighting for their freedom. In what position would General Gordon have appeared if they had put him at the head of an army as one who had come to conquer by force of arms? It would have taken away the last chance of his success, and would have simply prevented him from exercising in any way his great influence over the people whose friendship he was sent out to secure.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Her Majesty's Government are to be congratulated upon having obtained the support of an Irish patriot; but I am afraid that it will not be a very solid advantage to them, because he is a patriot altogether out of harmony with the general body of his Party, and he is a patriot who will cease to be a patriot if the coming Division should lead to a Dissolution. Irish patriotism! We know what Irish patriotism is worth when it becomes incorporated in a Government majority. When it stands alone, fighting for its own hand, unconnected with either Party, it is often honest and sincere, although we may think it misguided; but Irish patriotism, once incorporated into a Government majority, is nothing more than a beggar on the look-out for some substantial mark of favour from the Crown. I make a present to the Government, with the greatest liberality, of the Irish patriotism they have secured this afternoon. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) boasts that he is the friend of freedom and humanity; and, to justify his boast, he proposes to vote against a Motion which expresses regret that the best and most tried friend of freedom and of humanity that this century has seen has not been supported effectually by the Government, and is now placed in a position of imminent peril. That is how the hon. and learned Member endeavours to show that he is the friend of freedom and humanity. Then I must compliment him on his tact in reminding the House and the Prime Minister of a demonstration that was made the other day of public opinion—a demonstration which I do not suppose meets with any sympathy in this House, and to which I am as certain that no future speaker will allude, as I am that no past speaker has done so. But to pass to the question before the House, I do not think that it is necessary to debate this question with any amount of heat, or any amount of set oratorical phrases, or any amount of invective or vituperation. The question itself is as clear and simple a question as ever presented itself to Parliament. The Motion before the House is couched in terms of extreme moderation. The Prime Minister said last night that it was not manly or courageous; I take leave to doubt whether the Prime Minister or any one of his Colleagues is a judge of what is manly or courageous. Those are qualities in which Her Majesty's Government have proved themselves conspicuously deficient, and the want of these qualities renders them incapable of detecting them in other people. In any case, it struck me as a most singular criticism on the part of the Prime Minister. What is the Motion of the right hon. Baronet? It is a Motion expressing regret that the efforts of General Gordon have not been properly seconded by the acts of the Government at home, and expressing a determination to provide now for the safety of General Gordon. I myself can see nothing unmanly or wanting in courage in such a Motion as that; but I am bound to say that I can see a great deal that is wanting in courage in the Prime Minister's speech last night. I wonder whether the Prime Minister recollects an incident which took place in 1830? The right hon. Gentleman would have been about 20 years of age, and, I have no doubt, was well acquainted with political incidents. The Duke of Wellington made a speech on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. When he sat down, there were buzzings, and whisperings, and colloquies, and an evident amount of consternation on his own side, so much so that the Duke asked what was the cause of it, and the reply was—"Your Grace has announced the fall of your Government, that is all." If the Prime Minister had occupied the singularly advantageous position which I occupy here, and had been able to discern the intense, eager expectation of his supporters when he rose to address the House, the deepening gloom which settled down upon them as he proceeded to his remarks, and the blank dismay which overcame them when he closed his speech; and if he had been able to see what I saw—the buzzing, the whispering, the colloquies which went on in the Lobby—and had asked the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), what was the reason, the noble Lord, if he had been an able and an intelligent and a learned noble Lord, would have replied to the Prime Minister—"Sir, you have announced the fall of your Government." What was that speech? It was an announcement in the most solemn manner on the part of Her Majesty's Government by their chief Representative of the final and definite abandonment of General Gordon. Of that there can be absolutely no doubt whatever in the mind of anyone who listened to him, or who has read the report of his speech. That speech reminds me of the conduct of a Roman Governor of 1,800 years ago, who washed his hands in the face of the multitude. That speech, I say, announced in the most open and unmistakable manner the abandonment of General Gordon. That is a course which I am certain the country is not prepared to adopt, and which I am equally certain Parliament is not prepared to ratify. What was the mission of General Gordon; what was its nature? The mission, to my mind, was in theory and intentions one of the noblest ever undertaken. The object of the mission was twofold. It was to rescue the faithful garrisons who were scattered over the Soudan, numbering something like 30,000, exclusive of women and children, and it was to restore freedom and tranquillity to harassed and oppressed tribes. The whole nation acquiesced in that mission, as I believe it acquiesced in the abandonment of the Soudan. I do not think it could be asserted for one moment that any person on the Opposition side of the House has ever advocated the reconquest of the Soudan; and I may say that I have never heard anybody, who is responsible on this side of the House, censure the abandonment of the Soudan. But although the nation and the Opposition acquiesced in the abandonment of the Soudan, the nation felt deeply the solemn and high duties which that abandonment imposed upon them; and the nation hailed with pleasure, and I may almost say with rapture, the mission of General Gordon, long delayed as it was, and was prepared to condone many an error, because the Government had intrusted those high duties to be discharged by so generous, so gallant, and so noble an officer as General Gordon. I do not believe that any mission which ever left the shores of this country had ever created so much interest. Every step taken by that officer from London to Khartoum was watched with the most intense anxiety by the public. But the very intensity of the interest excited is the measure of the responsibility imposed upon the Government to do their part in assisting General Gordon to carry his dangerous mission to a successful conclusion. The Prime Minister said with great bluntness last night that the Government had discharged their responsibility to the utmost. I take leave to traverse the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and say that the Government have not discharged one bit of that responsibility. I assert that, as it was the duty of the Government to have seconded to the very utmost the mission of General

Gordon, they ought, at the outset, to have considerably increased their force in Egypt and to have sent British troops up the Nile. The first appearance of General Gordon in Upper Egypt prevented disturbances. He found a state of semi-order, and he pacified it completely. There can be no doubt, if it had been known in those regions, as it would have been known, that the force at Cairo had been increased and British troops had been moved up the Nile, the first effect of the mission, instead of being transient, would have been permanent. More than that, the season of the year was exceptionally favourable for the movement of troops, and I assert that that movement was perfectly consistent with the pacific character of the mission of General Gordon. Material support is not out of character with a mission which is essentially pacific; and if any supporter or Member of the Government should deny that assertion I have only to point to the conduct of the Government with respect to Suakin in order completely to make out my case. The conduct of the Government in that case was to give material support to the efforts to restore order in the Soudan; and why should material support have been limited to Suakin? I submit that the first failure of the Government to recognize their responsibility to General Gordon was in not increasing the troops at Cairo, and moving troops up the Nile contemporaneously with General Gordon's advance to Khartoum. Then, the Government had another warning. Soon after General Gordon arrived at Khartoum he made what may be called his frantic appeal to the Government to send him Zebehr Pasha. I have never been one of those who have been disposed to blame the Government for not acceding to that request. I think not only that Zebehr is a man with whom no British Government ought to have any connection; but I believe that he would have done his best to assassinate General Gordon when he got to Khartoum. But the Prime Minister, curiously enough, told the House last night that he thought General Gordon was right in asking for Zebehr, and said he had been disposed to go almost any length to meet the request. The right hon. Gentleman, however, as was pointed out by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) in the able speech he made last night, gave an extraordinary reason for not doing what he thought was right, and what he was prepared to go almost any length to do. He said—"I did not do what I thought I should do, because I feared I might be placed in a minority."

Mr. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord has represented what I said with perfect inaccuracy. I did not say that I should in any case have sent Zebehr; but I said that, whereas the arguments for sending Zebehr might have been very nearly balanced, and, in the minds of some, might have preponderated, the one argument that was conclusive against it was not that the Government would have been placed in a minority, but that the sending of Zebehr would have been stopped by a Vote of the House of Commons.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: That is exactly the same thing. If the Prime Minister had come down to the House and proposed to send Zebehr, and a Vote had been taken against him, does anyone think that he would have retained Office? It would have been a Vote of Censure on the Government. My contention, therefore, is right. I feel that that is a fair construction to put upon the words of the Prime Minister. It is in accordance with former acts of the right hon. Gentleman, because I recollect that he once said he did not restore order in Ireland when he might have done so, because he was not certain whether at that time he should have obtained a majority of the House of Commons. But what I wonder at is, that the Government, knowing the character of General Gordon, knowing his love of the Soudanese, knowing his hopes of contributing to the happiness of those races, and his opinion of this abandoned ruffian Zebehr, and seeing that General Gordon, had made an appeal for his services did not open their eyes to the fact that General Gordon's position at Khartoum had become untenable, that his mission was far more desperate than had been imagined, and that his position was one of imminent peril. I wonder, and shall wonder for ever, that the Government at that time did not take measures to provide for the safety of General Gordon—to increase the British Forces at Cairo, and to move British troops up the Nile. It was as early as the 22nd of February that the

Government refused to allow Zebehr to go to Khartoum, and certainly at that time a movement of troops might have been carried on without the slightest risk. What would have been the position of General Gordon now if troops had then been sent up the Nile? That is the second conspicuous, undeniable, uncontradicted failure of the Government to provide for the safety of General Gordon, or for the success of the mission on which he was sent. Just let me turn for a moment to the Suakin expedition. The Prime Minister taunted the Opposition because they cheered him when he announced that expedition. We cheered that announcement, not because we were in love with the dangers of the expedition, and not because we did not see them, but because it occurred to us that the dangers were far outweighed by the advantages which would obviously result from the expedition. The object of that expedition was, I imagine, at the time, threefold. It was to preserve the safety of the ports on the Red Sea, to relieve Tokar, and to open up a route to Berber. On those grounds, and on those grounds alone, did we cheer the announcement of the Government; but when we found, to our disgust and dismay, that not one of those objects had been in any part attained, we lost no time in condemning the expedition to Suakin, and supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). That was, I think, a clear, consistent, and honest course of conduct. General Gordon was undoubtedly adverse to the expedition. He impressed on the Government that it was too late to do anything for Tokar—and he was perfectly right; but I can quite understand that, finding his influence already beginning to fail, he did not like to put an absolute negative on the expedition; and, thinking that the presence of troops at Suakin would support his position at Khartoum, gave it a qualified assent. General Gordon, however, did not imagine, nor did anyone else, that the Government would have allowed the troops to fight two vindictive, bloody, and unprovoked battles, and then sail away without having effected anything more permanent or satisfactory. Let me just compare the Government's treatment of Suakin with their treatment of General Gordon. What is Suakin? Suakin is a dirty, wretched, plague-stricken port on the Red Sea, of no value to Egypt or to anyone but the Soudanese tribes. What is General Gordon? The Prime Minister told us last night, in an admirable phrase, that General Gordon is "a great personality;" more than that, he is the Envoy of the Queen; more than that, Gordon's life is invaluable to his country, because a nation does not turn out Gordons by the dozen every day. The Prime Minister worked himself into a fury with the right hon. Gentleman last night, because he said the Government ought to have given material support to General Gordon. But why was it wrong to do that for General Gordon—a great personality, the Envoy of the Queen, a man invaluable to his country—which you did so lavishly and so uselessly for this dirty, plague-stricken port on the Red Sea? For this port the Government shed blood in torrents; they poured out money like water; but for Gordon they refused, over and over again, to advance one British soldier one single step; they refused to provide him with one single half-penny of money; and they refused to take a single word of advice he offered to them. In comparing the treatment of Suakin by the Government with the treatment of General Gordon, the logic of facts is hopelessly fatal to their position. As I listened to the Prime Minister last night a curious idea came into my head. I thought of the singularly different—the inexplicably different—manner in which different individuals appeal to his sympathies. I compared his efforts in the cause of General Gordon with his efforts in the cause of Mr. Bradlaugh. I remember the courage, the perseverance, the tenacity he displayed, and the amount of time of the House of Commons which was consumed by the Government in their desperate adherence to that man. If the hundredth part of those invaluable moral qualities bestowed upon the cause of a seditious blasphemer—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Order!"]—had been given to the support of the Christian hero, the success of General Gordon's mission would have been at this time assured. And this struck me as most remarkable when the Prime Minister sat down—that the finest speech he ever delivered in the House of Commons was in support of the seditious blasphemer——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Sir **WILFRID LAWSON**: I rise to Order. I wish, Sir, respectfully to ask you whether a Member of the House has a right to call another Member "seditious?"

Mr. **SPEAKER**: In reply to the hon. Baronet, I have to say that I do not think the term "seditious blasphemer" applied to a Member of this House is a proper and Parliamentary expression. [*Cheers, and cries of* "Withdraw!"] I am sure the noble Lord will withdraw the expression.

Lord **RANDOLPH CHURCHILL**: I withdraw it. I meant it merely as a political criticism. I withdraw it in deference to your opinion, Sir, and particularly in deference to the political sympathies of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I was going to say that the finest speech the right hon. Gentleman ever delivered in the House of Commons was in the cause of this Gentleman whom I am prohibited from characterizing; and the least effective speech he ever delivered was, by common consent, in the cause of the Christian hero. That is not only a fair political criticism; it is a great deal more; it is an instructive historical parallel. The Prime Minister made a most extraordinary remark last night, which shows the incapacity of the present Government for dealing with these difficult commotions abroad. He said, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, who questioned the wisdom of the Government in not sending troops to Berber—"What would be the use of sending a few British troops?" Well, for 50 years the Prime Minister has been more or less consecutively in the service of the Crown, and in that capacity he has been identified with some of the most glorious exploits of British valour; and, after all, he gets up and asks the House of Commons what would be the value of a few hundred British soldiers? Surely, when he asked this question, he must have been thinking, not of the earlier military glories with which he was connected, but of the unfortunate events at Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill. For my part, I think the value of a few hundred soldiers at Berber would have been everything. They would, in the first place, have opened up the road. Their very passing across the Desert would have produced a great effect; it would have confirmed the wavering, given hope to the fugitives, and saved the garrisons. It would, undoubtedly, have been apparent to everyone in that part of the world that those British troops were merely the precursors of others, and it would have prevented the present isolation of General Gordon. The troops were ready and anxious to go; General Graham was anxious to go. I do not know whether the Prime Minister knows it, because, in his exalted position, he may be denied the knowledge open to humbler men; but I know that the feeling of the troops coming away from Suakin was one of utter and intense disgust. Because those brave men who, whenever they performed deeds of fame, are exposed to the jeers and jibes of many hon. Gentlemen opposite—[*Cries of* "No!"]—these brave men were filled with the conviction that all their bravery had gone for nothing, and, more than that, that they had slaughtered brave and gallant foes for no purpose whatever. The whole of that force was only too anxious, too desirous, by opening up the road to Berber, to place something tangible on record as the result of their exertions. The drift of the Prime Minister's argument last night appeared to me to be a very extraordinary one, and one which would be repudiated by the public, because he argued that the Government had no longer any duty to perform towards the Soudan garrisons. [Mr. Gladstone: I did not say so.] The right hon. Gentleman said he sent General Gordon to get the garrisons out; General Gordon had failed, and really he and his Colleagues cannot any further be bothered with the matter. That was the whole drift of his speech, because the House noticed how he descended upon the right hon. Gentleman, and asked which garrisons were to be rescued—that of Dongola, Bahr Gazelle, or what others? Well, Sir, the duty of the Government is to recognize the claims of every one of them. That was the duty recognized by a unanimous House of Commons at the beginning of the Session. ["No, no!"] Then, why was it not questioned at the time? It was recognized by a unanimous House of Commons when General Gordon started on his mission. ["No!"] I adhere to that assertion. It was the duty of Gordon to rescue them when you sent him out, and the duty of rescuing them still lies heavily upon this country that placed them in peril by the abandonment of the Soudan. At any rate, there is one duty perfectly beyond argument, and that is the duty of England to support her Envoy on all occasions. The position of an Envoy is sacred, not so much to the country to which he is sent, because that may be an uncivilized country, but essentially sacred to the country which sent him out, and essentially sacred when that Envoy is placed in a position of peril in a distant land. I assert that the fear to go to war in support of an Envoy is a certain indication of a decaying Empire; and the abandonment of an Envoy by a British Government, with the sanction of a British Parliament, is the surest sign of a falling State. The right hon. Gentleman says that, in October, he will consider this question again—a very reasonable allowance of time, not at all too long a time, to procure the information of which the Government stands in need—and he imagines that by October, having obtained that information, the Government will be able to devote their attention to the rescue of General Gordon. Does he think that England will wait till October to hear what the Government is going to do? Does the right hon. Gentleman think England is going to turn over on her side and go to sleep again without giving another thought to this business? If so, I can only conceive how low an estimate must the Prime Minister have formed of the countrymen who so long have worshipped and put their trust in him. Such is their reward for the devotion of many years that they are supposed to be capable of the dilatoriness which distinguishes the right hon. Gentleman himself. If the Prime Minister thinks that the British people will wait till the month of October, does he think that the Mahdi will wait till then? Because, whatever may be the qualities of the British people, the Mahdi has shown qualities which enable us to calculate the rate of his advance. Does not the right hon. Gentleman propose to take any steps to guard the inhabitants of Lower Egypt against the incursion of the Mahdi until the time when he says climatic influences will not endanger the health and life of the troops? If the right hon. Gentleman does not propose to take any steps for that purpose, I cannot believe that the decision of the Government will be endorsed by the House of Commons. Very little, to my mind, would be necessary to arrest the Mahdi—a slight movement of troops, a slight movement of ships, a little more energy, a little more precision, a little more common sense, a little more consistency in your foreign despatches, and the thing would be done. But now the Prime Minister is going to meet the Powers of Europe in Conference. He is going to meet them after this debate, if he survives it; he is going to meet in Conference on the Egyptian Question Powers represented by standing Armies numbering millions of men. I like Conferences, and advocate them under certain conditions. But I will illustrate my meaning. Compare the position which Lord Beaconsfield occupied at the Congress of Berlin with the position which the Prime Minister will occupy at the Conference which is now to take place. The one, by a mere movement of the Fleet, and by a movement of troops, arrested the advance of the Russian Army at the very threshold of the goal to which for a century they had been approaching; the other appears as having been afraid, and as having stated his fear in this House, to arrest the march of a barbarian and to rescue an English Envoy. I should like to know whether the Government can appear on terms of equality with the other Powers in such circumstances as these? The Government go to the Conference having done a dishonourable act. The Conference will not be so much a coalition for the consideration of European affairs of Powers meeting on terms of equality as a tribunal called together to pronounce judgment on the crimes of a delinquent and recreant nation; and I greatly fear that in this Conference the Government will find that they have created a Frankenstein. The Government denounce the motives of those who bring forward this Vote of Censure, and say that it is dictated, not by a love of country, but by a spirit of Party and a desire for the transference of power. The Prime Minister has had 50 years of Parliamentary experience; and I ask him to tell us, from motives of intelligent curiosity, whether he ever knew a Vote of Censure which had not for its object and for its end a transference of power, and if that is the general character of Votes of Censure, why is the particular Vote of Censure which the right hon.

Baronet proposes so vile in his eyes? The right hon. Gentleman says that the Opposition is ambitious and unjust. It is not for me to defend the Opposition from those aspersions; but I should like to know from the Prime Minister or any of his Colleagues, whether, when the Prime Minister conducted in 1877 that agitation which electrified the country, he was not ambitious, he was never unjust? Were not these adjectives applicable to him when he publicly boasted —I think it was at Oxford—that for a considerable time he had rested neither night nor day in his endeavours to thwart the policy of Lord Beaconsfield. The taunt cannot come from him with any great validity that the present Opposition is either unjust or ambitious, or that this Vote of Censure is dictated by a desire for the advancement of a Party. I hear a great deal about the deplorable weakness of the Opposition. Well, I certainly did not detect any deplorable weakness in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who proposed this Motion last night, nor did I detect any deplorable weakness in the sonorous and resonant cheers which greeted that speech continually from beginning to end—a speech with reference to which I may be permitted to remark, with all deference, that it was a magnificent indictment, all the more magnificent because it was so measured and so grave, and I think it must have recalled to the Prime Minister himself the best days of Tory Leadership. But what does this transference of power mean which the Prime Minister says is so mischievous and pernicious? So far as I can make out, it means the immediate and certain rescue of General Gordon as opposed to the autumnal and uncertain rescue of General Gordon in six months' time; it means the restoration of order in Egypt as opposed to the continuance of anarchy; it means the repulse of the Mahdi as opposed to a general Mahomedan rising; it means, I believe, the taking over of Egypt under English protection, and extending the might of Britain over that disturbed land for a time, and for all time. That is what I believe a transference of power means in regard to Egypt. May I go on, and ask what it means at home? It means — I look all round the House, and the different sections of the House—to the Whigs a cessation of voting day after day that black is white, a Parliamentary diet which even the ordinarily tough and leathery political stomach of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) is unable any longer to assimilate. What does it mean to the Radical Party? It means that, after abandoning for four years every principle on which they came into Parliament, they will at length be able to reconcile their principles with their votes. But we are told there must not be a transfer of power, because the Radical Party could not support anything which would prove an obstacle to the progress of the Reform Bill. Why should that prevent the Radical Party from taking a just view of the position of General Gordon? Parliamentary Reform is no longer a Party question. I cannot go into the whole treatment of this matter by the Opposition; but this is certain—that whatever transfer of power takes place, the whole question of Parliamentary Reform will be dealt with on a more complete, on a more genuine, and a larger basis. [*Interruptions.*] I do not know why there should be this demonstration. I simply state what is the policy which has been pursued by the Opposition. Do the Irish Party fear that the loss of the Reform Bill will militate against their interests? I should think that the treatment given by the House of Commons as a whole to the Motion of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) would dissipate any idle fear on that subject. I believe the object of this Vote of Censure is to transfer that power, and the sooner it comes the better it will be for the country. For 19 nights and days we have debated this question—for 19 nights and days with more or less anger and more or less acrimony. The Government, when they went to Egypt, abandoned every shred of principle they possessed, and Egypt has been their Nemesis, and I believe will be their ruin. The whole question of Egypt is at last, thank God, presented to us in an intelligible and simple form, and it is—"Will you, or will you not, rescue General Gordon now?" Answer me "Aye," or answer me "No." The people of England, of Scotland, and I believe of Ireland, say "Aye." [*Cries of* "No, no!"] The Prime Minister and a few Radical fanatics below the Gangway alone say "No." But great as is the Prime Minister's power, long as has been his career, dazzling as is his eloquence, and undoubtedly glorious as is his name in such a position as this, the odds are so overwhelmingly great that even the Prime Minister himself must either submit or resign.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The noble Lord, who has just sat down, promised the House a very moderate speech, and that there should be no Party attack in it; but I hardly think he has fulfilled his promise.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I did not say there would be no Party attack in it.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I understood the noble Lord to say so; but, at any rate, I am not going to follow in detail the speech of the noble Lord, for it will doubtless be answered by some Minister. There are parts of it to which it will not be difficult to reply; but there are other parts of it, I am sorry to say, which it will not be so easy to answer. We have a Vote of Censure before us. It would have been in the power of the Government to meet that Motion with a traversing Motion; but they have taken a bolder course, and from their point of view I cannot blame them. The Motion expresses regret that the Government have not promoted the success of General Gordon's mission, or taken steps to secure his safety. I understand that by moving a direct negative the Prime Minister asks the House to express approval of the course which the Government have taken.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not do that.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I imagined it would be stated and claimed as an acknowledgment that the House of Commons had approved of the action of the Government. But I am sorry to say I cannot express that approval. Nor is it made more easy by any allusion to the future to pass over past omissions. It is a very serious matter for a man not to be able to support the Government of the Party to which he belongs when a Vote of Censure is moved; and I feel it to be a very serious matter. I felt it to be a very serious matter when the former Vote of Censure was moved; and, as a matter of fact, I am sorry I cannot take the course now which I took on that occasion. I, therefore, hope the House will allow me briefly to give my reasons. It was asked by the Prime Minister last evening what was General Gordon's mission. The noble Lord has asked that question, aud it seems to be useless repetition for me to ask it again; but there does appear to me to be a most extraordinary misconception of what the object of that mission really was. It has been said by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) that the object of the mission was merely the withdrawal of the garrisons, and I do not wonder at that conception, because the despatch we have received this morning appears to show that that is now the opinion of the Government. The Foreign Secretary says in his despatch of May 1 that the object of General Gordon's mission was to accomplish the evacuation of the Soudan, and the safe withdrawal, if possible, of the Egyptian garrisons from that country. Now, that is a complete ignoring and forgetting, and, I had almost said, disowning of what was originally stated to be the object of the mission. I need only refer my right hon. Friend to what he stated in the debate on the previous Vote of Censure. He then said the object of the mission was to extricate the garrisons and to reconstitute the Government of the country in which the garrisons were situated. [MR. GLADSTONE: Read on.] I am quite willing to read on. The conclusion of the right hon. Gentleman's sentence was—

> "And of reconstituting it by giving back to those Chiefs their ancestral powers which had been withdrawn or suspended during the period of the Egyptian Government."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 274.)

Undoubtedly that was the mode by which at that time General Gordon was to reconstitute the Government of the Soudan. But does my right hon. Friend say, or has the Government by their action enabled my right hon. Friend to say, that if they found a difficulty in doing it by that particular method, they did not consider it their duty to do it by some means or other? Now comes, I think, a question which naturally suggests itself to many hon. Members below the Gangway, and that is, why was this mission undertaken? The garrisons were in danger, the Native Christians were in danger; but there were garrisons and Native Christians in danger in other parts of the world. It might have been a matter of humanity to attempt to rescue them; but why should this mission have been undertaken in the cause of humanity? And, again, why attempt to reconstitute the Government of the country? What had we to do with the anarchy existing in the Soudan, and why should we attempt to prevent it? It was because my right hon. Friend knew, and the Government knew, that it was our duty to attempt to carry out these objects. It was no mere question of humanity, it was a question of duty. And it was because this Government, acting in the name of the Queen, had taken upon themselves the condition of the Soudan and had ordered its abandonment. The Egyptian Government had protested against that abandonment, and it was by that act that the Government of the right hon. Gentleman showed themselves before Egypt and England and Europe to be the real Governors of Egypt, and the persons really responsible for the actions of the Egyptian Government in the Soudan. They acknowledged that responsibility. I have no ground of complaint of their thus acting. The point is not so much that they have altogether ignored responsibility, as that, after having acknowledged it for a time, they seemed now to have forgotten it, and do not realize the meaning of the promises they have made. Now, my right hon. Friend seems to doubt whether what I have stated was the view of General Gordon. But what happened? Remember, General Gordon was sent out from England, it is true, to report. That mission was soon ended, and it would, indeed, have been rather an absurd mission to have sent him merely to report. By the time he got to Cairo it changed, and he had instructions to go to the South with Powers; and he was distinctly told by Lord Granville—

> "You will consider yourself authorized and instructed to perform such other duties as the Egyptian Government may desire to intrust to you, and as may be communicated to you by Sir E. Baring."—[Egypt, No. 2 (1884), p. 3.]

What were those duties? Not merely that he was sent as an Envoy. I admit that he has that character, and I agree with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) that we are bound to secure the safety of this Envoy as of other Envoys; but he was sent, not only as an Envoy; he was, in fact, ordered by our Government to go to the Soudan as Governor General of the Soudan. It is useless to say he wished to do so himself. He may or he may not have wished it. He may even have suggested it; but the Government, acting as they did, were bound to support him. He was appointed Governor General by a Firman of the Khedive—in fact, upon the instructions of our Government, because they were given by Sir Evelyn Baring, who informed the Government at home that they were given—and these were the instructions given to him—

> "We trust that your Excellency will adopt the most effective measures for the accomplishment of your mission in this respect, and that after completing the evacuation you will take the necessary steps for establishing an organized government in the different provinces of the Soudan."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 28.]

But there was something much more important than words; it was the act of sending him out as Governor General. He might have been sent without any direct power over the people, and without any responsibility. He might have been sent merely as an Envoy to try to negotiate the extrication of the garrisons; but he was sent down as Governor General to exercise the power of Governor General. It was said that this was for temporary purposes. I do not deny that; but from day to day he was incurring fresh responsibility—the Government must have known it—and performing a great many governing acts, such as opening prison doors, forgiving taxes, dismissing many officials, appointing many other officials, issuing edicts, and summoning a Council. Can it, then, for a moment be supposed that any man thus in power to exercise such authority, who knew that the Government at home had sanctioned his being put in that position and were aware how he was using it, would imagine that he was to get rid of that position and to slink away, leaving the Native Government to take care of itself, as soon as difficulties increased? I do not think that any man going on behalf of the great English nation would do that. I think he would be very loth to take up such a mission upon such terms. The Government said they did not ask him to do what he did; but they knew very well what he was doing. Of all the men possible to conceive as unlikely not to feel for what he had made himself responsible, going as he did in obedience to English orders, there was no man so little likely to do that as General Gordon. He says in one of his despatches afterwards—"To take that course would be mean." And I think he was right. Now, just let me say a word about the position in the Soudan. We must not be led away by vague terms. The reconquest of the Soudan is often mentioned. We must define what we mean by the Soudan. There was a part of the Soudan at the time of General Gordon's mission in the possession of the Mahdi, and other parts in which the rebellion had not taken place. It was in these districts that he had to stem the invasion if he could, to rescue the garrisons, and to see that anarchy did not follow their withdrawal. He took steps which at first succeeded. The Government approved what he had done. They beheld his acts with pride, and congratulated him on his success. For a time all went well. Originally, it is quite true, General Gordon thought that the Government could be reconstituted by putting back in power the Chiefs displaced by the Egyptian Government. But by the time he got to Cairo he saw reason to fear that at Khartoum and in one or two of the other large towns this course would be very difficult, because no Chiefs of the old families were still in existence. The Government knew that he had given up this hope, yet they did not give up the task of reconstituting the Government. Then he came to the conclusion to ask the Government to appoint Zebehr. I entirely agree with the course that the Government took on this point. In passing let me say one word about General Gordon. I think there is hardly anything in his remarkable life, or in the story now being transacted at Khartoum, which better shows the unselfish and chivalrous devotion of the man than his action about Zebehr Pasha. He knew that Zebehr Pasha hated him; that he was his deadly enemy; that he had reason to fear that if he came to the Soudan he would cause his death. He was informed of that at Cairo; but he possesses two strong characteristics. In the first place, he has absolutely no fear of his life; and, secondly, he carries no rancour. I think the Government were perfectly right in the conclusion they came to, though I scarcely think they came to that conclusion, as now stated, on the evidence of public opinion. No doubt, public opinion would have been against the appointment of Zebehr; but, so far as I can recollect, there was no expression of opinion before the 10th of March, and on February 29 and on March 5 the Government had, in forcible language, expressed their surprise at this suggested appointment, and given a strong opinion against it. Most of us are agreed on this point—that no fault is to be found with the Government for this decision. They were right in refusing to send Zebehr; but that ought to have made them see the responsibility that rested on them to find some other plan for the restoration of order in the Soudan. No plan was suggested. General Gordon pointed out that we had taken the Government away from these people, and that we could not leave them in anarchy. He was asked to suggest someone else. But it was the duty of the Government to have suggested someone else. I do not think it would have been very difficult. I ventured to give a hint on this point during the debate on March 10. I think the natural course would have been for them to have said to General Gordon—"Proclaim yourself as Governor until you have consolidated the Government, and have good reason to believe that anarchy will not result from your departure." I believe that course would have been successful. Nothing whatever was done. General Gordon offered his resignation. If nothing was to be done, that resignation ought to have been accepted. It was not accepted. He was asked to remain; but upon what conditions? Without support, without assistance, without help. This was not merely a question of our duty to the people of Khartoum and of the honour of General Gordon, so that the men who trusted him should not come to misery. It was a question of his personal safety. What was his chief danger? As early as February he said the danger is not from attack from without, but from conspiracy within. Surely the Government must have seen the danger of his being deserted. His danger from traitors was immensely increased by his not being able to hold out to those who were rallying around him the assurance that they would not suffer when he left them. There are passages which show that. In one telegram Gordon points out that his difficulty is due to the haziness of the future, and the fear entertained by some persons of compromising themselves by supporting him. On March 3 he wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring—

> "If you were the people of Khartoum, you would, like they would, make terms with Mahdi by making me *backsheesh* to the Mahdi."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 156.]

Why did not the Government recognize their responsibility, and say—"We have sent you there for a certain duty, we will give you power to stay there, and we will support you until you have performed your duty." If this had been the tone adopted there would have been no talk of an expedition in the autumn. Instead of that garrison after garrison was deserted. The people naturally feared to support General Gordon, for they knew that the Government would force him to go away, and then they would be left to the tender mercies of the Mahdi. I have permission to read an extract from a letter written by Sir Henry Gordon, who has not, it must be admitted, shown any feeling against the Government—

> "The Government," he says, "will not allow Zebehr to go, nor will they tell General Gordon to administer the country himself. The people are, therefore, like terrified sheep, and do not know which way to turn. If General Gordon were ordered to remain they would flock to him; but they fear he will have to leave them, and then God help them; they will fall a prey to the Mahdi."

This was the secret of the whole matter. General Gordon was formally asked to remain there; but without assistance or help. Not only was no hope of support given to him—all his appeals for help were disregarded. No help was either given or promised. I dare say the Secretary of State for War will explain why no troops marched from Suakin to Berber. Some military men thought the attempt might be made, others that it could not. But I much doubt whether the actual expedition would have been necessary. If preparations had been made, if officers had been sent down, and if there had been an evident intention shown on the part of the Government to support him, that probably would have been sufficient. But there was no help, and not even an assurance of help, and at last came that telegram of which we do not know the exact date, but which appears to have been sent to him in obedience to Lord Granville's instructions on March 13, and which informed General Gordon — "Osman Digna's troops dispersed. No succour for you from Berber." Let us mark the immense change that has happened since the time when General Gordon got that telegram and the position now before us? General Gordon did not get this telegram until April 8; and it is no use mentioning telegrams sent to him after that time, still less is there any use in mentioning telegrams sent by him before that time. Those telegrams he sent still believing that the Government were going to support him, and they are now quoted as a proof that he is in no danger. What was the danger? Not that he would not be able to beat off the men who attacked him in Khartoum, but that there would be treachery and desertion. Treachery and desertion had shown themselves, and he had been compelled to shoot three men who had proved themselves traitors; and that is his danger now. His danger is that, stimulated by what is happening at Berber, and by what is probably now happening at Dongola, encouraged to revolt, and fearing to follow him, he will find in Khartoum a large majority of opponents, partly out of hatred and still more out of fear, and but very few friends. My hon. Friend the Member for Andover (Mr. Francis Buxton) and the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) seem to suppose that General Gordon at any moment could get away. Well, if he was to follow such advice as they would give him, he probably could get away. He probably might go by himself, and might possibly be able to take Colonel Stewart and Mr. Power with him; but this we may be sure of—he may find it a hopeless contest to carry on his mission, and he may make an effort to take away those persons who have been intrusted to his care; but he is not the man to slink off by himself, or along with his two English friends. We have heard a great deal about the condition of his mission, that he was to use nothing but pacific means. Now, I confess I heard with very great surprise the Prime Minister's definition of this condition last night. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The next difference between us and the right hon. Gentleman is when he contends that General Gordon had authority from us to pro-

> ceed by warlike means if pacific means should fail. I contend that he has not adduced a rag of evidence to support that allegation, and that it is contradicted by every declaration that we have made in Parliament, and by every passage that we have submitted to Parliament."

I am sorry the Prime Minister is not present now; but does he really mean that that was the condition? Does he really mean that this officer, the Envoy of the Queen, a man carrying on this difficult task, was sent as Governor General to Khartoum upon the understanding that he was not to use anything but pacific means in any event? Was Khartoum the only place in the world to be so governed; and was General Gordon the only person who was expected to do it on such a condition? It is undoubtedly true that it was his desire, and the desire of the Government, that there should be no resort to violent methods. Of course, it was their desire and their hope that he would succeed by the strength and power of his personality; but if they meant that no other means were to be used in any circumstances, he ought to have been warned of this before he left. Not only was he not warned, but he very quickly found that he would be compelled to have recourse to force. On February 27 there is a despatch of his in which he says to Sir Evelyn Baring that—

> "Having put out my programme of peace, and allowed sufficient time to elapse, I am now sending out forces to show our force."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884) p. 102.]

The Government did not object to that. Then, again, he very naturally supposed that the landing of the force at Suakin was meant for his assistance. I have no doubt that when he heard of those battles, he supposed that they were for the purpose of giving him assistance. I entirely approved of that expedition to the relief of Tokar; but I grieved very much that it was thought necessary to fight battles after the fate of Tokar had been decided. At that time I had this hope—that they were to lead to the opening of the road to Berber. I do not believe the Government themselves had any notion, while the most warlike means were being adopted on the Eastern Coast of the Soudan, that nothing but pacific means were to be adopted in Central Soudan. But General Gordon evidently thought those troops were to go to his rescue, and we read touching accounts of scouts being sent out to look for them in his helplessness, or, at least, his want of support. If he had seen the despatches, however, he would have thought still more certainly that that support was coming to his aid. We find the Government saying, in a despatch to Admiral Hewett—

> "We do not want you to take warlike action; it is not necessary; but if you think you can open up the road to Suakin, you may go forward to Tamanieb;"

and for that purpose he did go forward to Tamanieb. Finally, we come to the last stage. Now, my right hon. Friend gave us an interpretation of a telegram last evening. It is an important telegram to General Gordon, if he gets it, because it is the last declaration of the policy of the Government. It is important to us in this debate, because it is upon that telegram that we are to judge what is now the policy of the Government. My right hon. Friend said it was a covenant to Parliament and a covenant to the nation. Now, I confess that I do not think, if General Gordon gets that telegram, he will put that interpretation upon it. It does not appear to me to contain any covenant whatever. Messengers are scouring all that part of Africa, from Abyssinia far away up to the Western Desert, in order to see whether they can get this message through to General Gordon. If he does get it, in what position will it probably find him at Khartoum? Struggling for his life; and not merely for his own life, but for the lives of all those who have been intrusted to him. What does the telegram say? It contains three questions and one assurance. The first question is—

> "That he is to state and keep us informed to the best of his ability, not only as to the immediate, but the prospective danger at Khartoum."

I believe everyone but the Prime Minister is already convinced of that danger. I do not say that he is aware of the danger himself; I think he would act very differently if he was; and I attribute his not being convinced to his wonderful power of persuasion. He can persuade most people of most things, and, above all, he can persuade himself of almost anything. Then the despatch continues—

> "He is to advise us as to the force that would be necessary in order to secure his safe removal."

Now, observe, it is not the removal of those who have trusted in General Gordon; it is his removal only. It might be supposed that you could not remove him without also removing his followers; but I am afraid that despatch must be read with the despatch of March 16, from Lord Granville to Sir Evelyn Baring, in which he says that the Government were unable to authorize any advance of British troops in the direction of Berber until they had received military information with regard to its practicability, and that, if ordered, it would be confined to securing the safety of General Gordon. If that is the meaning of it, we can have little doubt what will be the answer which General Gordon will return to it. Then comes an assurance; but not a promise of help—rather a promise of no help—

> "We do not propose to supply him with a Turkish or other force for the purpose of undertaking military expeditions against the Mahdi, such expeditions being beyond the scope of the commission which he holds, and at variance with the pacific policy which was the purpose of his mission to the Soudan."

There is no assurance whatever that he would have support either for carrying out the original object of his mission, or even for securing the safety of those who were acting under the orders of the Government, and whom he had induced to follow him and greatly to endanger themselves. Then comes the last question, and I do not doubt the answer which will be given—

> "If with the knowledge of this fact he decides on remaining at Khartoum he should state the cause of his decision and the intention with which he so continues."

The answer, I think, which will be returned to this will be that General Gordon will not desert those who have trusted him; that he will do what he can at the danger of his own life to protect them if possible. That is the answer he will make; and I believe the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who cried "Hear, hear!" a short time ago, would make the same reply. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] That is the last written declaration of the Government. But we have the spoken declaration of my right hon. Friend last evening, and does it go further? Is it more than this, that when we obtain this information, when we know why General Gordon chooses to remain, if we still find it necessary to send out an expedition to help him, we will do so? My right hon. Friend said he would not wait an indefinite time; but it is clear that he would wait a considerable time. But the interpretation of the Prime Minister's speech last evening is to be found in the action of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who do not now feel it necessary to move their Amendments. They are satisfied with that speech. They are satisfied that every possible means will be adopted to get rid of that expedition, and that there will be great delay in undertaking it or in preparing for it. They do not think there is much danger of such an expedition. General Gordon may die; he may go to the Congo; he may try some other despairing method of rescuing himself and his followers. Then, possibly, he may do another thing. I do not know whether it lies in my right hon. Friend's estimate, but it does lie in mine, that the wonderful resources of that wonderful man may come out when he is left by himself, as they did in China, as they also did in the Soudan when he was there before. He may be found a match for all his enemies; and although he be not supported by English power and the English Government, he may yet assert the grandeur of the English character and the heroism of a brave and devoted Englishman. It is quite possible that, after all, General Gordon may succeed, and that before October comes you may find that his success will be so clear that for very shame's sake you will have to support him, and take, or try to take, some credit for what he has done. But what we have now before us is this last telegram as the policy of the Government. It is impossible for me to express approval of that policy with that telegram before me. My hon. Friends below the Gangway are jubilant at this moment. They are conscientious in their views. I do not say this in any sneering manner. They feel most keenly the possible bloodshed and the burdens that may fall on the English taxpayers. But let me tell them that if they were to set to work to make bloodshed probable and to impose tremendous burdens on the taxpayers, they could not do it more surely than by the course they are now pursuing. Preparations for General Gordon's support, if they had been made some time ago, would have sufficed. It is just possible, though I fear hardly probable, that if those preparations were made at once, and if General Gordon himself could be informed that British power was behind him, an expedition would not be necessary. It may be said you cannot get a message delivered to him, and cannot get an answer from him; but it is one thing sending a message through enemies, and another sending it to enemies; and if they once knew that British power could, and if necessary would, do what it has done in Egypt and at Suakin, I believe that, with that power behind General Gordon, the expedition might not be necessary. But if the policy is adopted of giving no certain hope, or prospect of such an expedition, but only holding out its possibility if certain information be obtained, then all the tribes will rise in greater force, and every man who hates Egyptian rule—as many have reason for doing—every man who fears what the Mahdi or his followers will do, will rally round the standard of the Mahdi's friends; and while you would find still that in order to satisfy your own consciences (said the right hon. Gentleman, turning to the Radical Benches)—yes, even your consciences —[*Loud and continued cheers from the Opposition, and interruption.*]—I will explain what I mean. I know what the feelings of many of my hon. Friends below the Gangway are on this matter. I was brought up among men of that stamp. Some of the dearest of my own relations were men whose consciences were very strong upon these matters; and not for the sake of philanthropy, much less for the sake of interest or of honour—not merely for such a cause as that for which Osman Digna's troops were dispersed after Tokar had surrendered—not merely for the cause for which the bombardment of Alexandria was ordered—but under no conditions, and in no circumstances, would their consciences have allowed them to send out an expedition. But there are some men who have almost such consciences, but have not them entirely. Their confidence in non-resistance principles is not so strong as that. That is what I mean. There might come a time when even my hon. Friends would reconsider their peace notions, and would feel that an expedition should be sent out. I hope that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister does not suppose that I am alluding to him, or that I think him one of those persons who have this dislike to war; but let me say that when that expedition comes it may cost millions of money which might have been saved, and very likely cause the death of thousands of men whose lives might have been spared. You may depend upon it that this country will not allow you to disavow your responsibilities. But it may be in your power to make them much more costly and much more difficult to fulfil. I have only one further word to say. I have still some hope that as in the Soudan so in Egypt—I do not want to bring in that question now—the Government may at last wake up to the reality of facts and to the responsibilities of their position. But as regards the Soudan itself, let me entreat them to ponder over these words of their own agent, Sir Evelyn Baring, which appear to me to be very weighty, and to deserve their utmost consideration. In his despatch of February 28, he says that—

> "Whatever may be said to the contrary, Her Majesty's Government must, in reality, be responsible for any arrangements that are now devised for the Soudan, and I do not believe it is possible to shake off that responsibility."

It is because I cannot but feel that they are engaged at this moment in a vain, a useless, though also a dangerous, and what may turn out to be a costly attempt to shift off that responsibility, that I find myself utterly unable to support the Government on this occasion.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the House has listened, as it always does, with interest, and also with respect, to the evidently earnest and honest expression of the strong opinions held on this question by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster); but I regret that in the expression of those opinions my right hon. Friend should have found it impossible to state the convictions which he entertains on this subject without making personal attacks upon a section of the House with which he acknowledges that for the greater part of his life he has been identified, and suggesting that there is some difference between the quality of their consciences and that which he possesses himself; and also that he should have thought it necessary to make a bitter and personal, and evidently highly-prepared and long-reflected-over attack upon the sincerity of my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, under whose Leadership he has so long served, and perhaps by means of whose support he has been assisted in acquiring some part of that position which he so deservedly occupies. I think that our debates could be conducted without the necessity of introducing those personal attacks. I do not think that anybody entertains any doubt as to the real and strong love which my right hon. Friend feels for peace and the cause of peace. But, at the same time, we may feel some astonishment that my right hon. Friend's love for peace should always be found exhibiting itself in the utterance of trumpet calls to war.

Referring for a moment to the speech made this afternoon by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), there are one or two very short observations that I should like to make. The noble Lord said that the speech of the Prime Minister last night was, to his mind, the announcement of the definite and fixed abandonment of General Gordon. Well, Sir, I do not know what impression it may have made on the noble Lord; but certainly it conveyed to my mind exactly the opposite impression. It appeared to me that that speech, while it contained the repudiation of a policy of military action for purposes external to, outside of, and inconsistent with, the mission of General Gordon, contained, at the same time, the fullest and most absolute recognition of the responsibility of the Government and of this country for the safety of General Gordon. Then the noble Lord also referred to a defect in the policy of the Government from the very moment of the mission of General Gordon to Egypt. He said that that mission ought to have been accompanied by a movement of troops up the Nile, and by the strengthening of our forces in Egypt. But to what point of the Nile could this movement of troops have been in any way made, and what reason had he to suppose that Gordon himself ever thought that such a movement of troops up the Nile into the torrid regions of Upper Egypt was necessary? Not at the time of his first mission. The noble Lord says that it was perfectly possible at that time, and that that possibility was shown by the fact that we did make at that time an expedition to Suakin.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said that the despatch of the expedition to Suakin showed that there was no inconsistency in giving help to General Gordon.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes; but the noble Lord spoke particularly of the favourable situation, and said it was shown by our expedition to Suakin that we might have relieved General Gordon. But that expedition to Suakin was one which did not necessarily involve the retention of the troops at Suakin or in that neighbourhood, and it was anticipated that those troops would soon return to Egypt. But what would have been the use of despatching troops to some point—the noble Lord does not show us what the point was to be—up the Nile, until General Gordon had executed his mission? Then the noble Lord made some remarks upon the proposal to send Zebehr, and he said that the only reason why the Government would not send Zebehr was that they would have been placed in a minority on the question, although the noble Lord himself approved the decision of the Government. The Prime Minister said that, while there might be a great deal to be said both for and against General Gordon's proposal with reference to Zebehr, there was one argument, in his opinion, conclusive against it, and that was that not only this Government, but any Government that made such a proposal, would have been placed in a minority, that it would not have been in the power of any Government to support such a decision, and that to hold out to General Gordon the prospect of assistance from Zebehr could be only holding out a delusive prospect, and would only embarrass him. The noble Lord said also that the demand for Zebehr showed General Gordon's opinion of the weakness of his position at Khartoum. That demand for Zebehr had nothing to do with General Gordon's position at Khartoum. It was made at the moment of his arrival at Khartoum, when he tells us that he was receiving messages of congratulation from all parts of the country. The demand, therefore, at that time showed no such acknowledgment of weakness as it is represented to contain by the noble Lord.

I must ask the House for a moment to forgive me for referring to a question somewhat personal to myself. An hon. Member last night—I think it was the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—accused me, as well as Her Majesty's Government in general, of having concealed from the House the wishes communicated by General Gordon. I would refer to an answer given by me on the 1st of April to a Question put by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), as to whether we had received any confirmation of a report in *The Times* that General Gordon was expecting British aid? I stated that we had received communications from General Gordon up to the same date as the telegram in *The Times*, and that General Gordon did not appear to have made any request for British troops to be sent to Khartoum. Now, that answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Eye is perfectly accurate, not only as far as we knew at that moment, but also up to the present time. But that there might not be the slightest misapprehension on the subject, within two days of giving that answer I made a full statement to this House, in which I laid before the House all the information which I had then on the subject, and which is all the House has now. I said that General Gordon had never suggested to me the employment of British troops for the relief of Khartoum. In that statement I claim that I laid before the House all the information then in the power of the Government to give, and it is practically all that is known now in the House.

I shall not, in what I have to say, make any reference to certain expressions contained in the telegrams of General Gordon, which have been somewhat eagerly grasped at by the Opposition. What we have to look at in these telegrams is the information and the advice which is contained in them. As to the expression of General Gordon's opinion, or the language in which it is couched, I do not think that we ought to trouble ourselves much more about them than if they came from any other sources. It is quite clear to anyone who has read the whole series of General Gordon's telegrams that he is a man of extremely impulsive character; that as soon as an idea comes to him he immediately proceeds to telegraph it; and that his frame of mind varies very rapidly from day to day, even from hour to hour. It is also perfectly well known that General Gordon, Christian hero though he be, has a quick temper as well as other people; and I am not surprised that, with the extremely imperfect knowledge of the views and intention of the Government that was in his possession, he expressed his indignation in somewhat strong language. But the fact that General Gordon spoke of indelible disgrace—an expression which has been fastened on by the Opposition—has not necessarily the effect of attaching it to us. I say that it would be indelible disgrace if we should neglect any means at the disposal of this country to save General Gordon; but if General Gordon tells us that indelible disgrace attaches to the Government with reference to these other garrisons, then I say that I do not admit that General Gordon is, on this point at least, a better authority than anyone else. The Government were under no moral obligation to use the war resources of this Empire for the relief of those garrisons. General Gordon's mission did not involve the employment of military force; and the fact that he has been despatched to Khartoum, and that he has done, and is doing, all that he considers to be best and most advisable to relieve these garrisons, does not alter the moral obligation that rests upon Her Majesty's Government, and cannot in itself affect the accusation of indelible disgrace.

It appears to me that the scope and character of General Gordon's mission have been very much lost sight of, and have been misrepresented and exaggerated throughout the whole of this debate. A great part of the speech of the right hon. Baronet who brought forward this Motion appeared to me to be founded on the belief that General Gordon had been despatched by the Government for the purpose of stamping out the insurrection and putting down the movement headed by the Mahdi. The language of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) last night appeared to have very little reference to the subject we are discussing. What has the position we hold in India, what have the measures by which that position was assumed, to do with the position we hold in Egypt? If the hon. Gentleman thinks that we have already annexed Egypt, and that it is incumbent on us to take similar measures for the protection of Egyptian territory to those we should take if danger were threatening our Indian Frontier, then it seems to me that the hon. Member for Orkney has made greater advances than hon. Gentlemen opposite would endorse. I dissent entirely from the version of the mission of General Gordon which has just been given us by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, and from his theory of the responsibility which he appears to think the Government have undertaken for the resettlement of the Soudan. He says that the mission of General Gordon was dictated primarily, not by motives of humanity, nor even of policy, but that it was a mission on which we sent him in fulfilment of a duty; and my right hon. Friend bases his argument on the fact that we have insisted upon the Egyptian Government abandoning the attempt to hold those vast Provinces which it has been proved they had not the power to hold. Well, Sir, I entirely dissent from and repudiate the contention of my right hon. Friend. We were in a position to give the Egyptian Government advice, and to insist upon its being followed; but unless the right hon. Gentleman can show that the advice was not good advice in the interest of Egypt itself, I cannot conceive how it can be established that we have taken any responsibility upon ourselves by giving that advice and insisting on its being accepted. My right hon. Friend argued that because certain powers were intrusted to General Gordon, he thereby made himself and those who employed him responsible for the present and the future of the Soudan. That appears to me to be an assumption totally unfounded, and I may almost call it a monstrous suggestion. Unless my right hon. Friend can show that new responsibilities were undertaken by General Gordon, and that General Gordon did anything, or could do anything, to aggravate the situation of danger and difficulty that existed before his arrival at Khartoum, it is impossible for me to see how the assumption by him of certain powers placed either him, or those who employed him, in a position of new responsibility in regard to the Soudan.

What was the exact character and object of his mission? At the time General Gordon was despatched the situation was one of very great difficulty and anxiety, as it is now. The position of the garrisons in the Soudan and of the Egyptian officials there appeared to be one of the greatest danger, and almost hopeless. They were separated from each other by enormous distances, frequently by immense deserts, and were only united to each other by rivers, the navigation of which was extremely precarious and difficult. They were separated by still further distances from Egypt, the base on which they had relied; and the moral support and influence of the Egyptian Government, by means of which alone they had up to that time held their position in the Soudan, had been destroyed. For that condition of things the Government never have admitted or accepted any responsibility. It was not Her Majesty's Government who sent the Egyptian officials or garrisons into that position of danger. They did not encourage, but on the contrary they dissuaded, the fatal expedition of General Hicks, which brought about the collapse of the Egyptian authority in the Soudan. In the opinion of the Government, the first condition of the problem before them, a condition openly and frankly avowed to the House, was that British troops should not be employed for the purpose of extracting those garrisons and officials from the position in which they were placed, owing to no action of the British people or Government, but to the mistakes made in former times by their own Government. The attempt might have failed in its object, and could only have succeeded through the reconquest of the Soudan and the subjugation of those who had had revolted against what was universally acknowledged to be an intolerable and oppressive Government. Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to reconquer the country either for the Egyptian Government or for this nation; neither were they prepared to make sacrifices of English treasure and life for the purpose of re-endowing the Egyptian Government with the Provinces of the Soudan. It was, in their opinion, no part of their duty to risk English treasure or life in enabling the Egyptian garrisons to march out with flying colours from their positions in the

Soudan. At the same time, there existed in this country a very strong and natural desire that some effort should, if possible, be made to mitigate the sufferings of the retreat of those garrisons. One chance of this there appeared to be. There was one man of known ability and energy who had great experience in the government and affairs of the Soudan, who was believed to have acquired great influence in that country, who was universally pointed to by the public opinion of this country, and who appeared himself to be of opinion that it would be possible by sending himself, without the support of any military force, to accomplish something for the withdrawal of the garrisons. In the conversations which General Gordon had with Members of the Government, before he undertook his mission, he explained to some extent the views which he entertained on this point. General Gordon said that in his opinion the danger of massacre of the garrisons was greatly exaggerated, that the power of the Mahdi was greatly exaggerated, and that it was probable that no opposition would be offered to the peaceful withdrawal of the Egyptian officials and such portions of the garrisons as might desire to leave. General Gordon further expressed his opinion that probably the greater number even of the Egyptian population would not desire to leave, that the greater number of the troops would probably join the Mahdi or the insurrectionary party, and that the withdrawal of such persons as it might be desirable to withdraw could be effected without any great difficulty or great risk of massacre. At the same time, Sir Evelyn Baring had asked, on behalf of the Egyptian Government, that a British officer should be sent to superintend the evacuation of Khartoum and the retreat of the other garrisons. It seemed to us at that time that this was a chance which we ought not to throw away, and that we should be wanting in our duty if we refused the offer of General Gordon's services, rejected the demands of Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Government, and allowed lives to be sacrificed through the known incapacity of the principal Egyptian officials of the Soudan. This was the primary object of the mission which General Gordon accepted. It is perfectly true that he thought it might be in his power to do something more—to secure the establishment of a Government in the Soudan to replace the Egyptian Government. The evacuation, even if it should lead to the establishment in Khartoum and other places of the Mahdi, or the heads of the insurrection, was the primary object which General Gordon went out to accomplish and which he willingly accepted.

I am not going to imitate the conduct pursued by some hon. Gentlemen opposite, in condemning without further information or in casting blame or doubt on General Gordon when his proceedings appeared to be somewhat inconsistent with the objects for which he left this country. We know what was the treatment he received from hon. Gentlemen opposite. No sooner was there a whisper of a Proclamation which appeared to countenance some extension of the Slave Trade than the most indignant protests were made from the other side of the House, and we were asked if we were going to support an envoy who proposed to re-establish the Slave Trade? No sooner had the rumour of General Gordon's application to have Zebehr sent to him reached this country than similar opposition was made, and there were similar notices of resistance. But although none of us are entitled to throw any doubt whatever on the measures which General Gordon thought fit to adopt, I am bound to say that there are some portions of his policy which, as at present advised, are not clear to us; and it is not clear to us that he has not departed in some respects from his original purpose. It is possible that General Gordon over-rated at first to some extent the probabilities as to the success of his mission; he might have overestimated his own strength in dealing with the objects to be achieved, not merely the removal of the garrisons, but the reconstitution of the Government of the Soudan, and, what he thought a necessary preliminary to the reconstitution of settled government in the Soudan, the crushing of the power of the Mahdi. It may be that he found that the execution of his original intentions, as I have described them, was perfectly impossible. But on the evidence before us we have had proof, to some extent, that the situation of the garrisons was not inaccurately estimated by General Gordon. In the case of Tokar, the garrison, though it surrendered, was not massacred, and it does not appear that even without the intervention of a British force that garrison would not have been allowed to depart. In the case of Shendy, the massacre of refugees does not appear to have been confirmed, and, so far as we have heard, the emigration of the officials and army from Berber has been accomplished without loss of life. Up to the present time there is nothing to show that General Gordon was wrong in believing, as he stated before he left this country, that probably there would be no difficulty put in the way by the inhabitants of the country of the Egyptian garrisons and people leaving the places which they then occupied.

The Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman says that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's mission. But he omits to state whether there was any possible course which, in the opinion of his Colleagues, would have been more successful. The speeches made in support of the right hon. Gentleman's Motion, however, go a great deal further—for they go so far as to say that the course taken by us tended not to promote, but to defeat, the success of General Gordon's mission. Let me examine the allegations. The first allegation appears to be that the military operations at Suakin exasperated the Mahdi and the people whom he led. Now, not one syllable of proof has been brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman or any of his supporters that that has been the case. The telegrams go entirely in an opposite direction. On the 29th of February, General Gordon, speaking of a rising of tribes near Kassala, says in a telegram to Sir Evelyn Baring—

> "Hadendowa have raised tribes near Kassala; attacked Kassala, but were repulsed. Road still closed. As Baker's defeat has caused this, you ought to do something to draw these Hadendowa down to Suakin." — [Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 121.]

Therefore, on the 29th of February it is quite evident that Gordon did not disapprove of the operations. Then on the 3rd of March, speaking again of Kassala, he says—

> "I have no doubt but that Graham's victory will withdraw the enemy from the vicinity."—[*Ibid.* p. 156.]

That does not show that General Gordon thought that the success of his mission had been endangered by the operations. On the 8th of March, he says—

> "Kassala will hold out without difficulty after Graham's victory."—[*Ibid.* p. 145.]

I maintain then, in the absence of proof to the contrary, that it is impossible to support the allegation that the military operations undertaken by the Government have tended in any way to aggravate the position of General Gordon at Khartoum.

Then we come to the proposal of General Gordon to send Zebehr. That is a question which need not be discussed at much length, because it is not seriously maintained by the Opposition that a different course ought to have been followed by Her Majesty's Government. The most that has been said—and it is the only practical suggestion—is that if this was refused you ought to have proposed something else. Well, I am not aware, after all the experience we have acquired, what it is suggested by Gentlemen opposite that we ought to have done. It is left to my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford to do that, and he says—"Gordon ought to have been asked to remain in Khartoum himself, and to establish a settled Government there and in the Soudan." What knowledge has my right hon. Friend that it was in the power of General Gordon to do so? And I would ask my right hon. Friend what help it was possible in February or March to give to Gordon? What assistance would it have been possible to render him in the task of establishing a settled Government in Khartoum and the Provinces? Then it is said that we ought to have taken advantage of General Graham's success, and despatched troops to Suakin to open the road and occupy Berber. In the first place, I would repeat what I stated on the 3rd of April, that the sending of troops to Berber has never been suggested by Gordon himself as an isolated operation, or except in connection with the proposal which he made that Zebehr should be sent out to succeed him. That I assert. But in the next place, what is of more practical importance, I must ask the House to consider what was the possibility of such an operation. As far as I am aware, the reliance of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends is on a telegram of Sir

Evelyn Baring, dated the 24th of March, in which he states shortly the opinion of General Stephenson and General Wood that the operation, though one of extraordinary military risk, was not an impossible one. Well, at that very time operations were in progress which were in that direction, and might possibly have had the effect of opening out communications with Suakin. In accordance with the recommendations of General Gordon, Sir Evelyn Baring, and the military authorities, advantage was taken of the victories gained to push on a reconnaissance in force in the direction of the road to Berber, and, if possible, to establish communications with that town. What was the result? What was the experience gained by that limited operation? Although the season had not reached the greatest heat the troops suffered fearfully, so that on one day's march almost half the small force employed had to fall out from the effect of the heat. That operation, accompanied as it was by great suffering to the troops, while it was not seriously resisted, though it found that a certain small force was still collected under Osman Digna, proved conclusively that any military expedition on a considerable scale in the direction of Berber was absolutely impossible. I do not deny that it might have been possible at great risk and the certainty of great suffering to send a small force of Cavalry. That was possible. But that force, if sent at all, must have been sent entirely unsupported by Artillery or Infantry. And in the attempt that had been made by far the most difficult part of the route had not been experienced. The difficulties of movement over the first 150 miles, though they might be overcome, were immense; but they were as nothing compared with the difficulties of the route over the last 100 miles. I remember the Questions that used to be addressed to me two or three years ago when General Roberts undertook his march from Cabul to Candahar with a considerable and perfectly-equipped Force. I then received most urgent expostulations and admonitions from Gentlemen opposite as to the inexpediency and recklessness of cutting off such a force from its base and sending it to march in an enemy's country without provision for perfect communications. I am, therefore, surprised at the extreme facility with which hon. Members opposite adopt the proposal that it would have been wise to send a small force of Cavalry across 200 miles of desert—100 of which are without water—without any provision for communicating with its base, and with the absolute certainty that, whatever might befall it, no reinforcements could reach it for months. And what was the object to be accomplished in return for this extraordinary risk? No one could suppose that a small force of 200 or 300 Cavalry would have been sufficient to undertake any considerable operation for the practical assistance of General Gordon. What he relied upon was the moral effect that would be produced by sending any British soldiers at all, and I do not deny that it is possible that if this risk had been run, and if this force had successfully arrived at Berber, a moral effect might have been produced; but that is entirely a matter of supposition, and is utterly incapable of proof.

So far as our experience goes, the moral effect of the operation of British soldiers in the Soudan may very easily be over-estimated. We were told that the moral effect of sending a force to Suakin would be such that there would be no fighting at all; but the moral effect was not even to save the garrison of Tokar. The siege was continued, and the garrison surrendered. At all events, it might have been supposed that the moral effect on the troops under Osman Digna would be such that they would not remain to fight our troops, and that they would disperse. But the Native levies, far from being impressed by the moral effect of a British Expedition, remained to fight two of the most sanguinary and obstinate engagements ever fought by British troops; and there is no reason to suppose that the tribes whom we might have encountered in marching to Berber, and the tribes in arms between Berber and Khartoum, are of a stuff so different from that of which those serving under Osman Digna are made, that the moral effect would have been what General Gordon anticipated. It is evident that if the moral effect had not been that which was expected by General Gordon the difficulties of General Gordon's position would have been greatly enhanced. I should like to know what would be the feeling of this country at this moment, and what would be the language of hon. Members opposite, if besides having General Gordon and Colonel Stewart beleagured in Khartoum, we also knew that a small force of British Cavalry, unable to take the offensive, was shut up in the town of Berber, and that no force for its extrication could be sent without a delay of many weeks?

The right hon. Gentleman says, in addition, that the steps necessary to secure the personal safety of General Gordon are still delayed. Where does the right hon. Gentleman obtain that information, and to what steps does that part of his Resolution point? The right hon. Gentleman does not say that any steps are actually necessary; he only says that certain steps which may be necessary are still delayed. In our opinion, before an Expedition for the relief of General Gordon is ordered or announced, it is the duty of the Government to satisfy themselves, by every means in their power, both of the necessity and practicability of that course. Such an expedition, the difficulties of which are very little appreciated by some hon. Members opposite, is not to be undertaken without the clearest proof of its necessity. Such an expedition ought certainly not to be made for the purpose of enabling General Gordon to "smash" the Mahdi, as he has expressed it. Such an expedition ought not to be made for the purpose of giving a satisfactory Government to the inhabitants of the Soudan, a task which is beyond the responsibility which the British Government ought to undertake. Such an expedition is not to be made even to enable the garrisons of the Soudan to march out with the honours of war. We must be satisfied, as far as it is possible for us to satisfy ourselves, that such an expedition is necessary to secure the safety of General Gordon, and of those for whose safety he has made himself responsible. It is necessary that we should be satisfied that the original view as to the possibility of evacuation is now impossible of execution. General Gordon will not be called upon by the Government to do anything which will be derogatory to his honour or to his character. Those who have trusted themselves in his service, those who have fought for him, those who have increased the perils in which they stood before by entering his service, no doubt General Gordon is responsible for, and cannot desert; but there is no reason to believe that if escape is possible for him it is not also possible for those who stand towards him in the relation which I have described. But the fact that General Gordon has risked his life in a pacific mission, in a mission of mercy, does not make him responsible for the performance of impossibilities. It does not make him responsible, and it does not make the Government any more responsible than they were before his mission was undertaken, for the safe withdrawal of the garrisons from the Soudan, which were not placed there in the service of England or by the orders of England. There is nothing to show that the danger in which those garrisons have always stood since the victory over General Hicks has been in any way increased by any orders given by General Gordon, or any measures taken by him. For the relief of those garrisons General Gordon is not bound in honour, but he is bound in honour not to desert those who have co-operated with him and taken service under him.

Before the steps referred to in the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman are decided upon or announced, the Government are bound to satisfy themselves of the practicability as well as of the necessity of such steps. They are bound to satisfy themselves by inquiry, by the collection of information, by consultation with the best authorities with whom they can communicate, before they commit this country to an undertaking which must be difficult, and which may be one of enormous difficulty. They must consider the scale of the preparations which will have to be made, the route which it will be possible to take, and the time of year when it will be possible for operations to commence. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock said that my right hon. Friend had announced that in October the Government would begin to think what measures it might be possible to take for the relief of General Gordon. The Government, I may tell the noble Lord, will not postpone considering the matter till the month of October, for they are thinking now, and have been long thinking, what measures they could take for the relief of General Gordon. Is the noble Lord prepared to say that this or any other Government would be justified in risking the health and safety of an expedition by sending it out before the month of September or October? I have spoken of the difficulties of any possible operations. Is the House aware that by the river route the distance from Cairo to Khartoum is 1,600 miles, intercepted by cataracts, and that many parts of the river are very little known, and have never been traversed by large bodies of men or used for the carriage of large quantities of forces? I have described the nature of the difficulties of the route by Suakin. Does the noble Lord think that an expedition on a large scale in the very height of summer is feasible or justifiable? I do not say that measures of the kind I have indicated are impossible, but I do say they are of such a magnitude that they are not to be attempted, and certainly not to be announced, until their practicability has been clearly demonstrated, and until the measures which it will be necessary to take are clearly foreseen. If such necessity should be proved, and if such practicability should be demonstrated, then I believe that this country will be prepared to grudge no sacrifice to save the life and honour of General Gordon. At the same time, it will be prepared, if it be possible, to give relief to those garrisons for the safety of which, as I have said, we admit and accept no responsibility, but whose sufferings unmerited, undeserved, and cruel, not by reason of any claims they possess upon us, in the name of mercy and humanity, we fully and completely appreciate.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that if the speech to which the House had just listened had been made two months ago, they would probably not now have been engaged in discussing the state of things in the Soudan. It was evident now that the Government had come to the determination to do what was right, only that determination came too late to be given effect to. He confessed he listened to some of the observations of the noble Marquess with considerable regret. The course adopted by the noble Marquess reminded him of the practice attributed to some savage nations, who, when their idols were dumb to their prayers, proceeded to heartily belabour those idols for their obstinacy. The House had had from from the Government two phases of opinion as to General Gordon. First, General Gordon was described as a Christian hero and as a genius; but now that the idol had not responded, he was described as a man of quick temper and impulsive views, who committed to telegrams the first notion that occurred to him. If that had been the description which the Prime Minister gave to the country of the person to whom this important mission had been intrusted, it was doubtful whether that mission would have secured the universal assent that it did obtain, and which was obtained by statements that were very different from those just made to the House by the noble Marquess. It seemed to him that at the bottom of this question there was something that the noble Marquess had not grappled with at all. *En passant*, he might observe that it was somewhat curious that the defence of the Government was left, perhaps necessarily, chiefly to Members of the Government. Certainly the speech of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) and the speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not suggest that outside their own ranks the Government had any very efficient support. But the question with which the noble Marquess had failed to deal was the question of the original responsibility of these acts.

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had added the following fifteen Members to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill:—Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Buszard, Mr. Edward Clarke, Mr. Thomas Collins, Dr. Commins, Mr. Grantham, Mr. Inderwick, Mr. Marum, Mr. Mellor, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Reid, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Waddy, Mr. Willis, and Sir J. Eardley Wilmot.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported*, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Edward Clarke and

Mr. Marum:—And had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Edmond Gray and Sir Robert Peel.

Report to lie upon the Table.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION.

VOTE OF CENSURE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th May],

> "That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said he was proceeding at the time of the adjournment of the debate to point out that the noble Marquess entirely avoided the cardinal point of the question—a course also taken by the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State. The Government had taken up this matter, like a great many other matters, too late. The question which the House and the country were interested in at the present moment was the responsibility which the Government assumed when General Gordon was sent, and the circumstances under which he was sent. The House had heard a great deal about the peculiarities of the country, the period of the year, the climatic difficulties, and so forth; but were these peculiarities unknown and unthought of by Her Majesty's Government when they originally sanctioned that mission? Could it be said that those who thought proper to assume the responsibilities of the government of Egypt were entitled to disclaim all responsibility for those who had been sent out to distant Provinces under the order of that Government? He declined to treat gravely the flimsy veil which separated Downing Street and Cairo, and he thought the time was past when anybody would get up in that House and contend that the Egyptian Government had any longer any serious existence. The noble Marquess repudiated responsibility for the garrisons in the Soudan; but he would like to know upon what grounds that repudiation was made, and if it extended to Sennar and the other garrisons? What was the difference between the different garrisons as a matter of policy? The Government thought it right that the Soudan should be evacuated at a very critical time, when Party feeling was in a very critical state in the country. General Gordon was selected. They had heard a good deal of violent protest against the assumptions made on that side of the House as to the character of his mission; but it was a remarkable thing that none of the speakers on behalf of the Government gave the House any very distinct idea of what General Gordon really was to do. What was the nature of his instructions? Was he to undertake the evacuation of the Soudan, or was his office confined to that of a mere messenger? Would he be doing the Government any injustice to suggest that the practice of "hedging" had been resorted to, and that General Gordon's instructions were framed in such a way that if they turned out well the glory would be given to the Government, but if they turned out ill the responsibility would fall upon General Gordon? ["Oh!"] Did hon. Members opposite think that suggestion unkind, because, if they did, he might tell them that the words were the words of the Prime Minister, substituting for the name of General Gordon that of Sir Bartle Frere. Much had been said of the protests of hon. Members on that side of the House when the announcement of Zebehr's appointment was made. It struck him as very peculiar, though no one had quoted the words of any hon. Member on that side in confirmation of that statement; but the Government ought not to consider it unnatural that some inquiry should be made into such an appointment considering the course the Government had pursued on a former occasion with respect to the Slave Circular. It might very well have been right to have permitted to General Gordon a discretion in the appointment, and if the Government had only dared to do what was right because it was right, it might have justified them in permitting Zebehr to leave Cairo and to be despatched to Khartoum. They had had charges of inconsistency made against the Conservative Party, because, when the Egyptian garrisons were in jeopardy, they urged the Government to take steps to relieve them, and subsequently supported the Vote of Censure moved by his right hon. Friend. But one thing seemed the natural sequel of the other. The Government were bound to relieve the garrisons, and the complaint against them at the time was that the Government delayed sending an expedition until it was too late. When the expedition did start, and did arrive at Suakin, what was the meaning of the 12 miles march into the desert and the bloody battles that were fought? It was all very well for hon. Members opposite to talk of their horror of bloodshed, but what had they to say to these battles? Were they fought for prestige? As long as it was supposed that these battles formed part of a scheme by which the Government were going to relieve these garrisons these battles appeared intelligible. But what was their justification now? Neither the noble Marquess the Secretary for War nor the Prime Minister had explained the object of these battles. Was it that at the time the Government were of opinion that they could assist General Gordon? If that was not the object, they must have been fought merely for the sake of prestige. The noble Marquess asked what the Government could have done? But that question depended on dates. The Government must be presumed to have been familiar with the advance of the hot season, and to have known at what time it would be impossible to move troops across the desert. Her Majesty's Government could not make up their minds as to what they should do. They had waited until the opportunity was lost of sending a force to Berber, and then they came to the House of Commons and told the country about the great desert and the terrible heat at the time when they shattered the Egyptian Government. But, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had said, was it really the case the Government did not mean to leave a stable Government behind them when they left the country, and that General Gordon's mission was simply to gather up the fragments of the Egyptian Administration which they themselves had reduced to powerlessness? Was General Gordon's mission simply to leave a message behind him that Egypt was to wash its hands of the Soudan? Would any Minister answer that question? No Minister had answered it yet. They were referred to those vague and hazy instructions in which General Gordon was to be allowed unlimited discretion, and then the moment he attempted to use his unlimited discretion he was informed that the Government did not approve of what he was about to do. The difficulty which the Government placed in the way of the House discussing those despatches was that they were not familiar with the difficulties of the task; but did the Government suppose that General Gordon was equally ignorant with the House? What did he say about the matter? General Gordon considered himself as having been ill-used, abandoned, and deserted. Why was that? Did he know the difficulties of the task? It was a strange thing to hear observations coming from the Treasury Bench calculated to cast doubt upon the complete familiarity of General Gordon with the whole subject with which he had been intrusted. But the reasoning of General Gordon throughout all those despatches in the Blue Books was that the Government had not kept faith with him; that they had not given him that assistance he had a right to expect in a situation of unexampled difficulty. The Government had declined to give him that assistance which they could have given him if they had been pleased to do so. It seemed to him, therefore, that the Government were in this difficulty. They now spoke as if General Gordon's mission, whatever it was, had failed. It was not so very long ago that the Prime Minister, in passionate language, had asked the Opposition to say why that mission had failed, and to point out on what evidence that opinion was based. At the present time the Government did not seem to be of the opinion that General Gordon's mission had succeeded. What had succeeded? Was it the news of that evening, that morning, or of yesterday which gave the assurance that General Gordon had succeeded in the object which the Prime Minister had sent him to attain? and, if not, what had Her Majesty's Ministers done to aid and assist him? The remarkable condition of things was this. Her Majesty's Ministers, according to the noble Marquess, had been thinking, were thinking, and would continue to think down to next October, of what they were going to do; but had they communicated to the House one word which would lead it to understand what they were going to do? All they heard was that there were difficulties in the way as to the climate, &c.; but what difficulty was there in Her Majesty's Government telling them what they would do for the purpose of rescuing General Gordon? Possibly, however, they were considering how they could best affect the dearly-loved Radical vote. Everyone expected that the Prime Minister, in the course of his speech the previous evening, would say what the Government were going to do; but what information had the House received? The noble Marquess, he thought, for the first time that afternoon, gave the House some information to the effect that they were thinking of it and were going to think of it; but that it was not true they were going to put off their meditations until October next. The country, however, was desirous to know what the responsibility, which the Government now admitted, was to lead to. Until a very late period they had not admitted their responsibility for General Gordon. Now they had done so. Had they done so in April the probability was that the House would not now be discussing this question. General Gordon had told the Government that a small force of men would get rid of this rebellion; but it appeared that his language about smashing the Mahdi was treated with something like a sneer. The noble Marquess had said that this was not the object of General Gordon's mission; but General Gordon did not say it was. He said that unless the Government assumed their responsibility and aided him in establishing a stable Government and allowed the people to live in peace and quietness they would have the Mahdi no longer at Khartoum, but at the gates of Cairo, and then they would have to smash up the Mahdi. He wished to ask hon. Members below the Gangway, and those who took the views of the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), what it was that justified their vote on behalf of Her Majesty's Government? He should like to know from Her Majesty's Government, or any of the advocates of peace at any price, what explanations had they now received which they had not got on the occasion when it was made to appear that the bloodshed at Suakin and Tamanieb was bloodshed justified by the exigencies of the occasion? He wished to know why it was that they claimed a sort of peculiar patronage of humanity? If there was nothing to justify them in that course he supposed those hon. Members would agree with the words of the Motion, and also in thinking that this was another instance of declaring too late their responsibility for General Gordon, while at the same moment they proclaimed their inability to help him.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: When any Member finds that a remark he has made is entirely misconstrued—especially as regards personal relations—it is the custom of the House that he should be allowed to explain it. My noble Friend the Secretary of State for War seemed to suppose from the remarks he made this afternoon that I had made a charge against my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister of personal insincerity. I can hardly imagine how my noble Friend could have thought so. All I can say is that nothing could have been further from my idea than to make any such charge. I will not enter further into the matter, but will simply say that although many Members might have been in close contact with my right hon. Friend and still differ from him in opinion, yet I do not believe that any one of them could by any possibility suppose he was not sincere in any remarks that he makes.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he was disposed to accept two propositions which might be derived from the Motion. One was, that it was the duty of the Government to promote, by every means in their power, the success of General Gordon's mission; the other was, that it was their duty, also, to use every effort to secure the safety of that distinguished General. But the policy of withdrawing from the Soudan was distinctly approved in the debate on the last Vote of Censure. General Gordon had approved of that policy, and was sent to aid in carrying it out. His mission, however, had been worse than abortive. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) wished that General Gordon had never been sent. As Sir Evelyn Baring had said, General Gordon had undoubtedly a mistaken idea of his own personal influence in the Soudan. At Cairo he was, at his own request, appointed by firman as Governor General of the Soudan. Directly he left Cairo he began to display the inutility of his mission. He wrote from Abu Hamad on February 8, begging that evacuation, but not abandonment, should be the programme to be followed, and that the firman he had obtained should be changed into one recognizing moral control and suzerainty. For himself he regarded the abolition of slavery in the Soudon as for the present impossible; no proclamation one way or the other could affect the question of slavery there; but he had no doubt whatever that General Gordon's proclamations on that subject had in no way contributed to the success of his mission, while he could well believe that there were Arab chiefs shrewd enough to see in them signs of weakness, and to despise the English for denying that doctrine of freedom with which our name has been known to be identified by all nomad tribes having any communication with the shores of Africa. Those proclamations had not aided, and were not necessary, to the policy of evacuation, to which it was to be regretted that General Gordon had not steadfastly adhered. He wished with all his heart that General Gordon had remained at Jerusalem, and had never had the power to publish his proclamations. He had not been at Khartoum a week before he wanted Zebehr as his successor with £100,000, and with an Anglo-Egyptian firman, changing evacuation into "moral control and suzerainty." Some would wonder why the Government were so squeamish about accepting Zebehr Pasha when they accepted the slavery proclamations. But while they accepted the reasons for the issue of the proclamations, they had never uttered a word in approval of them. He had not so much faith in General Gordon as to feel certain that he was a safe guide as to what would have been the action of Zebehr had he been sent to Khartoum. General Gordon's knowledge of the people told him as early as March 2 that he was a prisoner, not Governor, and he then telegraphed—"I have no option about staying at Khartoum; it has passed out of my hands." The Government had, perhaps, realized the dangers of "the one-man policy" in the case of Gordon, and were not disposed to try it again in that of Zebehr. If that was so, one could not blame them. He could not understand how anyone with the acute mind of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) could suppose that the success of General Gordon's mission was at any time within the reach of probability. The mission was, in his opinion, one of a series of errors which would probably continue if, in the words of Sir Evelyn Baring, "the Government attempted to settle the Egyptian Question by the light of English popular feeling." There were men in England who did not rank as heroes, but who would stand to be shot against any wall in Egypt before they would sign the slavery proclamations published by General Gordon. At a later stage General Gordon suggested a proclamation of emancipation and the raising of a servile war in a country where, as he said, each man on an average had 10 slaves. That would be a cruel policy, and, if followed by evacuation, would bring upon the slaves great misery and suffering. The fact was that Gordon, brave and honest man as he was, was best fitted for independent dealing with primitive forms of government. He was an English Saladin, not a Havelock. He had the virtues and defects of a great chief in such an order of society. Directly he came in contact with the complicated mechanism of highly-civilized Administrations such a man had never succeeded. Those who were most earnest for his deliverance knew that while we were ready to make any effort to relieve him, we must acknowledge that, except in circumstances of absolute independence, the employment of such a man was a matter of doubtful policy. He was not inclined to bear hardly upon the Government for inattention to Gordon's telegrams. They were so contradictory, so conflicting, that one felt inclined to exclaim, with Sir Evelyn Baring, on March 2—"I am most anxious to help and support you in every way, but I find it very difficult to understand exactly what it is you want." When the Government of this country had despatched an Envoy, he would guard his safety with the whole force of the country, and therefore he accepted without reserve the responsibility of the Government for the safety of Gordon. He would repudiate and endeavour to dismiss the Government if they had not admitted that policy. But the acknowledgement was never withheld. On March 16 it was stated by Lord Granville that they would sanction an advance of British troops to Berber from Suakin if they were satisfied as to the military conditions of such an expedition, and "that it is necessary in order to ensure the safety of General Gordon, and that it will be confined to that object." The House must take into consideration the nature of the telegrams at that time in possession of the Government. On this point General Gordon says, "Khartoum is all right;" then, "Khartoum is as safe as Kensington Park;" in a third, "We are all right at Khartoum, and have plenty of provisions;" in a fourth, "We are all right up here;" in a fifth, "I think we are now safe, and that as the Nile rises we shall account for the rebels;" and in a sixth, "Be assured for the present and for the next two months; we are as safe here as in Cairo." Those were the messages that were received while the question of an advance of British troops from Suakin to Berber was under consideration. The last of those six telegrams was dated March 31. On March 24 Sir Evelyn Baring advised that an effort should be made to help General Gordon from Suakin, "if it is at all a possible military operation." Generals Stephenson and Wood thought it might be possible, but said that General Graham should be further consulted. He supposed that General Graham was consulted, but they had no report of his opinion; and on the 26th of March positive orders were despatched to General Graham that "the Government have no intention of sending British troops to Berber." He had been told that if the troops had gone they must have marched five days without water to a well, and five days from that well without water; having in each case to carry water for five days. If it was an impossible operation, the answer was complete; if not, then he thought the resolution of the Government was one of doubtful expediency. At all events, he would like to see the report of General Graham upon the possibility of an advance upon Berber with a view to the relief of Khartoum. He would support the Government in any measures necessary for the relief of General Gordon and for the maintenance of order and good government in Lower Egypt, for which this country had unquestionably become responsible. He agreed with those who asserted that it would not do to play fast and loose with that responsibility. They must either repudiate it or assume it resolutely, with all its consequences. A middle policy would be the most costly, and by its consequences the least popular. It was well known that since the telegrams from General Gordon indicated possible danger the Cabinet had been in constant communication with Lord Wolseley and other military authorities. He took that, together with the emphatic statements of the Prime Minister, to imply that Her Majesty's Government were quite aware of and fully accepted their responsibility as to the safety of General Gordon. He believed that by all dispassionate men it was acknowledged that these difficult problems of Egyptian policy could best be dealt with by the present Administration. He never remembered, in many years' study of political affairs, problems of such complexity. He thought that any Government so engaged was entitled both to forbearance and to support, especially from those who were convinced, as he was himself, that the violence of some and the malignity of others of their opponents was the result of baffled efforts to defeat the policy of popular enfranchisement at home.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought that the hon. Member who had just sat down had, with the exception of the Prime Minister himself, passed the severest censure that could have been passed upon the policy of the Prime Minister, for the hon. Member had shown that every step that General Gordon had taken had been praised and defended by the Government up to the time of the present debate. Even if General Gordon had made mistakes, those mistakes had been accepted and condoned by Her Majesty's Government. The issue of the present debate was very simple; it was whether Her Majesty's Government had done what was in their power for the safety of General Gordon and the successful evacuation of the

Soudan? Their contention on that side of the House was that the Government had not done anything to support General Gordon, but that, on the contrary, they had deliberately thwarted him at every step, and now at his hour of utmost need they had deserted and betrayed him. General Gordon had advocated the sending of Zebehr to Khartoum, and this recommendation had been endorsed by Nubar Pasha, by Sir Evelyn Baring, and by the Khedive himself. If Her Majesty's Government had assented to the request he did not know that any Vote of Censure would have been proposed by the House. It seemed to him that it was evident that General Gordon thought—and thought rightly—that Zebehr was better than anarchy, and that in certain contingencies and in certain circumstances he would have been better for the presence of Zebehr. General Gordon was refused the support, moral and military, for which he asked. It was evident that he had asked over and over again for military assistance; he had asked for Indian Moslem troops to be sent to Wady Halfa; he had asked that the Berber-Suakin road should be opened; and he had asked that British troops should be sent to Berber. The Secretary for War had said it was not safe to send out British troops under present conditions; but the noble Marquess confused the present state of affairs with the situation in March last. There was little doubt that Gordon knew more about the dangers of the Soudan than anyone else; and there was his statement that it was as safe to send troops to Wady Halfa or Berber as for tourists to go up the Nile. This was in the middle of March last, when General Graham's victories had scattered the forces of Osman Digna and spread the fame of British arms through the Eastern Soudan. At that time it would have been possible for 500 Cavalry, or 1,000 Infantry and 500 Cavalry, to have gone from Suakin to Berber, and their advance would have prevented the spread of revolt. Fanatical movements always spread by neglect; and a remarkable illustration of this was furnished by the fact that, while Tewfik Bey was able with 70 black troops to defeat Osman Digna with 3,000 men, five months later it took 5,000 British soldiers to cope with the forces of Osman Digna. Every recommendation of General Gordon had been scorned and neglected, and no steps had been taken to support him. There never was a purer fiction for a greater effort of the imagination than to describe as a "war of freedom" the movement of the fanatical, savage, cruel, bloodthirsty, and barbarous chieftain. The warlike hordes from whom the Mahdi got his principal support had been slave dealers in the Soudan for generations, and General Gordon told us distinctly that this war of slave dealers, communists, and pillagers against established order and government was a war of one-third against two-thirds, many of whom were terrorized into submission. What was meant by saying that the Mahdi must be smashed up was that if we did not cope with him in the Soudan we should have to cope with him in Lower Egypt; and if we refused to deal with him other Powers would insist on doing so. Indeed, remonstrances had already been addressed to us by France and other Powers. The Government had failed to support General Gordon; they had misrepresented the movement in the Soudan for their own purposes, and after deluging the Soudan with blood they were allowing a wave of barbarism to overspread the Soudan and to threaten Egypt.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: Persistent efforts have been made all the Session to frown down references to Egyptian affairs. Timid and complacent Members have been whipped into the traces of the Party team and put to silence, while coteries of local wire-pullers have been incited to brand as renegades or obstructionists all who troubled Ministerial equanimity. But the attempt has not succeeded. A throb of anxiety beats from one end of the country to the other. Those who have given voice to it are the truest interpreters of that public opinion which has been so often and so menacingly apostrophized. The ebbing tide of national confidence bids fair to leave the cavillers stranded on the shore of the popular current. No one denies, no one doubts, that the Government are beset with difficulties. Whichever way they turn there are troubles. Whether they go forward, or go back, or stand still, they are equally assailed by a raking fire of censure and criticism. But they have their own paralytic policy to blame for this. There is no more desire, on the other side, to gain Party advantage out of Ministerial embarrassment than there is on this to evoke Party sympathy out of Administrative blunders. In such circumstances both sides act very much alike. No Opposition, either Liberal or Conservative, means mischief to the country. But neither will mourn over just as much mischance as will serve to discredit their antagonists. The Prime Minister says that the Resolution before the House needs little discussion. I agre with him. A bald recital of the facts ought to be, and would be, sufficient to carry it, were it not for Party vassalage. Let the touching telegrams from General Gordon be placarded broadcast; let the cross of manliness and devotion he has raised in far Khartoum be upheld at home, and it will arouse a spirit which will shatter the equivocating and huckstering state-craft whose highest effort is to—

> "Promise, pause, prepare, postpone,
> And end by letting things alone."

You may dispute the wisdom of Colonizing the Soudan. But it was Colonized at the instance of able men who knew more of Egypt and its requirements than we do. We found there thousands of settlers trading on the faith of Egyptian assurances. The Khedive is bound by ties of kinship, interest, and humanity to protect them, just as we are to protect men of our race planted in the Possessions we have dotted over the surface of the globe. We destroyed his means of doing so, and commanded him to abandon the country. By that act we assumed his obligations. We acknowledged our responsibility when we requisitioned General Gordon, and despatched General Graham to Suakin. Their orders were to rescue the emigrants and soldiers, and retire. They have not been rescued, and are in more peril than ever. The task the Government took on itself has not been executed. It cannot be parried; it must not be repudiated. It is not the institutions, but the spirit of a people that protects its liberty and sustains its freedom. A moral inertness may have grown parasitically over popular energies; but although it has cramped, it has not killed their ancient vigour. If Ministers are unable to unloosen the Gordian knot that their own ineptitude has tied, they must follow Alexander's example and cut it. They desire to dissociate General Gordon from the garrisons. This is impossible. They sneakingly suggest that he should sacrifice his comrades in captivity and decamp. But they mistake their man. It was the helpless to help, and the hopeless to save, that sent him on his forlorn and chivalrous mission, and he spurns such cowardly counsels. When the intrepid Blake was called on to capitulate at Taunton, he refused with the laconic reply that he had not yet eaten his boots. General Gordon has all the generous audacity of the Commonwealth commander, and will be equally daring and tenacious. He may not have eaten his boots; but his ability or his inability to hold out does not acquit us of our accountability for him, and for those with him. The Government say they cannot now despatch troops up the Nile. Perhaps not. That, however, is not the opinion of all experts. This is the hottest, but it is not the most unhealthy season of the year. But they could have done so. They did not, or they would not when they might, and now they must bear the odium attaching to their supineness, or negligence, or both. Some hon. Members do not trouble themselves about the difficulties of the expedition, only about its price. In the lugubrious and sombre pictures they have drawn every line is a sovereign. The chink of coin, and the dust of trade, are ever present in their arguments and appeals. I, too, am an economist; but I do not approve of the niggard and ungenerous parsimony which looks only at the cost of the Public Service—not at the mode in which it is performed—and which would put the work of the State on the same footing as the supply of a workhouse, and have it done by tender, which is meanly mercantile, instead of being broadly national. Life is not existence, but effort. Men cannot vegetate like cabbages. When a nation halts to count the expense of doing its duty, it parts with the essence of its virility. Other hon. Members object to an expedition because scores of lives may be lost to save one. Very likely. But England's amenability for the safety of her citizens, and the redress of their wrongs, is no perfunctory engagement prescribed by charter. It is comprehensive and far-reaching, and cannot be measured with the arithmetical precision of a haberdasher's yard-wand.

There may be occasions when all the resources of the Empire must be staked on exacting reparation for a solitary act of injustice. Blood, it is too true, has often been spilt like water for a statesman's place or a despot's lust. Every sympathetic man longs for the time when intelligence will march over prostrate prejudices and animosities. But that has not yet arrived. And the men who entered with so light a heart on the Campaign of 1882 can not, with any show of consistency, ply Parliament with pusillanimous appeals for peace at the price of national reputation and good faith. That there will be men slain if an English Army goes to Khartoum is incontestable. But the number will be greater from the decrepitude and nervelessness of Ministers. If they had acted with decision at first, there would have been no war. If they had moved to the relief of Sinkat and Tokar sooner, we would have saved the slaughter, the purposeless slaughter, at El Teb and Tamanieb. If they had sent 500 sabres to Berber after General Graham's victory, the road to Khartoum would now be open, and the refugees on their way to Cairo. [An hon. MEMBER: That is your view.] Of course it is my view. I am not accustomed to speak other people's views. It is my practice to think for myself, and when I have arrived at a conclusion to express it. This I understand to be the function of a Representative. It is this, at least, that I am here to discharge, and I mean to discharge it. But the Government refuses, and our Envoy will only now be reached over hecatombs of valiant and fearless Arabs. In public, as in personal business, the first requisite of success is to have a clearly defined object. To know what you want, and to strive steadily to secure it, is half the battle. But the Cabinet has been shifty and infirm of purpose. The ends sought have been vaguely and ambiguously defined. There is scarcely a definition given by one Minister that has not been contradicted by another—sometimes by the same man himself. Like the chameleon, they take their hue from the air they breathe. Incidents have controlled their policy when their policy should have controlled the incidents. This indecision and indefiniteness are easily explained. There are differences amongst themselves—they have to be compromised. There are compacts with other Powers—they have to be fulfilled. There are pledges to their supporters—they have to be kept. Their assurances to Europe, their promises to their friends, and their internal divergencies, have produced halting, spasmodic, and capricious action. If they move in one direction, they impinge on the susceptibilities of other States; in another, on the peace predilections of their followers or their own gratuitous and haphazard engagements. I do not cite all this to their disparagement. It is no discredit to a dozen intelligent men to say that they disagree over so complicated a question. As for their inability to adjust their performances to their professions, that is inevitable. They stirred every passion, and pressed every prejudice into service, against their opponents. The curses of 1878, 1879, and 1880 have come home to roost. But great national purposes should be superior to the prepossessions of politicians, and beyond the convenience of factions. There are times, and this is one of them, when minor considerations should yield to public security and honour—when the nation should be preferred before Party. The position of the Government can only be rightly understood, and the guarantees they have given can only be gauged, by recalling the objects of the intervention. What are these? Ignoring contradictions and verbal fencing, stripping the subject of superfluities and sophistry, and going straight down to the primal granite as proved by fact—Why did they go to Egypt, and for what end do they remain? Why? To protect British interests. And for no other reason. They may tickle their self-conceit by protestations of their disinterestedness, but no one believes them. English statesmen are often illogical, but never idealistic. You gather people's convictions not by their conversation, but by their acts. Our acts acclaim that we do not fight for the Soudanese, or the fellaheen, or for sentiment, but for self-interest—enlightened self-interest. I am not debating or defending, only stating the doctrine. But, brushing aside the casuistry by which this vacillation has been shrouded, our deeds proved that it was not abstract sympathy for the Egyptians, or Platonic love of liberty, or even land-hunger, but a belief that interests vital to the Empire were imperilled by the nationalist rising that sent our ships to Alexandria, our troops to Tel-el-Kebir, our agents to Cairo, and our Emissary to Khartoum. Egypt may remain under the Viceroyalty of Tewfik, or any other equally incompetent, illustrious, or ignoble Pasha, provided our resources are assured. We do not want a stone of his Pyramids, or a rood of his territory. But if our interests are not safeguarded by him we will protect them themselves. This is the philosophy of our policy — blurred, obscured, and inarticulate, perhaps, at times, but indubitable. Is there a partizan present so purblind as to argue that the disciplined inaction, the timorous irresolution — which has paralyzed energy and destroyed hope, which has compromised property and imperilled lives we had stipulated to defend—will not impair our influence and damage our interest? Some hon. Members contend that we should leave Egypt right out —pluck up the institutions we have tried to plant, and abandon General Gordon to the paws of the panther or the spears of the Hadendowa. We can do so. But, apart from the craven baseness of such a course, what will be the consequences? What? Rampant anarchy, usury, outrage, plunder. Blazing torch and gory scimitar will bathe in blood the verdure of the classic valley—a reign of desolation as desperate and as devastating as ever afflicted a long-suffering people. Are hon. Members prepared to precipitate such chaos and such carnage—to add to the fury of fanaticism the ravages of servile war? You may disapprove, I certainly do so, of the strategy—diplomatic, political, and military—that has led up to the existing complications. But you cannot evade the consequences they entail. Although statesmen's views on speculative points may be wide as the poles asunder, we must accept the fatality of deeds done. If the Government leave Egypt amidst existing turmoils, not even the commanding personality of the Prime Minister will prevent its overthrow. General Gordon is accused of inconsistency. The charge cannot in equity be sustained. He has never faltered in his purpose, though he has varied his suggestions to the exigencies. All his plans have been rejected. He has been systematically contravened, thwarted, restrained, and trammelled. Not a single request he has made has been complied with, not a solitary proposal has been acted upon. And the Cabinet, after having committed every error the circumstances allowed, is shabby enough to attribute their own failure to their baulked but sedulous and heroic Agent. But whatever may have been General Gordon's changeableness, the Government certainly have revised their original decision respecting the Soudan more than once, and they may with advantage do so again. At first they disowned all liability for it, and ordered its entire and immediate evacuation. That was found impracticable, as well as injudicious and cruel. Then the Red Sea ports were to be retained, as well as the country up to Wady Halfa. But if the Delta is to be defended, General Gordon's last advice must be adopted. It will be disastrous to Egypt if the centre of her trade with Central Africa, and the control of the river on which she depends for existence, were to pass into hostile hands. It will be fatal if she has to submit to the formation of a powerful and aggressive State on her defenceless frontiers. The Mahdi may be master in Kordofan, but there must be a barrier to his advance on Upper Egypt, or Cairo might share the fate of Berber. That barrier cannot be held by Egyptians, demoralized by defeat and disaffected by superstition. Here, again, the Government are confronted with their initial difficulties—hampered with the dual authority, and haunted by a morbid dread of incurring responsibility. There are two ways open to them. They can rule Egypt by Eastern methods—that is, by the bastinado and bribery. But that would be repugnant to our traditions, trainings, and convictions. However faulty any plan they may sanction mny be, it must conform in some measure to Western ways and ideas — it must be just, law-abiding, and progressive. Ministers think they can attain this conformation by a bifarious bureaucracy, by a hierarchy of administrators controlled by foreign advisers. They cannot. They may as well try to mix oil and water. A treble barrier of prejudice, aversion, and avarice is arrayed against them. They have lavished administrative ability and experience on the enterprize; but neither genius nor devotion can work miracles. And only a miracle can evolve success out of the forced junction of Occidental and Oriental agencies. As the Government dare not leave Egypt, as they cannot legalize torture and corruption, and as their scheme of partial intervention and bipartite functionaries has broken down, they have no option but to avow the occult authority they have all along wielded. It is impossible to enjoy the advantages of a Protectorate, and shirk its responsibilities. If we are to array intelligent and independent Egyptians on the side of the new institutions, we must give some guarantee for their permanence. If our interests are identified with the well-being of Egypt—if order at Cairo means safety at Suez—Ministers can not hesitate to take the measures that will insure that well-being, and prevent a disorganized, distracted, and trouble-tossed country drifting from confusion to anarchy, and from anarchy to despair.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Sir, my hon. Friend and Colleague says he is the representative of no one but himself. I am bound to say, from my own knowledge of the part from which he hails, that I think my hon. Friend's statement is true. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite doubt that statement. My hon. Friend and Colleague used to make many prophecies in 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879; and I will refer hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they wish to know how far they are wise in relying upon the testimony of my hon. Friend, to his attitude in 1879 when he thought the opinion of this country was strongly in favour of Lord Beaconsfield's policy. My hon. Friend then spoke just as picturesquely and as eloquently as he has spoken to-night against my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. Yet we know that within six or eight months of that torrent of eloquence, which nobody admires more from a literary point of view than I do, his prophecies were all scattered to the winds, and the present Prime Minister came in with an overwhelming majority even from those parts of the country where the influence of my hon. Friend might have been expected to carry most weight. My hon. Friend has said that we ought sometimes to prefer the interests of the nation to those of Party. I agree with him. In my short Parliamentary experience I have shown that I am not incapable of taking that course. But it is a very extraordinary thing that the interests of the nation should require a man to vote ten or a dozen times during the Session against his Party. It is an extraordinary thing that, whether it is the restriction of the importation of cattle—[*Cries of* "Question!"]——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman must be allowed to proceed with his argument.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: It was barely an argument, Sir; it was an allusion and an illustration. My hon. Friend talks as if he were a mixture of Pharisee and Diogenes. He implies that all hon. Members who have voted these nine or ten times with the Government have preferred the interests of the Party to those of the nation, and must have voted from some blind or corrupt motive. I, for one, venture to repudiate that suggestion. As to what my hon. Friend has said upon the immediate issue submitted to the House by the Motion of the right hon. Baronet, I find it difficult to answer. It is difficult to answer because I do not find facts and arguments, but only magnificent rhetoric. We have got beyond that. In my opinion, we are on the eve of the most vast and far-reaching catastrophe which has ever overtaken the Realm. I believe that from the Prime Minister down to the very humblest Member of the House who has taken the trouble to ascertain the facts of the situation, and to view them tolerably largely, all will agree that we are on the eve of most calamitous events. By calamitous events I do not mean the fall of Khartoum—I do not mean any disaster that may befall General Gordon and Colonel Stewart—I mean the engulphment of the interests of this Empire in what the Prime Minister, quoting ancient history, described as "that terrible land—the Soudan." The hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) said he hoped to hear from some of us who sit below the Gangway on this side how we reconcile the vote we are about to give to-night with the vote which we recorded on a memorable Saturday afternoon some weeks ago. Some of us gathered up courage to vote against the Government on that afternoon. [*A laugh.*] Well, most hon. Gentlemen will agree that it is no light matter to vote against one's friends. I, at all events, am not like my philosophic and eloquent Colleague—for to me it is a matter of searching of heart, and I say the very fact that some of us did find occasion to testify our disapproval of the policy of the Government—a policy forced on them partly by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), and partly by hon. Gentlemen opposite—that, I say, is a guarantee that if we vote for the Government to-night we know what we are doing, and that we are voting from honest conviction. It would be presumptuous for me to go at length into the question raised in the debate; but I should like to say a word about a charge against the Government from various parts of the House that they did not send Zebehr to the Soudan. Now, if there is one person in the whole world who is more responsible than another for not sending Zebehr, it is the right hon. Member for Bradford. The right hon. Gentleman will possibly say—and I gathered from his speech it was his opinion—that the Government had made up their minds before he made his memorable and most powerful speech against the appointment of Zebehr. Let us look at the order of the facts. On the 18th of February came the despatch from General Gordon requesting that Zebehr Pasha should be sent. On the 22nd of February Earl Granville set forth his reasons for not considering the proposal. On February 28th Sir Evelyn Baring returned to the charge by saying that he thought it would be the most advantageous course to send Zebehr. On February 29th Earl Granville said the matter was under the consideration of the Government. On March 4th Sir Evelyn Baring again informed Earl Granville that General Gordon was pressing for Zebehr without delay. On March 5 Earl Granville still holds out, but leaves the question open. It was on March 11, and not before March 11, that Lord Granville finally declared against compliance with General Gordon's wishes. Now, what happened on March 10th? On that morning the Anti-Slavery Society blew a tremendous blast on their trumpet. On the evening of March 10th the right hon. Member for Bradford blew a blast on his trumpet too, and it was the day after that Earl Granville made up his mind. I should not be surprised if some of the occupants of the Government Bench went that day to the Cabinet and said that after the speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford it was impossible for them to send Zebehr. Whether that was so or not, the Government quailed before these ferocious philanthropists. Whether they were right or wrong I do not say. I do not judge them harshly. The Jingo in a drab coat—the fiery Crusader in a broad-brimmed hat—I admit is no joke. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, rallying an audience by playing philanthropic melodies on the Jingo drum, is, I admit, a very formidable as well as a very truculent figure. The counsels of Gordon, of Stewart, of Baring, of Nubar—all unanimous for the despatch of Zebehr—are overborne by the discordant clamour of a heterogeneous crowd of bondholders, humanitarians, sentimentalists, political opponents, and distinguished members of the Society of Candid Friends. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, in the course of that powerful speech he made, when he was an opponent of General Gordon, dropped a very remarkable sentence. "I have more confidence," he said, "in what General Gordon proposes to do himself than in what he recommends other people to do." What did the whole of his powerful indictment of the Government turn upon, except that he was blaming the Government for accepting and acting upon his own maxim? Well might Sir Evelyn Baring say that, although Her Majesty's Government must judge of the importance to be attached to public opinion in England, any attempt to settle Egyptian questions by the light of English feeling—I am not sure that he might not have said by the darkness of English feeling—was sure to be productive of evil. These words are of great importance. The danger of settling these complex and difficult questions by the light of English opinion would be very great and enormous if we were quite sure that we heard in this House and in the organs of opinion the true sentiments of the country. But how much more dangerous is it, if Her Majesty's Government and if Parliament are not to hear the true voice of the country, but are to mistake for it, and are to have pressed upon them, the counterfeit and spurious version of it which it may please half-a-dozen irresponsible writers sitting here in London to pass off as public opinion? How dangerous will it be if the policy of the country is to be settled in deference to a few adroit journalistic ventriloquists, who have the art of passing off their own single voices for the passionate murmurs of indignant crowds from every part of the country? That is always the danger I have feared from our involving ourselves in Egypt, because we shall never be able to take the wise course of listening to statesmen on the spot—I do not say soldiers on the spot—but have listened instead to what General Gordon himself once called the ignorance of English opinion. I am not going to follow the example of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) by discussing whether it was or was not wise to send General Gordon. I have my own opinion upon that. We all know the Polish story of Mazeppa, who was bound by thongs to the back of a wild courser of the desert, with spur and bridle undefiled. I think it is questionable whether statesmen did well when they bound the fate of a Government and the destinies of a nation to a man who is a hero, no doubt, but who is no safe guide of the policy of this country. A great deal has been said about the Government not accepting all General Gordon's suggestions as to what they ought to do. I do not yield to anyone on either side of the House in my admiration of what is picturesque and romantic, and devoted and noble, and original in General Gordon's character. In these days, of all others, we ought to prize a man to whom money is dross, and fame as idle breath, who cares little for his life, and to whom death has no terrors. I have no want of respect and admiration for General Gordon's character. But you cannot transact the business of a great Empire upon the principles of a romance of mediæval chivalry; and it would have been impossible for any Government to follow the random zig-zags of General Gordon's purpose. We know he changed his mind, not only about Zebehr, but about the Khedive and Nubar. He asked for five English officers, and before Sir Evelyn Baring had time to send them he changed his mind and said he did not want them. One day he deplores the violence of Turkish rule, and another he is for having the Turks to help him. There is no end to all his changes of purpose and of view. Situated as he is in the midst of terrible emergencies, I should be the last man to criticize what he says with pedantic narrowness. At the same time, if you are going to make allowances for him, surely it is fair that you make allowances for Her Majesty's Government too. You have no right to find fault with them for being unable, like panting time, to toil after General Gordon. I must apologize to the House for detaining it so long. We know what it all means. I hope that hon. Gentlemen opposite will not be offended with me if I say so; but we know that this debate is part of a whole series of operations which have been carried on with desperate energy, the whole end and object of which is to plunge Her Majesty's Government deeper and more irrevocably into the morass of protectorate and annexation. Any weapon that will drive them further in this deplorable direction is good enough for the purpose. One day it is slavery; another day it is the annexation of Merv by Russia that is made the reason for our annexing Egypt. Constantly we see the cloven-hoof appear. Though we are told—"It is quite true you cannot send a military expedition to the Soudan," yet it is added—"You may still give General Gordon the moral support he requires by announcing that you are going to do"—what?—"to guarantee the debt." Yes, Sir; and that is what is at the root of it. I do not for a moment deny that there is noble and chivalrous feeling at the bottom of many minds about General Gordon. But I say that what is going on is an attempt to exploit the sentiment about General Gordon in favour of a policy which I for one feel, whatever may be the fate of Parties or of Ministries, would be fraught with the utmost disaster to the whole Empire and to all classes of those who send us to this House.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Mr. Speaker, I am not sorry to follow my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and to say at once that there are some points upon which I entirely agree with him. I am glad to follow him for another reason, which is that though I have myself sometimes ventured to pass what he would, perhaps, call a candid criticism upon the acts of the Government, I think I can claim my hon.

Friend among the band of candid friends who have criticized the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I trust that the House will permit me to say a few words upon the subject, and I think I may venture to promise two things. I will not continue the strain of personality, which upon this very important question has characterized the last two or three speeches. I do not share in the view of my hon. Friend with regard to the attitude which has been taken by the Press in regard to this matter, for I know how much he has himself contributed to the moulding of public opinion by means of the Press; and I am sure there are many hon. Members of this House who are deeply indebted to him for the constant valuable instruction he has given, and for the tone which he has adopted. There is another point, however, on which I agree with him in his speech, and that is where he said that we have not a narrow question before us this evening, but, as he properly said, one in which vast issues are involved. It is not merely the question, grave as that is, of the safety of General Gordon, but the attitude which the House, the country, and the constituencies intend to take in reference to some of the most important matters which could be submitted to their consideration. It is now too late to enter upon minute criticisms, which might be based upon extracts from Blue Books. What now mainly concerns us is to realize what depends upon the action we shall take, not merely in view of what is contained in the Blue Books, which we have had the pain to peruse, but of what has been stated by Her Majesty's Government in the course of this debate in explanation and defence of the course which they have pursued. We have to consider before giving our votes how those explanations affect in the first place the past, in the second the safety of General Gordon, and in the third how they affect some greater questions which appear to be looming in the distance with regard to the future of Egypt, and which the Prime Minister touched when he made allusions to the future career of the Mahdi. With regard to the past, there is one point to which my hon. Friend alluded on which I should like to say a word, much as has been said upon the subject—and it is the question of Zebehr. Now, I wish to state in the fullest and frankest way that I consider that Her Majesty's Government were not only justified, but that it was absolutely necessary for the interests and reputation of this country, to refuse the appointment of Zebehr Pasha, and that not only upon the grounds which have been put hitherto, although those grounds are strong. When that appointment was under discussion I asked myself what would be the position of the Representatives of this country abroad amongst Mussulman States, who for years and years have been urging that there was one point upon which this country would not enter into a compromise or listen to reason, and that was any question connected with slavery. That is the language which our Representatives have always held, and I should not envy the position of a Representative of England to whom a Turkish Pasha could be able to reply—"When it is not inconvenient to yourselves you pursue this philanthropic doctrine; but when it is necessary to utilize a slave-owner and a slave-dealer, when the exigencies of your own country seem to require it, you do not hesitate to do so." Now, it seems to me that that would be a crushing retort, and in all these questions I think we ought always to ask ourselves up to what point our philanthropy leads us, and not to be so inconsistent in our philanthropy, as I am afraid we often are. So much for the appointment of Zebehr Pasha. But I agree entirely in what has been stated by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). [*Cries of* "Oh!"] That the very fact—hon. Members, although they cry "Oh!" will agree with this—that the very fact that the appointment of Zebehr Pasha was refused made it still more incumbent on Her Majesty's Government and on this country to do all in their power to sustain General Gordon, and to make up for that loss which he believed he had suffered in not obtaining the services of Zebehr Pasha. Let me for one moment turn to what my hon. Friend, who has just sat down, said with regard to General Gordon. He compared General Gordon to a wild courser, and there was some approval of the simile; and he pointed out, in language that could not be misunderstood, that it was a mistake on the part of Her Majesty's Government to have confided, as he well put it, the honour and the credit of England into the hands of General Gordon, whose character he then proceeded to describe. He paid a tribute to his moral qualities; but he said, in the most plain language, that he was not a man to whom we could safely confide such a delicate mission as this. But were the Government not responsible for the appointment of General Gordon? At the time when General Gordon was sent out, did they not speak of having given him the widest discretionary power? Were they not then acquainted with his character, which was not an unknown character? His mode of acting, his mode of thinking, his rapidity of judgment, and his inconsistencies if you like, had all been published to the world in the history of General Gordon, and of General Gordon's famous career. When they appointed a man such as General Gordon, I ask the House, had they not a second string to their bow? Had they no policy whatever which they intended to pursue in the case General Gordon did not succeed? Is it possible to conceive that Her Majesty's Government sent General Gordon upon this mission without having contemplated what they would do in an alternative likely to occur, and which has occurred—namely, that General Gordon should find insuperable difficulties when he arrived at Khartoum? Well, General Gordon asked Her Majesty's Government for support, and he made various proposals to them. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said that the Government had supported him, and began to explain to the House by what means they had supported him. The list was not very long, because it was confined in the end to this—that they had pleaded here that the Proclamation in regard to slavery was not a mistake on the part of General Gordon. But I am bound to say, beyond that slavery instance of support, I cannot discern that Her Majesty's Government have taken any active steps beyond the despatch of telegrams containing comments, negatives, and inquiries, by which they have facilitated the accomplishment of his mission. Did they suggest any alternative to General Gordon, or did they do anything he asked them to do? Now, Her Majesty's Government have naturally directed their attention to the question of answering the various allegations made against them—that they did not do what General Gordon asked. How far have they succeeded in that defence? I hasten from this point in regard to the mission of General Gordon to another important point which has not come out in the debate as many others have come out. In speaking of the establishment of a kind of local Government in the Soudan, a very important distinction made by General Gordon himself very early in his telegrams, but which has been omitted in the discussion, is this. He said—

> "It is necessary to make special provision for Khartoum, Dongola, and Kassala, for this reason—that in these three places there are no Sultans to whom you can restore the country."

Now, in all the arguments which have been pressed in opposition to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, it has always been said—"Can you re-establish order throughout the whole of the Soudan;" but the particular point to which General Gordon refers in all his telegrams—the point on which he has set his heart—is the hope of being able to establish a settled Government at Khartoum, a city of 50,000 inhabitants. When he reached that city, it clearly appeared to him impossible to hand over a city of that size until there was some kind of authority established in it, and it was to that point that he directed his attention. Now, I put it to the House whether it is not a unique operation in history which he was conducting—namely, to hand back again to barbarism a city of 50,000 people, which had previously been under some kind of government, however bad? Was not that a kind of operation which required great delicacy, and in which General Gordon required much support? But in all the telegrams from Her Majesty's Government, except in one asking General Gordon himself to stay, I can find no indication whatever that Her Majesty's Government ever appreciated this difficulty, or thought they had any responsibilities in regard to it. Her Majesty's Government have declined all responsibility for the extrication of the garrisons and for the extrication of the Khartoum *employés*, and I do not think they have said much about the extrication of Native Christians in those cities. But can the Government, can England, so entirely decline that responsibility which Her Majesty's Government seem so anxious to decline? I put it to hon. Members below the Gangway—I know they think there is nothing to be said on the other side of this question; but, remembering the situation, it is right that the point should be put before the country. We wrapped the Union Jack so tightly around the Ruler of Egypt that he could not stir himself; we had taken the whole of his Army; and we would not allow him to move a step. There was an Egyptian Army, but it was under English officers, and, being in possession of Cairo, we said—"You must not move a man." Do not let it be said that Egypt could not have reconquered the Soudan. That argument has been pressed too much. It has been said that all the more distant garrisons in the Soudan cannot be reached. I demur to the doctrine that, because some garrisons are so distant that they cannot be reached, we are not, therefore, bound to save those which we can reach. Why not make an effort to reach those which are nearest—those garrisons which are not so entirely beyond your reach, but which you have always been able to reach when there was even a weak Government established at Cairo? The Egyptian Government may say—"We think that, when our brethren, our husbands, our kith and kin, are endangered there, and you have got our Army in hand, and you are in our territory—we think, at all events, we have a right to make a claim upon you to do the utmost you can for our kindred; and we consider it cynical and interested on your part to decline all responsibility even to the extent we think reasonable." Now, I think I have put a very reasonable argument before hon. Members on this point, even if they do not agree with me. General Gordon, at all events, saw what his duty was towards those *employés* he was obliged to use while he was Governor General, and whom General Gordon, with the approval of Her Majesty's Government by their Agent at Cairo, was obliged to have. He thought he was bound to those people, and I will say no more on that point, because it has been alluded to over and over again; but I regret to think that in no one single telegram to General Gordon can I find any trace of approval on the part of Her Majesty's Government as regards those declarations that he made, that he would not fly unless he took those men with him. There was no declaration on that subject even from my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in his speech last night, and the first acknowledgment—the real acknowledgment—was made in that able speech to which we listened from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War. He has acknowledged, and he has acknowledged differently from those telegrams, that the safety of General Gordon must not be the only object of any movement. He has acknowledged that there are other duties which General Gordon must perform before he can leave Khartoum with honour. One word as to the impression made upon my own mind by the answers which have been made with regard to the claims for assistance put forward by General Gordon. It has been said over and over again that General Gordon did not ask for troops to be sent to Khartoum. No, Sir; but he asked for troops to be sent to other points where he thought they would give him equal support. He asked for them to be sent to various points; but Her Majesty's Government have felt that in no single instance could they comply with his request. Had they no confidence in General Gordon's knowledge of what might be done, and of the value of 200 or 300 English soldiers in that country? Had they no confidence in General Gordon's suggestions with regard to these military operations? If they had not, why, then, do they ask him and consult him now, when he himself is shut up, as to the means by which he is to be extricated? When General Gordon gets that telegram, if ever he gets it, will he not say—"What is the use of my giving any opinion to Her Majesty's Government upon these points when they have rejected as absurd, or have not acted up to one single proposal I have ever submitted?" I admit the force of much that has been said by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War when on his responsibility he speaks of military impossibilities or of military difficulties being so great that military movements ought not to be undertaken. Of course we are bound to give the greatest weight to those declarations; but the noble Marquess did not deal with all the suggestions that were made. He dealt with the difficulties of the

Suakin and Berber route; but let me say that we must not forget who General Gordon is, and what he believes can be done with difficult material. General Gordon would have been contented with 200 or 300 English troops, at any one of several points which he indicated, because, although my right hon. Friend has ceased to believe in the moral effect of British soldiers—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] I hear hon. Members say "No, no!" I do not think they could have heard the speech of my noble Friend, because my noble Friend said that after the actions at Suakin the difficulty of dealing with Osman Digna, and the whole situation showed that there was no moral effect in British soldiers. [*Cries of* "No!"] Then I am to understand that there is moral effect in British soldiers? [*Cries of* "No!"] Then I cannot make out what hon. Members mean. I believe myself that there is moral effect. I believe in the moral effect of 200 or 300 men if we had been able to place them at any of these points. I believe in the *prestige* of the British soldier. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and interruption.*] I shall be quite prepared to deal with any hon. Member who may differ from me; but I must ask to be allowed to proceed with my argument. I believe in the *prestige* and moral effect of the British soldier, and I believe that many of us entertain a similar belief. I know it is a word that is not liked—anyway on this side of the House. I know there is some objection to the word because it is French; but it has been an English possession, and that possession is now at stake. The possession of it has been the talisman by which we have been able to hold India, and by which single officers have been able to go under great difficulties to distant places, and so wield Native forces as to be able to achieve marvellous results. Who was it who was shut up in Khartoum? It was Chinese Gordon—a man who, with almost impossible materials, had done impossible things; who had led ever victorious armies, and had been extremely successful; and was he to understand that during all these months when he was asking for assistance there were no resources whatever that could be employed? It was suggested that troops should be sent to Dongola. The answer was that if a battalion of troops were moved to Dongola there would not be a force sufficient left in Egypt Proper. Well, that was a difficulty which might have been dealt with, and I regret this fact—that during all that time there were apparently no efforts whatever made even by Native assistance acting under English officers to establish any kind of Civil government in Khartoum. A proposal was made, I think by General Gordon himself, that two English officers should be sent to Berber; but it was considered too dangerous to send English officers to Berber, which is not surrounded, while it is assumed that there is no danger to General Gordon in Khartoum, which is surrounded. I have seen no attempt on the part of Her Majesty's Government to second the efforts of General Gordon to establish some kind of Civil government in Khartoum, and I cannot see that any attempt has ever been made to render him any kind of assistance. Can it be said that there was no Englishman at any point beyond the limits of Egypt who could arrange a service of messengers to send to General Gordon? I am certain that there are numbers of English officers who would willingly have volunteered to let General Gordon know that he was not abandoned. If messages have not reached him, I venture to think that greater efforts might have been made, and ought to have been made at any cost, to establish communication with him. Well, Sir, that being the past, I now come to the question of the moment, which is far more important to all of us—what are the declarations of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the future? Are we satisfied? Can any of us be satisfied with what Her Majesty's Government have declared in this respect? Some of us have been taken to task—I personally have been taken to task in the matter. It has been said—"Can anyone who has served with the Prime Minister"—and I am proud to have served with him—"can anyone doubt him when he announces his intention to send an expedition to the relief of General Gordon?" No, Sir; I would entertain no such doubt if my right hon. Friend had made such an announcement; I would have entertained no doubt if my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War had made such an announcement; but even to-night he told us, and he gave his reasons for the conclusion, that an expedition could not be launched; and he further told us that it would be necessary to have evidence both as to its necessity and as to its practicability. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister told us—I do not wish to misquote his words—that we must have satisfactory and reasonable evidence of the danger which has to be met. Now, there is a difference between myself and my right hon. Friends who sit on that Bench. As regards the necessity of the case, it seems to me to be proved. Till when are we to wait? Are we to wait until we know that Khartoum is further surrounded than it is at this moment? Are we to wait until we hear of some catastrophe at Khartoum? Then it will be too late. As to the practicability, I should have thought Her Majesty's Government had had full warning enough now to be able to tell us to-night whether an expedition would or would not be practicable. My right hon. Friend said—"We have an engagement with General Gordon; we have an engagement with the country as well;" but I wish that everyone should realize this—that it is not only Her Majesty's Government who are responsible for the safety of General Gordon. It is the country which is responsible also. We are responsible, every one of us, and I think we ought to look twice before we give our votes. We ought to consider the effect our individual vote may have upon our individual responsibility for General Gordon. It is not enough to be responsible. What is the good of responsibility if General Gordon's life should be sacrificed? Is there no danger? I will not quote extracts from the Blue Books. There have been many given on both sides. But I will ask if General Gordon and Colonel Stewart were a brother, or son, or any relation of ours, should we, or should we not, think they were in danger from day to day? It is because I do not see that Her Majesty's Government even now realize the danger in which General Gordon seems, according to the evidence produced to us, to be placed, that I do not see my way to be satisfied with the declarations of Her Majesty's Government. There is one point more to which I wish to call the attention of the House—a point which has filled me with alarm—and it is the allusion of my right hon. Friend to the position of the Mahdi. It is represented now that the Mahdi is the liberator of the Soudan.

MR. GLADSTONE: Does my right hon. Friend make that remark to me?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes.

MR. GLADSTONE: Then my right hon. Friend is mistaken. I certainly never represented the Mahdi as the liberator of the Soudan.

MR. GOSCHEN: I am sorry that I misunderstood my right hon. Friend. I am glad to understand that my right hon. Friend has not done so; but other Members have, and my right hon. Friend spoke of the people of the Soudan fighting for freedom, and of the emissaries of the Mahdi who worked upon them. This is a matter of the gravest importance. I may be mistaken, but I believe my hon. Friends below the Gangway, or, at least, a great many of them, are convinced—and that is the reason why they are so reluctant that any operations should be undertaken—that the whole of the Soudan is engaged in a struggle for freedom. Such sentences were uttered as that the nation was struggling for freedom; and when my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), in his eloquent speech, spoke of the cause of freedom in the Soudan, there were loud cheers that seemed to endorse that sentiment as the sentiment of hon. Members below the Gangway. ["No!"] I am glad of that expression of dissent, because I do not wish to gain any advantage in debate from a point like that, and I am relieved if I understand there is not this feeling, that the Mahdi is leading a triumphant body of emancipated subjects who are coming down to join as one body in liberating the people of the Soudan. There was no part of the speech of my right hon. Friend which struck me more with an impression of the dangers which might have to be incurred. We must remember that we have to look to anarchy and fanaticism as well as to emancipation in the Soudan. My hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) spoke of the danger of attributing to English opinion too much weight in these matters. But what does Sir Evelyn Baring, a statesman on the spot, say? His remarks were quoted by my hon. Friend as those of a proper authority, and he says that—"There is danger in the anarchy and fanaticism which may arise in the Soudan." That is a danger in which all Europe is interested in various ways, and it is a danger which we may have to face. It is not by magnifying the difficulties of every operation which may have to be undertaken that we shall be able to face that danger which I believe is growing upon us. I thank the House most cordially for having listened to me so patiently. There is only one point more on which I wish to say a word before I sit down. It seems to me to be a deplorable and lamentable thing that we cannot discuss these most delicate and difficult questions without their being obscured by the smoke of the battle of Party spirit. The condition seems to have been broken that foreign affairs should be taken out of the arena of Party politics. And see what is the result of the change which has taken place. We have no more continuity of national will. We have nothing but a spasmodic policy, and we see ruinous quarrels between rival Parties over these difficult questions of foreign affairs, and we are presenting an edifying spectacle to Europe, which is looking on to see what profit it can obtain from these dissensions among ourselves. I was once gently rebuked by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister for holding this view. He thought it was a necessary condition of Party warfare. But when the time of trouble is upon us, surely we all feel how our difficulties are increased by the fact that we cannot discuss these questions without these Party conflicts. The spirit of Party surely must not absorb us, and Party spirit ought not to stop our mouths when we think it our duty on any occasion to say that we see danger to the State in any course that is being pursued. I do not think that even criticism could be more damaging than silence when the country believes that that silence does not really mean unanimous opinion. I believe that, even from the lower standpoint of Party politics, it is useful that independent expressions of opinion should be given on matters of national policy. I trust, therefore, that we may be forgiven—those of us who speak out on this occasion—and I venture to claim this—that a Party has a reputation as well as its Chiefs, and that a Party has a character to lose. I say to the Liberal Party that I trust the day will never come when it will have to stand before the country as an apologist for minimizing national duties, and for a dogged refusal to look facts in the face. I trust the Liberal Party will forgive those of us who do feel strongly for speaking out. Her Majesty's Government will have a large majority to-night variously composed. It will comprise many who have studied these Blue Books, but who have an unalterable and unassailable opinion that in these matters Her Majesty's Government can do no wrong. On the other hand, it will contain some, who, stifling the memory of the pang they suffered as chapter after chapter of the story of General Gordon's fortunes were placed in their hands, will vote for Her Majesty's Government because it possesses their confidence on other questions. But we have some experience of majorities thus obtained. Before the Division is taken everyone understands the nature of a certain portion of these votes; but after the Division is taken it is another story. Then the teaching of events is forgotten in the joy at the size of the majority, and the figures obtained are quoted as a certain proof of unequivocal approval, on every platform of the country. My noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs went a little further. He has said in advance, before the Division is taken, that it would be a faithful reflex of the opinion of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but I do not believe that one-half of those who sit on this side of the House adopt that opinion; I do not believe that all who sit upon the Treasury Bench hold that opinion. I doubt whether my noble Friend entirely agrees with himself in that opinion. At all events, I am not prepared to contribute to a majority which will be accepted in the light of an approval of all that has been done, and as expressing satisfaction with all the declarations that have been made. Therefore, I must decline by my vote to swell a figure which would be put to such a use.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY said, he would not detain the House long, after the speeches they had listened to already from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford and the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down; but there was a few remarks which he was anxious to address to the House. He should not, in any case, have risen for the mere purpose of adding to the words of reproach and censure which had been directed against Her Majesty's Government, not only from those Benches, but from hon. Members opposite, against the equal blindness and meanness of the course which Her Majesty's Government had seen fit to pursue with regard to General Gordon and the Soudan, ever since the day they first sent him out as a scapegoat into the Nubian wilderness to bear the responsibility of their own Ministerial blunders and their own political sins. It was not the voice only of Party, or of any combination of Parties, that had rung out within those walls its condemnation of the policy of the Government. Far beyond the domain of Party, outside the limits of those walls, in tones not of idle recrimination, but of earnest and indignant remonstrance, they could hear the angry murmurs of a people at length aroused to a true estimation of the peril in which their heroic fellow-countryman was placed, and to the fact that his peril involved the country's shame. He said "the country's shame." There was now hanging on the slender shred of General Gordon's life a legacy of indelible disgrace, far deeper and more enduring than even the refusal of the abandonment of the Soudan garrison which he himself had stigmatized in those words. No denunciation or reproach on his part could strengthen the effect of those two melancholy telegrams, the publication of which had aroused so profound a sensation throughout the country. It was only necessary to read those telegrams aloud. It mattered little how the Vote of Censure was decided. If to-night, as they had been told by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), the Government secured a large majority, it would but weaken the belief of the country in the value of its Parliament as in any way a true exponent of the real feeling of the nation. The real censure upon the Government was recorded in the last words of General Gordon, that last message wrung from him in his abandonment; and whatever might be the result of the vote that night, those telegrams would find their place in all future history in connection with, and as a sufficient comment on, the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt during the last six months. He would say this—that all the cheers that might greet a victory on the part of the mere mechanical majority of the Government that night, should they even win that Pyrrhic triumph, however loud and prolonged those cheers might be, they would not drown the echo of those two ringing, stinging words, "indelible disgrace." Never since, in the history of this selfsame land of Egypt, the children of Israel in bondage were bidden to make bricks without straw, had a man been sent out to perform a more desperately difficult task, under more impossible conditions of fulfilment than General Gordon in his mission to Khartoum. Every request he had made was refused; every suggestion he had offered was overruled or disregarded. He pointed out that our policy in the Soudan would entail the certainty of anarchy and bloodshed, unless Zebehr was sent to consolidate some form of Government. He did not wish to dwell further upon that point, except to point out what had been the result of that ancestral policy upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, dilated with so much eloquence a few weeks ago. The result of that policy was that England was offered the alternative—to use the words of Colonel Stewart—of anarchy and bloodshed, or of entering into an alliance and appointing, as Ruler of the Soudan, a man who had been branded by Lord Granville as the king of the slave-hunters. He had devastated the regions of the White Nile. He did not intend to enter further into any points of the past policy of the Government, especially considering the hour of the evening which had been reached. The only point on which he desired to offer one or two brief remarks had reference to the delay in taking the necessary steps to secure the personal safety of General Gordon, and those remarks he would make from no Party point of view. In fact, his main object in rising—and he would not have risen at that time of the evening under any other circumstances—was to explain and urge upon the serious consideration of the Government the proposal which he had ventured to make some 14 days ago—namely, that the Government should lend their countenance, and should give some slight and inexpensive assistance to a volunteer effort for the immediate relief of General Gordon. In answer to a question he had addressed to the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman said that the Government already so fully recognized their obligations as to the personal security of General Gordon that it would ill become them to devolve upon a voluntary effort the fulfilment of those obligations. That was, he owned, a sufficient reply to his question, so long as there was any reason to suppose that the Government understood the immediate necessity for sending out the assistance as well as their obligation to render it. But it had been already stated by the Prime Minister that there was no intention of taking any immediate action for the relief of General Gordon; still, in his opinion, it was the immediate necessity for such assistance that justified his Volunteer scheme. It was said that General Gordon could hold out until the month of November. The last news received from him showed that he had only provisions up to September. Even, however, if, as far as food went, he could hold out to November, and could resist attacks during all those months also, yet it must be remembered that the real danger was from within, and not from without. He knew this had been already denied in some sort of way by the Prime Minister himself; but did the right hon. Gentleman deny that in Khartoum, as in every large city, there must be a large faction in the city, who, he would not say sympathized with the hostile troops, but who were disaffected towards the Government of Khartoum? They knew very well that General Gordon had recognized this fact, or why had he levelled houses in Khartoum, and intrenched himself in an inner line of fortifications? Each day that passed, with its fresh calamitous incidents at Khartoum—the treachery of the Black Pashas and defeat of Gordon's troops—the return of the riddled steamer from Shendy and the massacre of the fugitives—the mere fact that the city was day after day hemmed in, and fired on, by the rebel Arabs—each piece of evil tidings, whether true or false, increased the hostile faction in the city, and, however much the Government might console themselves with the thought that General Gordon was amply supplied with provisions and ammunition to resist a direct attack, they could not deny in their own hearts and consciences the great and increasing danger to which he was daily and hourly exposed from the treachery of his troops, and the sudden rising of the disaffected rabble of Khartoum. So much for the immediate necessity of sending assistance. As to the ability of the Government to send assistance, the right hon. Gentleman, with an apt quotation from the Roman, and fortified by a reference to the Persian, had proclaimed his inability at this time of the year to send any assistance to General Gordon. He would almost agree that Her Majesty's Government could not in the middle of summer send English troops, and he knew that the right hon. Gentleman would not send Indian troops who could render that assistance. They could not send Egyptian troops. To send out Egyptian troops would only insure the sacrifice of the officers who were sent out with them, and hand over to the hostile tribes a consignment, carriage paid, of arms and ammunition. That was what they could not do; but what they could do was this, and it was not much to ask. They could extend their countenance to the sending of a Volunteer expedition of 1,000 Englishmen, to start at once, or as soon as might be, from Suakin, prepared even to face the summer heat of the Desert in so good a cause. They would have to be mounted on Indian horses, or it might be found possible to procure horses on the Arabian Coast. They would require 530 camels for the conveyance of ammunition and water, and of the rations for men and horses, and with such a force he believed they could reach Berber in nine days. He was, of course, well aware that the whole force could not expect, under the summer heat of the Desert, to reach Berber; but if the 1,000 men were selected with judgment, and animated by a proper English spirit of determination, at any rate the largest portion of such a force would be at Khartoum within 18 days of the time of starting. Such an expedition would not only relieve General Gordon and secure his safety, but would place this country in a position to settle the question of the Soudan. General Gordon had himself told Her Majesty's Government that 500 determined men would put down the rising in the Soudan. All he asked now was the permission of the Government to purchase stores, arms, and ammunition, and that the Government should give them, as they thought they might at least ask, Government transport as far as Suakin. He was well aware of all the objections which might be urged against Volunteer expeditions; but he maintained that this was one of those occasions in which Volunteer assistance should be gladly and willingly and could be properly accepted by the Government. If the Government could or would send English troops the necessity for such a proposal would fall to the ground; but, failing that, he thought it would be almost criminal to refuse sanction to this proposal. It would, he knew, command the approval of the country, and would secure hearty and generous support. It would be for those who projected the scheme to find the men and the money. All they asked was for the Government to extend to them that necessary recognition and countenance that would be necessary to consecrate any Volunteer expedition, and, further, to give to the expedition that slight material assistance which he had alluded to, and which would entail absolutely no charge on the finances of the country. He said that this proposal would entail no responsibility on the Government; but he would also assert that the refusal of the proposal would entail further and heavy responsibility on the Government for the security of General Gordon after his (Mr. Guy Dawnay's) disclaimer of any Party spirit in presenting this scheme. He wished to avoid any remark which might have the appearance of a threat, in regard to the future, or of casting blame upon the Government for its conduct in the past. He would only urge and entreat the right hon. Gentleman not lightly and without serious consideration to throw away this last loophole of escape which the proposal offered to the Government against the charge brought against them by the Motion of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)—a charge they otherwise could not avoid. If they refused this proposal they could not avoid, and they could not escape the condemnation of the country for having wilfully disregarded the steps which were necessary to secure the safety of General Gordon.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Mr. Speaker, I must be allowed to express, not only on behalf of the Government, but on behalf of the whole House, our feeling of the gallantry which has prompted the suggestion made by the hon. Member who has just spoken. That suggestion, whatever we may think of its practicability, is most creditable to his courage and to his public spirit. There is no one in this House, having heard the hon. Member, but must feel convinced that it is a *bonâ fide* proposal earnestly made by him. At the same time, I think the hon. Member's argument would destroy, if it were accepted, the whole case and position in this debate of the Conservative Party, because he told the House that no other means of rescue at the present time was possible; that all those various means of rescue thrown out in the course of the debate were impossible of adoption.

MR. GUY DAWNAY: I said there were two alternative schemes of rescue; one by English troops, which I feared the Government could not adopt, the other by Indian troops, which I was afraid that the Government would not adopt.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I shall come presently to the question of the employment of Indian troops; but I will for the moment confine myself to thanking the hon. Member for the gallantry of his proposal, while pointing out to him that that proposal has not been received with any favour in the country or in this House. The Government are of opinion that any steps which are necessary to be taken in this matter should be taken on the responsibility of the Government. Now, Sir, one remark with reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). I shall have to deal with other statements made in the part of the House where my right hon. Friend sits; but I wish, first of all, to further correct the impression already partially corrected in the course of his speech concerning the statement of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister as to what has occurred in the Soudan. My right hon. Friend never spoke of the Mahdi as a liberator; I think that the argument was that the Mahdi retained his power and position in the Soudan by trading upon the anti-Egyptian feeling almost universally existing there; that it was this feeling which might not unfairly be represented as a desire for liberty by which the Mahdi alone maintained his supremacy. As to the other speeches which have been delivered against the Government since my noble Friend spoke in their support, the first was that of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard). Sir, I will not describe that speech as containing those quibbles of the law which learned lawyers frequently address to the House; but I must say that the hon. and learned Member did certainly take a number of rather small points. I can, however, assure him, with reference to the point on which he laid the greatest stress, that no orders were sent to General Gordon by Her Majesty's Government as to his not going himself to the Mahdi other than the advice contained in the Blue Book before the House—there are no others, except those which the hon. and learned Member may have derived from his imagination. The speech of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was one which on many points differed from those which proceeded from other parts of the House, and which have been directed against the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member did not make to-night quite so grand an oration as we are accustomed to hear from him; but he said the House would have accepted Zebehr as Governor of the Soudan, in which, however, he diametrically contradicted almost all the speakers who have addressed the House in this debate against the policy of the Government. I shall leave him to settle that matter with my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and others who have expressed their opinion that the House would have done nothing of the kind. And I shall also leave him to settle it with Lord Salisbury, his Leader, who has expressed a similar opinion. There are some matters that cannot be set aside by words, and I think the utterances of the noble Lord in "another place" and those of my right hon. Friend and others in this House are amongst them—they cannot be got over by a mere statement to the contrary. Sir, perhaps one of the most remarkable speeches of this evening against the Government policy was that of the senior Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen), who spoke of the efforts which had been made throughout the whole Session to frown down discussion of the Egyptian Question. But, Sir, those attempts have not only been singularly unsuccessful, but they have been so in a degree which altogether transcends the experience of this House in respect of similar discussions. We have had many discussions upon that subject, some of them, in our opinion, most unnecessary. I think, from the concluding words of the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon, that I shall have his sympathy when I say that these discussions on foreign affairs, treated as they have been during the present Session, are frequently most harmful to the interests of the State. When I had the honour of holding the Office of Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs discussions on foreign affairs were undoubtedly increasing in number; but since I ceased to hold that Office they have continued to increase more rapidly, and I cannot but agree with my right hon. Friend in thinking that irregular discussions on delicate questions of foreign policy are calculated to have a most hurtful influence upon the policy of the Government. I would repeat the warning which my right hon. Friend addressed to those who sit opposite to us, that if ever they again become the Government of this country they may find the practice which they have set going in the last few years highly inconvenient.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: You set it going yourselves.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I will tell the hon. Member for Eye one or two facts. In the last Parliament no questions of foreign affairs were ever asked by myself or by anyone now on this Bench without at least three days' Notice to the House. But at the present time Questions on foreign affairs of the most delicate character are invariably asked without Notice, and I fear that the House will never be able to return to the better practice of former times. The senior hon. Member for Newcastle, in his able speech, the effect of which, however, was much destroyed by the crushing answer of his Colleague in the representation of that town, strongly opposed the policy of the evacuation of the Soudan; and he said that when we interfered at all we took responsibility for the future of the Soudan upon ourselves. The hon. Member agrees with most of the Opposition speakers in desiring to retain the Soudan in some way for Egypt. That is an absolute difference of policy between the hon. Member and the whole of the Opposition and Her Majesty's Government. Nothing will ever induce us to give that fatal advice to the Egyptian Government; it is an absolute breach between us which nothing can bridge over, and which nothing can cause us to forget. I would point out also that the opinion of General Gordon on this matter is the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. General Gordon believes as strongly as we—or, at least, he did believe all the time that we were hearing from him every day—that it would be a fatal policy for Egypt to attempt to retain her sovereignty over the Soudan. The hon. Member for Newcastle told us we could have sent troops at one time, that we would not send them when we could, and that if the heat afterwards prevented our sending them it was our fault. I ask when we could have sent those troops? Was it before the 27th or 28th of February, up to which time General Gordon was saying that this absolutely pacific mission was almost certain of success? If he thinks that in the month of March we might have sent troops up the Nile, not for a short expedition, but in order to secure the future possession of the Soudan for Egypt, I should like to know whether they would not have arrived there at the very hottest period of the year? And when the hon. Member admits that the conditions are insuperably difficult now, I ask whether they would not have attached to the expedition which he recommended? The hon. Member, amidst tremendous cheering from the Opposition, told the House that he was accustomed to think for himself; but the fact that we are sometimes inclined to congratulate him upon is that he thinks not only for himself, but for the other side; he always appears to state the views of the Opposition with much more eloquence than they are accustomed to use themselves. Now, the main lines of attack upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government have been three. We have been attacked by the hon. Member for Eye to-night, and by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin yesterday, for not having sent men to Wady Halfa. I thought the proposal a piece of Irish fun on the part of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, and I hardly thought it serious on the part of the hon. Member for Eye; but, to my amazement, my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon seems to have taken up this view. He said that to avoid a Vote of Censure we ought to have changed the position of affairs in the Soudan by sending 200 men to Wady Halfa, which is on the frontier of Egypt Proper, and at the Second Cataract, and that that movement would affect the proceedings higher up in the centre of the Soudan. But a far more serious attack has been made upon the Government on the two other heads—by the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) to-night, and by the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) yesterday—on the ground that we compromised General Gordon's safety by our proceedings at Suakin, and by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), as well as by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), for not having sent a force across the Desert during these operations from Suakin to Berber. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, with that daring imagination for which he is noted, said that the soldiers at Suakin all wanted to go to Berber. But that does not at all tally with the information which has been supplied to me. The words of Sir Evelyn Baring have been quoted against us on this point; but I will deal with that in one moment. The hon. Member for Eye laid more stress, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire laid less stress, on our not sending Zebehr. That is the fourth line of attack, but it is one which may be passed by with ease, because the Opposition are themselves greatly divided upon the subject, and the majority seem to approve the policy of the Government in refusing to sanction the appointment. With regard to the sending of a force from Suakin to Berber, there is in the possession of the House a long and elaborate despatch giving our reasons for not sending that force. The opinion of Sir Evelyn Baring has been given in both senses, but with great moderation. In one despatch, showing reasons for not sending the force, he said—

> "I cannot agree with the proposal mentioned in Colonel Stewart's telegram that a force of British or Indian Cavalry should be sent through from Suakin to Berber."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 138.]

Later on, in April, he said that it was the opinion of General Stephenson that it was a matter of extraordinary military risk, but not an impossible operation. Thus General Stephenson was of opinion that it was "not an impossible operation." Why, Sir, nothing is impossible for the forces of this country. If you will only expend enough blood of our troops, and allow enough men to die of fever and heat in the Desert, it is possible to do anything; even the heart of Africa could be reached by our troops. But there are such things as virtual impossibilities, and it is virtually impossible to conduct operations in the Soudan at this time of the year, or at the time when it was suggested that the expedition should have been undertaken. It is a noticeable fact that in the North of Africa the hottest weather comes before the longest day; and it would be within that season that the operations would take place. We have placed before the House, in the Papers No. 13, our reasons at full length for not sending that expedition; and, at the same time, I think I have shown tonight that the opinion which has been said to be in favour of its possibility at such a time is virtually against its being sent, and it is the only one which can even be thought to be in its favour. The right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire yesterday, and another Member of the Opposition, the hon. and learned Member for Launceston, to-day have argued that the safety of General Gordon was endangered by our operations at Suakin. In February the Opposition repeatedly attacked us with their whole force—horse, foot, and artillery—for waiting for the opinion of General Gordon. We never said we would not undertake these operations, but that nothing would induce us to undertake them unless we were confirmed by the opinion of General Gordon. We have had no opinion from General Gordon against these operations; and although his telegrams are not altogether consistent with one another, we gathered that they would, on the whole, help him in his progress. It is remarkable that the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire was one of those who made some of the strongest of observations on the subject of immediately undertaking these operations. When we asked for time in order to consult General Gordon, he said it was an insult to the House to wait General Gordon's opinion; but now he says that the operations conducted with General Gordon's approval endangered his safety. Now, with regard to the Wady Halfa proposal, it was the main ground of the attack of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin; and to my amazement, as I have said, it was echoed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon. Sir, it appears to me that this "200 men policy" is a pretence policy, a scarecrow policy, a wooden gun policy; a policy of bravado that could not be pursued without leading to disaster. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) also recommended that policy; and he also told us that at the time of the Suakin operations, if the people believed that a British Force was coming, they would disperse, and when the troops went, and it was falsely reported that the Arabs had dispersed, the right hon. Gentleman said—"Of course, I told you they would when they heard you were coming." But they did not disperse on that account, and I doubt that they would not be scared by 200 men at Wady Halfa. The Opposition, as I have pointed out, are not agreed in their attacks upon us; and, having dealt with them, I will put before the House what has been the policy of Her Majesty's Government. General Gordon's commission was a pacific commission, received by him in the manner which has been described to the House this evening in the speech of my noble Friend. The account given by my noble Friend is so impossible of contradiction that I will not trouble the House by going over it again at this hour of the morning (12·40 A.M.). General Gordon was not only sent on a pacific mission, but he was sent at his own suggestion, with instructions that were drawn out by himself. I was one who met General Gordon on the day he left the country, and I heard his conversation, which tallied with the account of it given by the noble Lord. He spoke with absolute confidence, and without the shadow of a doubt, of being able, by pacific means, and without the least thought of military support, to effect a pacific arrangement which would lead to the withdrawal of the garrisons. It is one of the curious difficulties under which we labour—as it would be a difficulty to any Government—that up to this moment we do not know, and we have not the evidence before us from which to deduce, the reasons which prevented that pacific policy being carried out. We do not know how it is that, as regards certain garrisons, the Mahdi has been unwilling to come to a friendly arrangement and to let them leave the Soudan—that is a matter on which we have no information at this time. The primary object of General Gordon's mission was Khartoum. He was asked for by the Egyptian Government to conduct the retreat from Khartoum. Those were the terms in which they asked for an English officer, and it was on a telegram containing those terms that we sent General Gordon. He began by attempting to carry out his pacific mission, and in pursuance of that mission he sent away from Khartoum women and children, the men who were left from General Hicks's expedition, and a certain number of fellaheen, and the greater portion of them have now reached Egypt Proper. That was the beginning of General Gordon's mission. Now, General Gordon suddenly changed his views as to the character of his mission, because, on the 27th of February, without any reason as to which we have information—this again shows how deficient the information in the possession of the Government has been—on the 27th of February, General Gordon, having given us no hint of this intended change of views, told us he was now sending out troops to show his force, and in a telegram later in the same day he said that an expedition would start immediately to attack the rebels in the vicinity, and that he had put out a Proclamation in which he stated that he was compelled to use severe measures, and that whoever persisted in disobeying him would be treated as they deserved. We have no information as to the cause of this sudden change. We know there was no immediate danger at Khartoum, because on the same day that that change of policy was announced Mr. Power telegraphed—

"Town of Khartoum peaceful. People coming in with food, everything cheaper; and country people in market. Gordon is working wonders with the people."—[*Ibid.*, 102.]

Therefore the change of policy does not appear to have grown out of any immediate danger to Khartoum. By a despatch, which will be found on pages 115 and 116 of Egypt, No. 12, it would appear that about that time General Gordon conceived the idea of remaining in Khartoum a much longer period than up to that time he had conceived, and it was in connection with this idea that he desired that Zebehr should be sent to him. It has not been mentioned by previous speakers that General Gordon's policy from the 27th of February was connected with the idea that Zebehr and himself were to remain in Khartoum together. Sir Evelyn Baring's advice to the Government to agree to the employment of Zebehr was always subject to the condition which General Gordon refused to accept. They were not agreed about Zebehr, for General Gordon always demanded that Zebehr should be there with him. Sir Evelyn Baring never consented to that proposal, but always said it was impossible, and insisted that if Zebehr were to go, the two should never be there together. That point must be borne in mind in connection with the proposal to send Zebehr. From this date General Gordon began to talk about smashing up the Mahdi. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) told us to-night, in the course of his speech, that we sneered at this phrase of General Gordon. I will be quite frank with the House; I do not sneer at it all, but I do mention it with disapproval. I am not in full possession of General Gordon's views and reasons—we have not the evidence before us to show us what those views are—but on the evidence which I have, I do think it was a mistake for General Gordon to talk of attacking and smashing up the Mahdi. On the same day on which he began to use this language, he told us that the Mahdi must be smashed up, and that at the present time it would be comparatively easy to destroy the Mahdi. Well, Sir, I need not impress it upon the House, because no one will contradict my statement that at this time he conceived the idea which I have put before the House that Zebehr must be with him for a considerable time—he always spoke of the combination of Zebehr and himself being an absolute necessity. But for that point he might have had Sir Evelyn Baring's support with regard to Zebehr. As the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), and other Members of the Opposition, think we ought to have given in to General Gordon's views, and have sent Zebehr, I will ask the House once more whether they consider that any Government, on whichever side it might have been—even a Government which included the hon. Member for Eye himself—would have received the support of Parliament and of the country in sending Zebehr in the manner which was proposed, even if the differences between Sir Evelyn Baring and General Gordon could have been reconciled? We know what would have been said. It would have been said that Zebehr was to be sent out with British money and with the moral support of the country, and he was to be made a K.C.M.G., and to be decorated with honours by the Queen of this country. That is a position which no Government could take up—which no Party in the House would support. We did not reject General Gordon's proposal suddenly. We expressed strong disapprobation of it; we pointed out the evils and dangers of its adoption; we had the gravest doubts whether, if we felt it our duty to acquiesce in it, it would not mean our own resignation. So strong was our opinion that it was not wise to go against General Gordon, that we did not take an absolute and final decision until we had weighed the matter in its every aspect. Now, Sir, the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) continues to hold the opinion that the House would have taken Zebehr. He told the House to-day that we had not given reasons enough to explain the refusal of Zebehr. I think I can give the noble Lord another reason contained in the words of his own Leader. Lord Salisbury, speaking on the 6th of March, said—

> "Why Zebehr is a slave-driver—the king of slave-drivers—a man stained with every cruelty and every crime that can disgrace humanity."—(3 *Hansard*, [285] 630.)

These are Lord Salisbury's words, and I give them as a sufficient answer to the noble Lord. Well, Sir, we had a great deal of sneering at the suggestion that General Gordon, even after his change of policy with regard to smashing up the Mahdi and his adoption of a more warlike operation, was still safe at Khartoum. It is impossible to argue with regard to words like "safety," without some examination of the evidence which lies behind them. Hon. Gentlemen quoted several statements of General Gordon as to the safety of Khartoum. There are a great many others; besides, there is this very remarkable fact—that there was no change in the language used by General Gordon with regard to the military safety of Khartoum from the earliest day he wrote on the subject down to the latest day on which we received information. Before General Gordon went to Khartoum there was a panic. It was supposed the town would not hold out three days; but from the time he got there he had always used the same language with regard to the safety of the place. On the 20th of February he told Colonel Coetlogon that Khartoum was now as safe as Cairo, and he added that Colonel Coetlogon's services in a military capacity were wasted, however much they might be desired in a civil capacity. On the 8th of March he said he had provisions for six months. On the 13th of March he began to speak of how rapidly provisions were coming into the town, and he said they were coming in far faster than at usual times. He continued to make these statements throughout the month. I will not weary the House by reading these statements; but on no less than 15 occasions during the month of March he gave the same assurances. On the 4th of April it is supposed by hon. Members that he suddenly changed his views; but on that day he said that Khartoum was all right. On the 5th of April he said—"The town is all right, and we have plenty of provisions." On the 7th he said—"We are all right up here;" and in a later telegram, which is undated, he said—"Our position will be strengthened when the Nile rises. If I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so." And then, in the most despondent telegram of all, he says—"I have provisions for five months." He does not tell us that the provisions were continuing to come in at the same rate. The only doubt which can be suggested as to the provisions is the difference between "six months" in one telegram and "five months" in another. That is a difference which I cannot explain. But that General Gordon is in difficulties with respect to provisions is inconsistent with the telegrams which we have received from time to time. Now, Sir, the hon. Members who believe in the absolute imminence of danger to Khartoum rely upon the telegrams of Mr. Power to *The Times.* I am bound to say Mr. Power is not at all free from pessimism. On the 30th of December last, Mr. Power reported that there were no arms and no food, and that in three days the town might be in the hands of the Mahdi. When I saw General Gordon himself, on the day on which he left this country, I read that telegram to him; but it produced no impression on his mind; he laughed at the idea of any danger to Khartoum. As a matter of fact, there were plenty of arms, there was plenty of food, and, certainly, the town did not surrender in three days. Granting, for the sake of argument, that we are entirely wrong in the view we take as to the military safety of Khartoum, granting that the Opposition are right in every word they urge, supposing that General Gordon's statements are to go for nothing, and supposing that he is in immediate danger, I should like to ask the House what is their impression, derived from the course of this debate, as to the policy which would be pursued by the Opposition were they to come into Office? Would the Opposition send an expedition, which has been recommended during the debate, of 12,000 men, in the hot weather, into the interior of the Soudan; or would they take precisely the same course we are taking—namely, to obtain proper information as to the various roads and ways of reaching the interior of the Soudan, and to generally make themselves prepared for any scheme that might become necessary, in the manner recommended by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) this afternoon? My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) does not appear to agree with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) as to the need for an actual expedition at the present moment. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock wants the troops to start to-morrow; but no other speaker has recommended an immediate expedition. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford speaks of the moral effect of the announcement of an expedition; but this, again, is an argument in favour of a pitiable policy of sham to which I have alluded to-night—a policy of saying you are going to send an expedition, when you do not really know at what time you are going to send it. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock wants an immediate expedition, and he said the result of a change of power would be certain rescue now instead of uncertain rescue in October. When the noble Lord says that a change of power would mean immediate rescue instead of an autumnal expedition, I would like to know whether he has given any real consideration to the subject—more consideration, for instance, than he has given to the proposal with regard to half-sovereigns? I want to know whether he has taken any steps to inform himself as to the military possibility of an expedition in the hot weather such as that which would, he says, be the result of a change of Government now? Does he know anything about the roads, or the difficulty of the various roads, or anything about the distances? There are four principal roads by which troops may advance in the event of an expedition being sent. Each of these roads is thought by most military authorities to be impassable in the height of summer, and all of them are thought to be impassable by certain military men. Some persons think that an expedition could be sent by steamer up the Nile. They remind me of a Member of this House who, during the American War, at the time of the Trent affair, recommended the despatch of a naval expedition to the Upper Lakes of America, entirely forgetting the existence of the Falls of Niagara. Although the difficulties of the Nile are not so insurmountable as those of the Falls of Niagara, the cataracts make the Nile the slowest route by which an expedition could possibly pass. Of the four roads of which I speak, the one from Massowah to Khartoum is 650 miles. The second, from Korosko to Berber, is about 570 miles, of which the bad part, between Korosko and Abu Ahmed, is 250 miles across the Nubian Desert, which is waterless. Colonel Stewart, who has been there twice, gives it as his opinion that that Desert is impassable for an army. There is only one well, and the water is unfit for use by man.

Then the road by Wady Halfa is 870 miles long, of which 150 miles are cataracts, and this route would be impracticable for an immediate expedition, owing to the length of distance and of time. Probably the most practicable road would be that from Suakin to Berber. That is 445 miles long, of which 240 or 250 are desert. The difficulty of that road, as has been explained to-night in one of the speeches, lies in the last 100 miles. There are along that road a stretch of 54 miles in one place and a stretch of 53 miles in another without a drop of water. I think the House ought to have some idea of the difficulties and the conditions of an expedition in the summer time such as is suggested by the noble Lord. A suggestion has been made to-night that Indian troops should be employed on the Berber and Suakin road; but Black troops cannot do without water any more than White troops; and I might even say that, in the opinion of military authorities, the Black troops, owing to the number of their followers, are more difficult to deal with in this respect than White troops. And there are other considerations, which will be appreciated by the House, which make it difficult and undesirable to employ Indian troops in that portion of the Soudan. All these questions of distance and road are questions which the Government have to consider with the greatest care, which they are bound as responsible for the business of this country, both at home and abroad, to consider with the greatest care. We have proclaimed our responsibility for General Gordon in the strongest possible way, and I have nothing to add to the words of the Secretary of State for War, which had a deep effect even on the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). For the protection of General Gordon we intend to do that which can practically be done; but we intend to do it according to the best information available to us; and we do not intend to be driven into doing it before we understand its necessity, and before the time has come when it must be done for the interest and honour of this country—we do not intend to be driven to do it any sooner by repeated Votes of Censure. My right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon has expressed a wish that the Liberal Party should not minimize the responsibility of the Government and the nation. I am not one of those who desire to minimize the national responsibility. I have never expressed that desire; on the contrary, I have frequently shown the House that my views are in the opposite direction to that; but we must not be led away by any idea, however strong, of national responsibility, to commit the country, without due information, and due regard of possibilities, to a course which might be more fatal to it than any adventure undertaken in the past. Hon. Members who have spoken against the Government have almost all of them shown what I may call the cloven hoof. I do not use the phrase in any disrespectful sense, but only with respect to the policy they recommend to the House; but they have all gone beyond the terms of the Motion, which speaks about the safety of General Gordon; they have all gone beyond the recommendations in the Motion, having regard to the honour of this country, and almost every one of them—and certainly the great majority of them—has told us that it is the duty of this country to hold the Soudan for Egypt. I will proceed to verify that statement. The hon. Member for Newcastle and one other Member have made that statement distinctly to-night, and I have quoted it in their presence without remark. With regard to other speakers, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) said the Government told the House that General Gordon's mission was pacific; but he asked whether they intended to desert the garrisons if pacific means fail. He spoke not only of Khartoum, but of all the garrisons; and he went on to say the whole difficulty arose from the absurd decision of the Government to have nothing to do with the Soudan. It was the decision of Sir Evelyn Baring and Nubar Pasha, and all who considered the interests of Egypt; and it was a decision arrived at, not only in Lord Dufferin's time, but since then, on different facts from those known to him when he was there. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock has taken the same line in the course of his speech, and has said it was the duty of the Government to rescue all the garrisons placed in peril; and the right hon. Member for Ripon has told us that we shall have to resist the Mahdi's advance, and that we ought to resist it in the Soudan itself. He said that by our policy we shall be driven to resist the Mahdi's advance at a point of the Mahdi's own choosing; and, supposing he does advance, we shall have to resist him on the frontier of Egypt Proper. Does he not see a very wide distinction between the facility and possibility of resisting the Mahdi when he invades the country of the Khedive, and attacking him in a country where he has the support of the whole population? I do not believe that, in the opinion of the country, whatever may be the opinion of the country with regard to the position of General Gordon—upon which there is a natural and proper feeling—we should increase the responsibilities either of this country or of Egypt in connection with the Soudan. I know that the adoption of that policy would gain a cheap popularity for the moment in the City, and would probably send up Egyptian Funds. If we were to express our view that it was desirable to "smash up" the Mahdi, or "to do for" the Mahdi, or to take any such course, the effect would be to lead to our remaining permanently in Egypt, and not only to the permanent occupation of Egypt, but of the interior of the Soudan, which is a far more difficult matter. I would say of that proposal, which has been recommended by several speakers —among others, by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock—what the most powerful man in the Conservative Party said recently of the demand of his own noble Leader — "I will resist to the uttermost this extravagant and despotic demand."

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I must apologize to the House for intruding upon them at so late an hour as the present; but I feel that we cannot allow this debate to close and a Division to be taken without some notice of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. I may make this general remark upon that speech and on the case which the right hon. Gentleman has presented—that the stronger is the argument he has put before the House the more has he confirmed the Motion of my right hon. Friend. I put it on this ground—he has argued with a great deal of ingenuity, I admit, to a certain point, and with a good deal of force against this, that, and the other suggestion for a remedy for the difficulties in which we are placed; but I want to know how it is we are placed in those difficulties? To whom are we to look as the Party who are responsible for the position in which we are now placed? If General Gordon is, unfortunately, in such a position that we cannot see that his proposals are likely to succeed; that his plans are likely to be carried out, or even that his personal safety is secured, what have the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues been about that they have allowed such a state of things to arise? It is not General Gordon to whom we are to look. We have to look to those who employed him. If he is deficient in many respects, if he is not the man to conduct such operations as these, it is you who encouraged and undertook the work he was to do, and it is you who must be held responsible for it. I make this general observation, because it seems to me to be half of the difficulty in which we are placed in regard to this Egyptian Question that the great object of the Government appears to be, not to obtain any particular result, or to solve any problem in a satisfactory national sense, but to shield themselves from responsibility, and to throw the responsibility upon others. Where they can do it, they are always glad to throw it on their Predecessors; where they cannot do that, they are ready to throw it upon their allies, on the Government of Egypt, on the Khedive—upon anybody—even upon the men they employ. The grossest injustice is done to General Gordon, a man who commands all our sympathies, and the sympathies of the whole country. Gross injustice is done to him by the manner in which his efforts are spoken of, and his proceedings criticized, by those who are ready enough to shelter themselves under his name, while ready enough to take credit for any success he may achieve. The junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), in his very able speech, was pleased to speak of General Gordon as a man whose conduct was to be characterized as a series of "random zigzags." I dispute entirely the propriety of that observation, if it is applied to his policy; for he has kept his main object in view, and never departed from it. He is a man of great fertility of resource, and is ready to adapt his mission to the changed circumstances in which he is placed; but if the changes he makes are to be called "random zigzags," how is it that many of them have been brought about? Not by any change of policy on his part, but by a change of circumstances, for which, in the main, the Government are responsible; and I say it is against them, and against their "random zigzags," that protests ought to be made. What could be a greater instance of "random zigzags" than the very action of the Government in employing General Gordon at all? It was a very hurried proceeding. Recollect what happened. The difficulty that has arisen in the Soudan was a difficulty that had been caused, and directly brought about, by the action of the Government themselves. It was they who, in the course of last autumn, imposed on the Government of Egypt an absolute direction that they should abandon and withdraw from the Soudan. They did that with such overbearing force that they broke up the Government of Egypt itself. They broke up the idol which they had established, and which they thought might stand by itself, and they reduced it to a nonentity. Then, how could they carry this into effect? It was possible for them to say, having given their orders, they left the Egyptian Government to work the matter out for themselves; but they did not do that. They had an offer made to them, by or on behalf of General Gordon, that he was ready to place himself at their disposal. He was a man who had the greatest possible knowledge and advantage in dealing with the Soudan. The Government knew that perfectly well. How long had they known it? How long had they had an opportunity of consulting him in the months during which these things were going on; and why did they never consult him at all until he came in that hurried way, and in the course of one or two days, when he did not know whether he was to go to the Congo or to the Soudan? Why did they, in that hurried fashion, send him off with a mission, and such a mission as that? They told him to do one thing, but, at the same time, they gave him permission and a hint, and even encouraged him, to do quite another thing. They sent him to report, and now, when we come to some of the hair-splitting defences of their conduct, we find the Government always ready enough to say—"Oh, yes; these things may be right or wrong; but, so far as we were concerned, we never gave him these instructions." No; all you told General Gordon, who you knew desired to go out, was not merely to report about, or to conduct an evacuation of the garrisons, but to do such work as he might think fit, and which might be intrusted to him by the Khedive. What was the result? Duties were thrust upon him, which he accepted, but which were of a very different character from what he had contemplated, and you never seem to have taken into consideration the possibility that he might fail in the attempt he was making. That was not a point, so far as General Gordon was concerned. He believed that he would succeed in what he undertook; but, so far as you were concerned, will any Member of the Government say that the Government believed with the same confidence that General Gordon believed, that he would succeed? Did the Government believe it? If they did believe it, they must have a very great power of credulity. Or did they only think and hope it? I believe they only thought and hoped it, and considered it worth trying; but if they only thought it was an experiment worth trying, what sort of statesmanship was it that had nothing in reserve? It was not a question of how far General Gordon might fail, but how far you were prepared for his failure, and for that change of plan? And it was no very great length of time that passed in the matter; for we have it from the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke), as we see in the Blue Book, that it was a very short time indeed before General Gordon found that his plan must be materially altered, and even abandoned. It was somewhere in the middle of January that General Gordon got his instructions in this country. He reached Khartoum on, I think, the 18th of February, and it was within nine days after he arrived at Khartoum that he found himself obliged materially to alter the proposals he had made. What was the state of the case? In nine days—that was no great length of time—you ought to have been prepared to say what was the policy which you were about to recommend. There is a despatch—I will not inflict it upon the

House at length now—but there is a despatch to which I earnestly entreat the attention of the House—written by Sir Evelyn Baring as early as February 28th—and that, as it seems to me, is the pivot upon which the whole of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in this matter turns. It was the parting of the way. Sir Evelyn Baring said—

> "I may now submit to your Lordship my views on the main point at issue, after having carefully considered the different proposals made by General Gordon. He says two alternative courses may be adopted—one to evacuate the Soudan entirely, and make no attempt to establish a settled Government there; the other to make every effort to set up some settled Government to replace the former Egyptian Administration."

Then he says General Gordon is obviously in favour of the second of these courses. He himself is in favour of the second course, and he very plainly calls upon the Government to pronounce between them. Her Majesty's Government never do pronounce opinions. They leave one thing on their own responsibility, and another thing on General Gordon's responsibility. They never choose their time, and it is because of that that we find ourselves in the position in which we now stand. I must say that Sir Evelyn Baring's opinions—I do not speak of General Gordon's—have been treated with much less respect than they deserve. The right hon. Gentleman said just now that Sir Evelyn Baring had never agreed to the proposal about Zebehr; that he never agreed to Zebehr being sent to Khartoum, to be there with General Gordon. I do not know, then, how the right hon. Gentleman explains the passage in the despatch of the 28th March—the long despatch of Lord Granville to Sir Evelyn Baring, which is to be found in the Blue Book, No. 13, page 3—where Lord Granville says—

> "In consequence of the confidence expressed by General Gordon that Zebehr would not injure him you withdrew the objection that you had previously to Zebehr being sent to Khartoum, and supported his recommendation."

I do not myself approve—I could not have approved—of Zebehr being sent there; but I say you had no right to pass over and misrepresent Sir Evelyn Baring's opinion. There are a good many other matters that the right hon. Gentleman passed over in a very free and easy and rapid manner which I think we should find, if we were to look closely into them, would not bear minute examination. There was, for instance, the question of sending troops to clear the road from Suakin to Berber. That might not be possible now; but there can be no doubt that it might have been possible then. It was a stroke of a military character that might easily have been struck just after the success of General Graham. That was the time when it should have been done. There might have been difficulties even then; but you yourselves have added very much to those difficulties, because the main, almost the only one you hear of is the want of water. If you have to conduct a march through a country where there is a scarcity of water it is obvious that one of the first things you have to consider is the desirability of providing a camel corps. Well, steps had been taken, without your authority, to form a camel corps, and you ordered that the camels should be sold and the corps broken up. This difficulty, therefore, is one arising out of your own conduct and your own action. I do not venture to speak on military questions. I have no authority on military matters, but I know that there have been military opinions expressed to the effect that this march might have been done, and is capable of being done. I speak of men of no small eminence when I mention Lord Napier of Magdala and General Malcolm, who had command of one of the divisions of the Army which marched into Abyssinia; and, therefore, knew the country well. They believed that the march could be done; but we find we are now told that the thing is impossible. Then I come back to what I said at the beginning. If it is impossible now, how are you to justify yourself in having allowed the matter to get to the point at which it is impossible? That is the question; that is the point my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) makes in his Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) says this is a "pale and colourless Resolution." If the vote of to-night could be different from what it is likely to be I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would have held very different language as to the paleness and colourlessness of the Resolution. He would, no doubt, accredit it with being quite sufficient to mark what the opinion of the House and of Parliament is, and I venture to say that it would have been held by the country to be very different from "pale and colourless." My right hon. Friend challenges your whole policy from the beginning, your want of foresight, your want of vigour and straightforward conduct, which has been characteristic of all your proceedings in this matter. Never was there a case to which the old saying of "meddle and muddle" more completely applied than it does to this. You embark General Gordon in an undertaking which you felt to be one of difficulty, in an undertaking of which the Prime Minister said in the House—

> "If it were put forward by me it would be absurd; but it is put forward by a man of such character and authority that we believe it will succeed."

You allowed him to bring forward that scheme, and allowed him to act on it, and yet you do not give him his head. You do not give him what he wants, or allow him to do that which he desires to do. You tell him, on the one hand, to take a pacific policy; and, on the other, you embarrass that pacific policy by your operations. What did he tell you as to General Baker's force at Suakin? While he was in Cairo, as Sir Evelyn Baring says, he objected to that force being there, and said the garrison should be reduced to 150 men. Why did he do that? Why, because it was inconsistent with the policy he wanted to carry out. You took no notice of his objection. When we spoke of the danger to which Sinkat and Tokar were exposed, we were asked to wait for the opinion of General Gordon. Why did not you take his opinion yourselves with regard to the employment of General Baker's force at Suakin? Why did you allow that force to be destroyed—for you were morally guilty of sending it to destruction, seeing that you could have prevented its going out? You allowed it to go out at the very time when your own agent, your own great man, was going on his expedition, and was urging you not to permit it. You cannot shield yourselves in this matter; you cannot play fast and loose in the way that you have endeavoured to do, throwing all responsibility on others if anything goes wrong. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), in the course of his observations, criticized what fell from my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in the discussion of that point—namely, the sending of the expedition to save Tokar. The right hon. Gentleman says that my right hon. Friend stated that it would be an insult to General Gordon if we proceeded without consulting him. But my right hon. Friend never said anything of the kind. What he said was that it would be an insult to General Gordon if there was any question raised as to the matter being one that affected General Gordon's personal safety; and what he intended to convey to the House—and did convey, for I remember the time well — was that to a man of General Gordon's bravery and patriotism, and self-sacrificing disposition, it would have been an insult to say—"May we undertake this operation, which it is important should be undertaken, without putting you to too great risk of losing your life?" That was what my right hon. Friend said, and, no doubt, it will find an echo in General Gordon's breast. I might have taken notice of other matters in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but I feel it is impossible to go further at this hour. Before I sit down, however, I wish to state to the House my own conviction in this matter. I know perfectly well that the right hon. Gentleman yesterday challenged us and said—"Speak as you like. The House will to-night decide in our favour." We know that. I admit that, for the sake of saving appearances, the right hon. Gentleman afterwards included the words "and the country." [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I will not delay the House by going into the matter now—we shall be able to see what he said in the reports of his speech; but, practically, the right hon. Gentleman, having a bad case to defend, throws down his gage of battle and says—"Let us fight it out in the Division Lobby." I will call on the House to bear this in mind, that they will be responsible for the vote they give to-night. The Government have endeavoured to cast off this responsibility, but not with any great success. They have endeavoured to cast the responsibility here upon their Predecessors, there upon the Egyptian Government, or General Gordon, or I do not know who. But though they have done that, they have not succeeded in getting rid of the responsibility they have cast upon these persons. They will be able to get rid of it if they are able to obtain from this House a vote clearly supporting and sustaining them. The responsibility will be transferred from their shoulders, where now it rests, to the shoulders of their supporters. I have no doubt that hon. Gentlemen who sit behind the Government, and who are convinced of the soundness of their arguments and of the course which they have pursued, will give them their support to-night with extremely good consciences, and will feel perfectly justified in the responsibility they will take on themselves. If there are any who have doubts, if there are any who feel other than satisfaction at the explanations that have been given, I must say I think that in voting against this Resolution they will be taking a course which they can never hope to justify to the country, and which they will hardly be able to justify to their own consciences. Gentlemen who think that they are right in supporting the Government in a policy which is one of so delicate, so difficult, so important a character as this, who think that they are justified in giving the Government a clearance for the whole course of their policy with regard to the mission of General Gordon, are, indeed, incurring a heavy responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman said yesterday that the question of Egypt—he did, to a certain extent, except the particular case of General Gordon—that the question of Egypt generally was one of but secondary interest. If he would persuade the House and the country that matters affecting Egypt and our position in it—the conduct we pursue there and the manner in which we uphold the honour of the English name and advance the interests of England—are matters of secondary importance, he is misleading the country. These are not matters of secondary importance. It is a matter of the very deepest concern to our national interests, our national welfare, and our national honour; and we cannot but trust that, though this debate will close with a majority for the Government of probably a very overwhelming character, this House will not be the last tribunal of appeal, but that the country will be awakened by the discussion to study the question.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 275; Noes 303: Majority 28.

AYES

Alexander, Major-Gen.
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Barne, F. St. J. N.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Brooks, W. C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Brymer, W. E.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Churchill, Lord R.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Close, M. C.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Collins, T.
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Cowen, J.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Major hon. M.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Colonel hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Eckersley, N.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, Sir G.
Elliot, G. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ennis, Sir J.
Estcourt, G. S.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Feilden, Lieut.-General
Fellowes, W. H.
Finch, G. H.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fitzwilliam, hn. C. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, rt. hon. R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
French-Brewster, R. A. B.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, right hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Giles, A.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gore-Langton, W. S.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Gray, E. D.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Guest, M. J.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Harris, W. J.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.

Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J. G.
Jackson, W. L.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennard, C. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, M. J.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Laing, S.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, right hn. Lord H. G. C. G.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lynch, N.
Marcartney, J. W. E.
Mac Iver, D.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Mahon, E.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
March, Earl of
Marriott, W. T.
Marum, E. M.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, T.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Miles, C. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Milner, Sir F.
Molloy, B. C.
Monckton, F.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Northcote, H. S.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
Onslow, D. R.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Peek, Sir H. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, right hon. Earl
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Read, C. S.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, Lord H.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheil, E.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Small, J. F.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smithwick, J. F.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
Stanley, E. J.
Storer, G.
Strutt, hon. C. H.
Sullivan, T. D.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, A. J.
Thornhill, T.
Thynne, Lord H. F.
Tollemache, hn. W. F.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watney, J.
Whitley, E.
Williams, General O.
Wilmot, Sir. H.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wyndham, hon. P.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.
Crichton, Viscount
Winn, R.

NOES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Allen, H. G.
Allen, W. S.
Allman, R. L.
Amory, Sir J. H.
Anderson, G.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Bass, H.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Blake, J. A.
Blennerhassett, R. P.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brassey, H. A.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, J.
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Buxton, F. W.
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Lord C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clark, S.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Crum, A.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Currie, Sir D.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
De Ferrières, Baron
Dickson, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Errington, G.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gabbett, D. F.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Gordon, Lord D.
Gordon, Sir A.

Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, Sir H.
James, C.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Lawrence, Sir J. C.
Lawrence, W.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Lee, H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lloyd, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lusk, Sir A.
Lymington, Viscount
Lyons, R. D.
Macfarlane, D. H.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Arthur, Sir W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Magniac, C.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, hon. E.
Martin, P.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mason, H.
Maxwell-Heron, J.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Milbank, Sir F. A.
Monk, C. J.
Moore, A.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, J.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Noel, E.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Beirne, Colonel F.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Donoghue, The
Otway, Sir A. J.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A.
Peddie, J. D.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.
Philips, R. N.
Playfair, rt. hn. Sir L.
Portman, hn. W. H. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, J. O'C.
Pugh, L. P.
Pulley, J.
Ramsay, J.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, Lieut-Col. G.
Smith, S.
Smyth, P. J.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stuart, H. V.
Summers, W.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Taylor, P. A.
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Vivian, A. P.
Waddy, S. D.
Walker, S.
Warterlow, Sir S.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
West, H. W.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Unions of Clonmel, Croom, Glin, Kanturk, Limerick, Lismore, Macroom, Mullingar, Rathkeale, and Wexford, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 198.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Union of Tullamore, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 199.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to New Streets in the City of Dublin, and to the Town of Dungarvan, and to Waterworks in Buncrana, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 200.]

SHANNON NAVIGATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Courtney, Bill to make provision with respect to the maintenance of certain Piers and other works in the estuary of the River Shannon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 201.]

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 14*th May*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railways, *put off.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 4) (Nenagh Union) * [202]; Factory Acts Extension (Shops) * [203].

Second Reading—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) [13], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—*Report*—Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) * [179].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

SOUTH EASTERN AND CHANNEL TUNNEL RAILWAYS BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in doing so he intended to make as few observations as possible, because he was aware that there was a measure following this that excited considerable interest, and he would not say anything that was likely to delay or interfere with the consideration of that measure. The Bill before the House, although in the nature of a Private Bill, was really a great national measure. It involved one of those great questions which justified the House in asking the Government what their policy was. He was quite aware that the policy of the Government was a mystery upon many questions; and it seemed to him that in regard to this question of a Channel Tunnel it was specially mysterious. What he wanted to know was, whether the policy of the Government was one of peace with all nations, or one of the separation of this country from the outer world — whether they were in favour of a cordial and intimate alliance with France, or whether they preferred a policy of isolation and separation, the logical end of which must be strained relations, and probably war? Then he wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister still retained his opinion in favour of the connection between England and France by a Tunnel which he had expressed in times gone by? Other great statesmen had expressed similar views. In addition to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) had originally placed a Notice on the Paper, which was now taken up by the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote), of his intention to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. He would ask those two hon. Gentlemen kindly to cogitate, before they spoke, as to the facts which he proposed to lay before them. They must remember that there existed in the house of business of the Rothschilds in the City a letter from the late Lord Derby to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Disraeli), afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, in which the Tunnel was spoken of as a great national work, which ought not to be opposed, but assisted by the moral approval of Government; and in that letter it was stated that all the dangers and difficulties with regard to facilities for invasion by the construction of a Channel Tunnel were hardly worth discussion. On many occasions he had tried to get the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to lay before the House a copy of the letter. He was quite sure the hon. Baronet the Member for Aylesbury (Sir Nathaniel Rothschild) would be glad to produce it; but there were other letters that could be seen. The next matter he wished to bring before the attention of the two hon. Gentlemen was that in pre-historic times, according to all the teaching of geology, England and France were, practically, one country. He would ask them then, in the first place, whether they considered themselves more sagacious than the great Leaders of their Party; and next, whether they thought Providence had made an accidental mistake in originally annexing England and France as one Continent? It was just as well that they should see exactly where they were. On this side of the Channel, according to the testimony of Colonel Yolland, there was a gallery under the sea of 2,000 and some odd hundred yards in length stretching towards the Coast of France; and on the other side of the Channel there was a similar gallery projecting in the direction of England. He knew the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade might tell them that, inasmuch as the Channel Tunnel works in France had been suspended, it was not necessary to trouble themselves further in regard to the Bill before the House; but with the permission of the House he would like to state, from official authority, what was exactly the position of the French Channel Tunnel works. This was an official account of the experiments on the Coast of France—

"Having been after our experimental heading at Escalles (S.W. of Sangatte) perfectly satisfied with the nature, soundness, and sufficient dryness of the chalk beds, and also with the merits of Colonel Beaumont's boring machine, we have stopped the work in that quarter, as it would have been for the present a useless expense, and it may at any time easily be resumed by again putting the machinery in working order, and after a few days pumping. Since then we have made three new borings, Nos. 3, 4, 5, to ascertain the exact depth at which gray chalk is to be met with at various places between Sangatte and Calais. The borings, Nos. 3, 4, have already been finished for a good while; No. 5 is about to be concluded. The results and practical knowledge derived from these borings are all of a most encouraging character. With the data so obtained we are pursuing proper studies for the further establishment of the deepest shafts, by means of which the central part of the Channel Tunnel is to be excavated, and finally drained and ventilated, after being opened for the traffic of goods and passengers. By these preliminary operations we intend making ourselves ready to begin at once the works on a large scale, as soon as an understanding has been come to between the English and French Governments. As to our legal situation in France, it is now perfectly sound and clear. We have fulfilled all our engagements, and have become, by our declaration of the 26th July, 1883, definite concessionaries of the French part of the Channel Tunnel. We have agreed with our Government that delays, after the time at which we are bound by the Act of Concession to have completed the works and opened the submarine railway to traffic, are to be counted from the date of the diplomatic arrangement, which must, of course, take place between both nations on the subject. Inclosed you will find a copy of our correspondence with the Ministre de Travaux Publique, by whom things have been settled as exposed. We anxiously await such an arrangement, as we suffer from the present delays, together with corresponding losses of interest on about £100,000, which we have spent on the faith of previous understandings, already realized on several occasions, as to the utility and feasibility of the general scheme—between the English and French Governments. As we declared, at the conclusion of the last meeting of our Association, we are heartily confident that the great and noble English nation will know how to secure her safety without depriving her country of a new way of communication, which would afford such new and immense facilities to her trade, and increase meanwhile her political power itself."

That was the present position of the matter. He might state that the powers of the Bill divided themselves into three heads. There was, first of all, a power to continue to completion the experimental work of the Tunnel. It was true that those who had been engaged on the work were convinced that the piercing of the Tunnel was perfectly practicable and comparatively easy; but it was thought, and he concurred in that opinion, that until a gallery was pierced through the whole length of the bed of the Channel, the public mind would not be entirely convinced that the scheme was altogether feasible. Last year he had the honour of addressing the Prime Minister on the subject, and he had then represented that not only would this work be advantageous in a scientific point of view—not only would it finally settle the question of practicability—but that there were political reasons why it was desirable that England, when nobody objected, but on the contrary assented, should take possession of her half of the Tunnel under the Channel; because they had it on the highest legal authority that if by any operation the people of France projected their Tunnel close to the English Coast, it would constitute an extension of French territory, and under French law would be controlled in accordance with French interests. Therefore, he thought, apart from the question of Tunnel or no Tunnel, it was extremely desirable that England should, by undertaking experimental works, take possession of her half of the bed of the Channel. In regard to the experimental works themselves, he would ask who was to be damaged? Who would be injured? Not the taxpayers of England, for they were not asked to take on themselves the completion of a scientific experiment. To science, on the contrary, it would bring about excellent results. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of

Trade knew very well that among other eminent men the late President of the Royal Society (Mr. Spottiswoode), the late President of the Society of Arts (Sir William Siemens), Professors from Oxford and elsewhere, and the Geological Society, had all, for scientific reasons, apart from reasons connected with the Tunnel itself, urged upon the Government that this experiment should be allowed to proceed. Geologists, also, believed that there was underlying a large portion of the Channel a great coal bed which might be utilized for the good of mankind. That was only a theoretical opinion; but one of the things which it was proposed to do before the President of the Board of Trade, as he (Sir Edward Watkin) thought arbitrarily, by injunction stopped the experimental works, was to make borings, in order to test the truth of this great problem of mineral deposits under the bed of the Channel. Therefore, on the ground of international law; on the ground of scientific interest, he hoped that nobody, not even the President of the Board of Trade, would oppose that part of the Bill, at all events, which involved the completion of the scientific experiments. He (Sir Edward Watkin) had never heard of any Government in any country who had hitherto stopped any experiment whatever calculated to elucidate great problems affecting the national progress. The next portion of the Bill related to the construction of land railways, which, of course, would have to be made if the Tunnel were built, in order to connect the railway systems with the Tunnel. It was proposed that these railways should be made according to the recommendations of the Military Commission which the Government had appointed to consider the question. He did not mean to say that they were laid out in the Bill as they might be best laid out for commercial purposes; but the Bill complied implicitly with the conditions laid down by the Commission. The third part of the Bill enabled the permanent works from the English Coast to be carried out in accordance with those of the French Channel Tunnel. In regard to that point, he wished to state that those who promoted the Bill had never sought in any sense whatever to obtain anything in the nature of a monopoly. There were only two railways which at present had termini in the Channel in the direction of Dover and Folkestone—namely, the South Eastern and the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Companies. So far as the South Eastern Company was concerned, they had always declared that in a great international work of this kind, to carry out a connection between the railways of England and those of the Continent, there could be nothing in the nature of a monopoly; but that the whole railway system should have free access to this great means of communication between the English railways and the railways of the Continent. Therefore, the House might dismiss from its mind any suspicion of there having been a desire in any sense whatever to make this a monopoly. The House would remember that this was no new question to the Government or to the Opposition; and the Prime Minister had expressed himself in time gone by enthusiastically in favour of this Tunnel. The right hon. Gentleman might have altered his mind; his opinions did sometimes very seriously change; but the Government of the day, Lord Granville being Prime Minister, undoubtedly sanctioned the principle of a Tunnel; and the Government of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite—the Government of Lord Beaconsfield—had, through Lord Derby, distinctly sanctioned it also. Then, again, Parliament had, in two or three Bills, given implied adherence to the principle. In 1874 it permitted the South Eastern Railway Company to lay out money in making experiments, and the South Eastern Company had done so. In 1875 it authorized the Company, of which the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) was the presiding genius, also to make experiments, and the noble Lord and his friends had possessed the powers, but had not made the experiments. Since then, as late as 1881, Parliament had permitted the South Eastern Railway Company and others to purchase land on the margin of the Tunnel, with a view, also avowedly specified in the Act of Parliament, of enabling further experiments to be made in connection with this Tunnel. Therefore, it was not a new question; and what he wished to know from the Government, and also what he would venture to ask from the Opposition, was, what was the reason those great Parties in the State had changed their mind on so important a question? He had said in the beginning that he wished to know from the Government if they were in favour of a policy of peace and union, and increased facilities for intercommunication between England and France, or whether they were in favour of a policy of isolation and separation? At this moment, undoubtedly, the position of our relations with a neighbouring nation across the Channel were somewhat strained; and he asked the House generally to consider what might have been the position if England and France, combined in union in face of all the world, were, at this moment, constructing this noble work, which must for ever attach this country to France and to the Continent? He ventured to think that our relations would have been of a totally different character. Unhappily, mole-hills had been magnified into mountains, where the two nations might have gone on hand-in-hand together, without allowing petty difficulties or jealousies in any way to interfere. He did not wish to mention great names in connection with the matter; but he must remind the House that one of the most sagacious men who had ever lived in our times—the late Prince Consort—was an earnest and enthusiastic advocate of the Channel Tunnel. His mind told him that unless some communication of the sort between England and the Continent were provided, England would become, as time went on, commercially isolated. The Continent being held together by a continuous system of railways, the commercial *entrepôt*, which England had hitherto been, and English commercial supremacy, would be seriously endangered by the construction of deep water harbours and the employment of quick steamers. He knew that there were some hon. Gentlemen—the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) among others—who thought that if there was to be a Tunnel at all it ought not to be a question of private enterprize. He agreed with the hon. Member; and when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade rose to move that the Bill be consigned to the limbo of six months hence, he would ask him to tell the House how frequently and how earnestly he (Sir Edward Watkin) had pleaded with him for more than two or three years that while private enterprize ought to complete the experiment whether a Tunnel under the Channel could be made with cheapness, facility, and certainty; and that while private enterprize alone should be employed in connecting the English railway system with that of the Continent, the undersea portion of the Tunnel itself should be made by the nation, should become the property of the nation, should be controlled by the nation, and ought not to be in any sense the property of private speculators, who might be Englishmen to-day, Frenchmen tomorrow, Americans some other day, or anybody else. Therefore, there was no intention on the part of the promoters of the Bill either to set up a monopoly, or in any way to interfere with what they believed to be the proper patriotic action of the Government. On the other hand, works had been carried out entirely on the faith of previous discussions in that House, and on the previous action of the Government representing both the great Parties of the State. The letter he had read just now clearly showed that if it had not been for the Correspondence and the Convention between the Governments of England and France the £100,000 which French gentlemen had laid out in experimental works would never have been expended. They might tell this country, when the proper time came, and the Government had interfered to stop the progress of the present Bill, that they would go on with their works in spite of Her Majesty's Government. What would the Government do then? Would they follow the idea that, the French people having crossed the dividing line in the centre of the Channel between England on the one side and France on the other, we ought to go to war with the Republic of France in consequence? That was a question well worthy of consideration. He would take it in another way. Did the Government consider that the Tunnel ought to be made by anybody at any time and under any circumstances? Because that was the real question. Would the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade get up and say that, in the opinion of the Government, of the collective Cabinet, the construction of a Tunnel under the Channel to connect England and France would be so totally opposed to British liberty, to civilization, and to common sense, and everything else, that under no circumstances, or at any time, under no set of men, ought it ever to be made? If they were prepared to do that, he would at once sit down. The Government either did not agree with the views of the Prince Consort, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Derby, Mr. Cobden, Lord Clarendon, and most men who had expressed themselves upon the subject, or, if they did believe in those views, what was the cause of their action that day? They either believed that this was a great work of civilization, or they did not. If they did, why were they going to oppose the Bill that day? What was their peculiar position with reference to the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), the President of the Channel Tunnel Company, which had done nothing? The noble Lord represented the Government—one of the most important among them all, the Government Whip—the man, in fact, who kept them in Office—as he had done last night. The noble Lord represented the Tunnel idea, as Chairman of the Board of one of these Companies; and yet the Government, of which the noble Lord was a Member, were coming there that day to assert, he supposed, that no Tunnel ought ever to be made. He wanted a distinct and deliberate answer to his question; and he hoped it would not be shirked or evaded in any way. He would repeat the question again. Did the Government think a Tunnel under the Channel ought never to be made, under any conceivable circumstances, to connect England and France? Because if that was their contention he had nothing more to say. They had a majority. It might have dwindled; but there it was. It was not merely a question of the Tunnel; but what were to be the future relations between England and France? Should they annex that part of the Continent generally for the intercommunication of commerce, or should they not? The Government ought to give some information to the House upon that question; and he respectfully entreated the Prime Minister or the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to tell them what the real views of the Government were. When a deputation of English workpeople went to France last year they had an interview with the President of the French Republic. And what did the President tell them? He told them they ought to go back and speak to their own Government. He said—

> "If the English Government are for a policy of isolation and separation I should deplore and regret it; but I cannot help it. We are all of one mind on this side of the Channel. We believe that this is a great work of civilization which ought to be accomplished, and we are ready to assist in its accomplishment."

The President of the French Republic added—

> "Go, then, and speak to your own Government."

He (Sir Edward Watkin) wanted an answer from Her Majesty's Government. He believed honestly that if the question were submitted to the great communities of the country it would certainly be very easily settled. Where was the whole difficulty? It was not for him to explain the curious changes of opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. Anyone who would open the Blue Books would see that at the beginning the right hon. Gentleman had communicated the distinct assent of the Government to the principle of the construction of the Tunnel. It was quite fair and just to the right hon. Gentleman to say that in further communications he very properly spoke of precautions and other matters that would have to be attended to; but, undoubtedly, two or three years ago the right hon. Gentleman led him to believe that the Government were in favour of the construction of a Tunnel, provided they were not asked to contribute anything towards it. What had happened to bring about a change of opinion? Perhaps he was only anticipating what the right hon. Gentleman would say. In the month of July, two years ago, there appeared in a French newspaper a letter dated from the War Office, and signed by Sir Garnet Wolseley; and that letter for the first time raised a distinct military alarm in regard to the Tunnel. He might say, in a parenthesis, that if he wanted an answer to what Sir Garnet Wolseley said he might appeal to a soldier of as high distinction as Sir Garnet himself—namely, Sir John Adye, who gave his opinion without the use of any high-sounding phrases, or any large amount of bad quotation from Shakespeare. He thought it would be seen that what Sir John Adye said undoubtedly answered the letter of Sir Garnet Wolseley. He had referred to the fact that the letter of Sir Garnet Wolseley was dated from the War Office; and he would like to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, presuming him to be present, whether, as a matter of discipline, any officer connected with the Army was allowed to write a letter affecting the policy of the country, contradicting and denouncing the action of Governments of both Parties in past times—denouncing that policy in a way that was likely to breed international suspicion, and then to date his letter from the War Office—without reprimand? He thought this military correspondence was a most dangerous thing. Soldiers had no right to interfere with the policy of the country, and it was a matter for the Executive Government to consider. All the mischief began, and had been continued, from the time of that letter, which convinced him, as a plain man, that there was a military authority cropping up in this country which might some day become dangerous. If peaceful men could not be allowed to promote communication between nations without letters being written and dated from the War Office by high military authorities, it was quite time that Parliament began to consider the relative positions of the civilian and military classes in the country. This, as far as he knew, constituted the whole difficulty. To sum up—the question came to this—the Government of the Liberal Party, and the Government of the Conservative Party, in past times had consented deliberately to the principle of the construction of the Tunnel. The Conservative Government then in power agreed to a Convention drawn up by three Commissioners on the part of England and three on the part of France, to provide and consider all the details in reference to this important question. Communications had been made between the two countries since. Large sums of money had been laid out on both sides of the Channel, and the matter had been practically settled. What the House was now asked to do, and what the two political Parties in the State were asked to do, was to be logical and consistent—first of all, to permit the completion of the experiments; and then, by the legislation asked for, to enable this great work to be accomplished by private enterprize. He begged to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Edward Watkin.*)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Baronet said, at the commencement of his observations, that he hoped the Government would make a clear statement as to their policy in reference to this matter, and he professed to discover some mystery in reference to their opinions. I can assure him that that mystery is entirely a figment of his own imagination — [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!]—for the policy of the Government is perfectly clear, as I hope the House will agree when I have concluded the very few remarks I think it necessary to offer at this stage of the proceedings. The hon. Baronet referred several times in the course of his speech to the opinions of distinguished individuals, who have been Members of former Governments, and of others in favour of this project. I think he somewhat exaggerated the tone of those communications. For instance, I am not myself aware of any published document in which the Prime Minister has expressed an enthusiastic opinion with respect to this project; but it is certainly true that a good many years ago the private secretary of Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister of the last Liberal Government, did express the general concurrence of the right hon. Gentleman with a similar project. In a communication to the Board of Trade, the right hon. Gentleman stated that, in principle, he saw no objection to the construction of a Tunnel. I do not know what advantage may be derived from an admission that various distinguished persons in former times saw no objection to this project. As a matter of fact, the same view was stated by Lord Granville on behalf of the former Government of the Prime Minister, and by Lord Derby and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) on behalf of the Government of Mr. Disraeli. But all this has nothing to do with the question at present before the House, which is that there is a general opinion entertained by the Members of this House that this project, if carried out, would seriously interfere with the security of the country. Under such circumstances, hon. Members are bound, if they are not mad or wicked, to put aside any number of favourable opinions by any number of men in order to put a stop to a project which, in their opinion, would entail such consequences and not allow it to proceed. I am not able to explain how it came about—that when this matter was originally proposed no military authority appears to have been struck with the danger its execution might possibly inflict upon the country; and accordingly the early discussions in reference to the matter were all connected with the question of monopoly, and the international arrangements it might be necessary to make for the security and convenience of the traffic. Accordingly, when the matter came before me a few years ago, looking back only to this correspondence, I thought it my duty, on behalf of what is really the Ministry of Commerce connected with the Government, to make an examination into the question from a commercial point of view; and I appointed a Departmental Committee—on which Sir Thomas Farrer, the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade, was assisted by a Representative from the Board of Admiralty and a Representative from the War Office—to consider under what conditions this project might be allowed to be proceeded with, if it was allowed to proceed at all. It was in the course of that inquiry that the Committee became acquainted with the opinion of Lord Wolseley, to which the hon. Baronet has referred. They also received an opinion to the same effect from Sir Cooper Key. I am informed that other distinguished officers were anxious to give evidence of a similar character. Under the circumstances, the Committee reported to me that this question, which was unexpected at the time the Committee was appointed, had arisen. I saw at once that a matter so tremendous in a national point of view could not be left to a Departmental Committee appointed for a different purpose. I, therefore, relieved the Departmental Committee of its duties, and I consulted at once my Colleagues in the Government. A proposal was then made by the then Secretary of State for War, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), that a Committee of Experts should be appointed, and the decision of the Cabinet was in favour of that proposal. Accordingly a scientific Committee was appointed, and instructed to report by what means the Tunnel, if constructed, might be rendered absolutely useless to an enemy in a time of war, or of threatened war. That Committee took evidence and made an elaborate Report; and I must say that their Report was the death-warrant of this scheme; because, while the Committee did report that, in their opinion, the Tunnel might be rendered absolutely useless to an enemy under the circumstances stated in the Reference, yet they accompanied that opinion by a statement that it was, of course, impossible that any human foresight could be entirely relied upon in every conceivable case. They made recommendations for the security of the Tunnel of a nature so complicated, so numerous, and so costly, that if they were carried into effect, it would be impossible that any Tunnel could be a commercial success. What did the Committee recommend? They recommended that the end of the Tunnel which was in this country should come out in view of a first-class fortress, which first-class fortress, I suppose, would have to be provided at the cost of the hon. Baronet and his shareholders. It was proposed that the Tunnel should have appliances by means of a portcullis, by which it could be closed on any occasion that might be necessary; further, that there should be means for filling the Tunnel with irrespirable gases, and by which shingle might be let into the Tunnel if occasion required; and, lastly, it was proposed that there should be means for blowing up the Tunnel and flooding it temporarily, and permanently, if necessary; and also that these appliances should be provided not only in the fortress but in various other centres in the country. Well, Sir, I say that if such precautions were necessary, it appears to me that it was not surprising that many people should think it would be better not to carry forward a project with reference to which such extreme precautions were necessary. On the receipt of this Report, the Government at once moved for the appointment of a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider not only the Report, but also all the information that could be obtained upon the subject, and also to take evidence. The Committee held a great number of meetings, and most carefully considered the subject. They were unable to agree upon a unanimous Report as to details; but they did agree by a majority that, in their opinion, it was undesirable the Tunnel should be further proceeded with. Under the circumstances disclosed by the Report and by the evidence taken by the various Committees, the Government decided to adopt the decision of that Committee; and in answer to the hon. Baronet's Question, I have to say that that is the policy of Her Majesty's Government. In pursuance of that decision, I last year moved that the Order for the Second Reading of both of the Bills should be discharged. The hon. Baronet now asks the House to reconsider that decision. Has anything happened in the time which has elapsed to lead us to set aside the Report of the Joint Committee, and to allow these works to go on? The hon. Baronet comes down to the House and poses as a great civilizing influence, and asks the leave of the House to continue experiments in order to discover whether or not there is a coal-bed under the Channel. We might be disposed to allow the hon. Baronet to continue experiments if we could have entire confidence in his proceedings. What is the history of this matter? I am obliged to remind the House of what took place very early in these proceedings. The question of the rights of the Crown arose. The Board of Trade, representing the Crown, claimed the foreshore where the hon. Gentleman was making his works. That claim was disputed, and was likely to become the subject of an action. But while that claim was disputed, nobody, I believe, disputed the rights of the Crown to the *solum* of the sea within the three-mile territorial limit; and it was thought sufficient to give notice to the hon. Baronet that as soon as he went beyond the limit of the foreshore, the Board of Trade reserved to themselves the right of interfering in such manner as was considered most expedient in the public interest. About the end of March, 1882, I received information to the effect that the borings had then proceeded almost to the limit of the foreshore. I at once gave notice to the hon. Baronet that he was to stop his works; and I received, in the first instance, from the secretary of the Company a positive assurance that the works had been stopped. I also received from the hon. Baronet a personal assurance that the works would be stopped, and a letter from him at the same time begging permission to continue the works, so far as they were necessary to secure the lives and health of those who had been employed in the workings, and in keeping the drainage right. He informed me that the responsibility for the death or any danger to the men would rest upon my head unless the required permission was given. Of course, I knew nothing of the facts; but I gave the permission asked conditionally—that such works only should be carried out as were absolutely necessary to secure the health and lives of the men employed, and at the same time I asked for an immediate inspection of the Works on behalf of the Board of Trade. That was on the 10th of April; on the 11th of April I informed the hon. Baronet that Colonel Yolland would inspect the works on the 12th. On the same day I received a letter from the hon. Baronet informing me that it was impossible for an inspection to take place on that day, but that he would arrange for it to take place on an early day. The inspection was afterwards fixed for the 6th of May; but again the hon. Baronet informed me that it was equally impossible for it to take place on that day, but that he would arrange for it on the 12th of May. I tried to get an earlier day; but the correspondence still went on until the 18th of May, when the hon. Baronet, after further excuses, suggested the 26th or 27th. The Board of Trade accepted the appointment for the 26th; but on the 25th a letter was received from the hon. Baronet regretting that it was impossible for the inspection to take place on that day, because the winding apparatus required repairs, but promising that everything should be ready by June 10. The Board of Trade accepted June 10; but on the 7th the hon. Baronet put me off again; and on the 9th I wrote to the hon. Baronet stating that the Board of Trade must insist on a day being fixed, in order that they might enforce the rights of the Crown. I asked for an appointment on June 19, and the hon. Baronet said he would do the best he could in the rough. On June 22 the hon. Baronet again sent an excuse and postponed the inspection. On June 23 the Board of Trade consulted its legal advisers, and on July 5, after further excuses and correspondence, I applied to the Court, which made an Order that the works should be stopped, except with the consent of the Board of Trade, and that the Board of Trade should be at liberty, at all reasonable times, to inspect the works.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN: I rise to Order. I do not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman in his statement, but I do think he ought to read these letters. He is giving merely a caricature of what took place. Nor is he reading the Order of the Court, and I wish him to do so.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no question of Order.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask whether all these documents are not on the Table of the House?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly they are. All the documents are printed in the Blue Book, and I do not suppose the House wishes me to read them. I can give the House my assurance that I have correctly stated what took place—and I will continue my account of the course of events. The Court made that Order on July 5, and on July 6 I arranged for an appointment on July 8, when Colonel Yolland was to visit the works. Therefore, from April 1 to July 6, I was engaged in correspondence with the hon. Baronet, in which I was continually pressing for an immediate inspection, and in which the hon. Baronet was continually putting me off. And why did he put me off? I do not know whether Colonel Yolland's Report gives any explanation of the mystery. Colonel Yolland having visited the works on July 15th, he reported that the Tunnel had been carried more than 600 yards beyond the line of the foreshore; and, further, that not one additional inch of the Tunnel was necessary, and that not one inch of the cutting had been necessary, to secure the health of the men employed, and that the ventilation would be much better attained if the cutting machine were entirely removed. On August 6 further inspection was made, when Colonel Yolland found that a further 70 yards of the Tunnel had been cut since the Order of the Court was obtained. On August 16 I took proceedings against the Company for sequestration for contempt of Court, and the Court ordered that the boring machine should not make further progress; and since then the works have been stopped. I, therefore, leave it to the House to judge whether it is likely that I, as the Representative of the Government, can have any confidence in the assurances of the hon. Baronet that if he be allowed to make experiments for scientific purposes, they may not be carried altogether beyond the intentions of the Government, and contrary to the wishes of Parliament. I think, under these circumstances, the House will feel with me that it is unnecessary to discuss the matter at further length, and that no reasons have been shown why the decision that the House came to on a previous occasion should be changed. I think the best and kindest thing to do for the hon. Baronet himself—though he will not thank us for it—and also for the shareholders, would be to give this matter its *coup de grâce.* I accordingly move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. BAXTER said, that as one of the Members of the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons who had sat to consider this question last year, he wished to make a few observations to the House. In the first place, he wished to urge upon all Members of the House who were interested in the matter, that they should suspend their final judgment till they had carefully perused the masterly draft Report of Lord Lansdowne, the Chairman of the Committee. The document was of first-rate importance, and was one which he believed would be consulted with interest and with pleasure long after the fears now entertained had been forgotten. He had not gathered from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade whether he and Her Majesty's Government really believed that all those fortresses and all that vast expenditure were required in order to protect the English end of the Tunnel.

His right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain) had been carefully vague on that point; but this he would say—that to his own mind and that of Mr. Speaker—to whose assistance in their investigations the Committee were much indebted—it was perfectly obvious that the great bulk of evidence showed that the opinion of Sir John Adye, the highest authority on a subject of this kind in the Kingdom, was quite correct. When speaking of the military dangers apprehended from the Tunnel, he emphatically said that with the commonest precautions he could not perceive them. Many years ago, when they were considering a railway from Southampton to London, military witnesses said that such a railway would bring England dangerously near to France. One portion of the evidence had struck him very forcibly; that was where several witnesses told them that they were rather ashamed to mention the project on the Continent, as foreigners could not help laughing at the chimera that had taken possession of so many honest British minds. He was not talking of Frenchmen, who might be supposed to be interested parties, anxious for an opportunity to invade, attack, and plunder this undefended, miserable Island of ours; but he was speaking of people outside—namely, Italians, Germans, Americans, and other foreigners, from whom we had nothing to fear. These people could not understand this periodic alarm of ours. He was not going to enter into the personal controversy between the President of the Board of Trade and the supporters of the Bill; that was a matter with which the House had nothing whatever to do; but he wished the House of Commons, and all hon. Gentlemen interested in this matter, to study it a little more deeply before they committed themselves to an opinion against the project for making a Tunnel between this country and France. The discussion of this matter had reminded him very forcibly of a memorable scene in that House some 26 years ago, when a Resolution was passed by a majority of 5 to 1 against the Suez Canal—a Resolution which, allow him to say, had made them the laughing-stock of Europe, and which, having thrown the Suez undertaking into French hands, had been the fountain-head and origin of all our troubles in Egypt. On that memorable occasion he voted in the minority, and he did so with a feeling of mixed humiliation and indignation to think that the statesmen of England and English engineers should have adopted the line of argument that they did. And on this project, also, if the House went to a Division, he should vote with the minority, in the firm belief that the Tunnel was perfectly certain to be made, and that it would confer immense benefit on the trade and commerce of the country. At the same time, he thought it was for the hon. Baronet behind him to consider whether it would be wise on this occasion to go to a Division. The hon. Baronet knew perfectly well, and they all knew, that in the present extraordinary state of public feeling on this matter it was quite impossible to go on with the project. He would advise the hon. Baronet to wait for two or three years, when he believed that a process of conversion would take place, and the people of this country would take a very different view of the matter. He attached no importance to this discussion that day. They all knew that the Bill could not pass; and he therefore thought the hon. Baronet would be wise by refraining from going to a Division. He would entreat the House of Commons not to pledge itself by any Resolution against the project.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that, after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he did not propose to kill over again this dead project; but he would point out what they had got to deal with. He would point out that they had not to consider the opinions of a generation which was dead and gone—the opinions quoted by the hon. Baronet—but that they had to deal with the minds and feelings and desires of the present generation. If the hon. Baronet could show that it was the desire of the people of the country at the present moment that the Tunnel should be made, no doubt he would obtain permission to make it; but it must be remembered that he had quoted a limited authority in favour of his scheme. Most of the authorities referred to as being in favour of the project could not be said to be interested in the question, and why? Because they were all dead and buried. They who were alive were really interested in it, and they were opposed to it. Then, again, the hon. Baronet proposed that this project was to be carried out for the benefit of future generations; and, in answer to that, he (Mr. Macfarlane) would observe that it would be time enough to make the Tunnel when future generations came into existence. Let future generations decide the question for themselves. No Government should undertake to legislate in the fashion proposed for generations to come. The hon. Baronet had descanted upon the peacemaking capacities of this Tunnel, believing that, if it were made, there would be no difficulty in settling the Tonquin, the Soudan, and all other disputes; but he (Mr. Macfarlane) did not believe that the lion and the lamb were going to lay down together in the Tunnel. He did not profess to know much about the military part of the question; but he was perfectly certain, judging from the present state of feeling of the country, that if the Tunnel were made they would have periodic panics, which would cost them the price of the Tunnel almost every year. If the hon. Baronet, therefore, went to a Division, he should vote against him.

Mr. MUNTZ said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) had suggested that they should consider the Marquess of Lansdowne's Report before they came to a decision on this question. Well, he (Mr. Muntz) had done that, and more than that, for he had read the whole of the evidence, and he was bound to say that it was most extraordinary evidence from beginning to end. He would not go into the military question; but with regard to the traffic which was expected to pass through a Tunnel between England and France, the most amazing statements were made. Knowing the condition of trade between the two countries, he was convinced that the estimates put forward as to the amount of traffic were most extravagant and preposterous, and that the equitation which arrived at them was only equalled by that which brought some people to the expectation of the enormous number of passengers who would be conveyed by the proposed Tunnel. They had a statement in the Blue Book —and he hoped it was a misprint— that, in the opinion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin), some 30,000,000 of people would go through the Tunnel annually, or half the population of France and the United Kingdom. France was not an island, and we were at her Western side. We knew what her traffic was on the Eastern side, and that she had routes of communication with the rest of the Continent far superior to any Tunnel which could be made. Well, take the means of communication between France and Italy. Notwithstanding the perfection they had attained, although the population of Italy was 27,000,000, and that of France 34,000,000, the Mont Cenis Tunnel did not carry more than 1,000 passengers a-day; in fact, nothing like what we were sending across the Channel, which was put down in the Blue Book at 478,000 annually. But was it not worthy of consideration in this matter whether the amount of goods and passenger traffic which would be carried through the Tunnel, however great it might be, would be equal to the possible risk? The risk was laughed at by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Baxter); but hon. Members who took an interest in this matter must remember the French Expedition of 1849. In that year an Expedition was sent out, from Toulon or Marseilles, with sealed orders from Paris. It sailed without anyone knowing where it was going, and landed at Civita Vecchia in 24 hours. If the Tunnel were constructed the same thing might be done in the case of England; an Expedition might be concentrated in England in 24 hours. If such an Expedition were sent over under existing circumstances, what would be the result? Why, we would drive it away. We could drive away any Force which could be easily landed; but if the Tunnel were made, and the French got possession of this end of it, what should we be able to do? He agreed with the military evidence in that respect, that in such a case an enemy having possession of the English end of the Tunnel would be able to invade England; and in addition to that, the construction of the Tunnel would subject us to the annoyance of a constant scare of what might happen. He had no doubt that if such a misfortune were to happen to this country as the construction of a Channel Tunnel, even if such a thing were possible, the military scare would be such that conscription would be demanded, and within

20 years this country would be cursed with what was already the curse of the rest of Europe. He did not wish to bring down that curse upon the land; and for that reason he should vote with the President of the Board of Trade, who had moved the rejection of the Bill.

SIR MASSEY LOPES said, he thought it was matter for congratulation that this very grave and important subject was being discussed entirely irrespective of Party considerations. Having had the honour of sitting upon the Committee, he did not hesitate to say that he had taken part in the deliberations with an unprejudiced and disinterested mind; and having heard the evidence and the arguments submitted, he had no doubt as to the vote he should give upon a scheme for the construction of a Tunnel. In the Committee there was no organized opposition to the Bill, and no adverse criticism of the principle, except so far as it came from voluntary evidence; and, therefore, those in favour of the Tunnel had a great advantage. These three questions came before them—and grave doubts were expressed with regard to them. One was as to the practicability of the scheme; another was the question of cost; and the third, which was a very important one, was the question of ventilation. The question of cost came before them in this way—there were two rival Companies, who were proposing to construct a Tunnel, and one of them gave the estimated cost at £3,000,000, while the other gave it at £8,000,000. As to the question of ventilation, though they did not go very far into it, they were told by General Hutchinson, one of the Inspectors of the Board of Trade, that there would be great danger in that respect. The only evidence brought before them favourable to the Tunnel had to admit that though, so far as the light goods traffic and perishable articles were concerned, they might all go by the Tunnel, yet heavy goods would always be likely to be carried by sea. The estimates given to the Committee as to the probable number of passengers really seemed quite chimerical, because it was assumed that every passenger who wanted to cross from France to England, or from England to France, would use the Tunnel and not the steamer; and that, certainly, did not seem to be very rational or reasonable. The advantages of the Tunnel put before the Committee were commercial and social; but they were quite hypothetical and speculative, and not supported by facts or figures. Then there was no strong public feeling in favour of the Tunnel shown to the Committee. There were no representatives brought before them—there was no evidence from representatives of Chambers of Commerce, or bodies of that kind. The disadvantages were admitted to be these—that the Tunnel would create new risk; that it would be a great element and source of danger; that we should have to construct new fortifications, which would entail increased military expenditure; that it would tend to create jealousies and political combinations on the Continent; and that if our relations were at any time strained with France, if there were any attempt to obstruct the Tunnel, it would tend rather to bring about war than to allay it. It was admitted, even by those who gave evidence in favour of the Tunnel, that the greatest factor in the success of the undertaking would be the question of rates. Those who strongly advocated it said that unless they were able to convey their goods by it cheaper than they did by sea they would not make use of it. It was found, also, that the Tunnel would belong to a great Cosmopolitan Company, and that was considered a difficulty. The authority would be a divided one, and difficulties might arise between Frenchmen and Englishmen as to who should have control. Those who were favourable to the project answered that argument by pointing to the amicability of the managers of the railways under the Alps; but he did not think that contention was a valid one, for there had always been a land passage between France and Italy, whilst there never had been—and he hoped there never would be—a road across the Channel other than a road for ships. The military, naval, and scientific evidence was to the effect that the most elaborate scheme of defence would never give us immunity from danger. He thought it was summed up in that way. The Committee had another project brought before them which, he believed, influenced their decision in some respect, and that was the proposal which was made some years ago by the eminent Engineer, Mr. Fowler, and passed by the House—namely, a proposal for the employment of ferry steamers. They had it in evidence that it was quite possible to carry, without transfer of passengers or goods, trains across the Channel; and it was also shown how much the harbour accommodation at Dover and Boulogne had been improved, and how greatly it would aid this project. The Committee also had it impressed upon them that our great defence was certainly our Channel—the water between our Coast and that of France. It was said we were going to do away with what Providence had given us—what, after all, was our best arm of defence against foreign nations. But he thought he might say that, after what they had heard from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, it was almost futile to go into further argument. He did not hesitate to say that the weight of evidence was most decidedly against the construction of the Tunnel; and that it was proved to the satisfaction of the Committee that the national advantages of the Tunnel would never compensate for its national mischief.

Sir HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he did not wish to take up the time of the House, or to go into the question in any detail; but, as a Member of the Committee, he desired to say a word or two. The details were capable of being gone into at great length. He would undertake to talk the Bill out without difficulty if he attempted to go into details; but he did not wish to do either the one thing or the other, and, like the hon. Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes), only rose to speak because he had been a Member of the Committee. He had no doubt that those who had listened to the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) must have been struck, as he (Sir Vivian Hussey) had been, not only on that occasion, but also when the hon. Baronet gave his evidence before the Committee, by the absence of any statement showing that there was a general desire on the part of the commercial interests of the country to have the Tunnel made. The Committee invited the Chambers of Commerce to appear before them and state what their opinion was; and they received from the Chairman of the Associated Chambers of Commerce a reply that it was not their desire to take any part whatever in the matter, or to offer any evidence. Now, it was inconceivable that if this question were one which really affected the trade of the country that the Chambers of Commerce representing that trade would not have came before the Committee to give evidence upon it. They had evidence from Manchester that opinion there was very much divided, and that, certainly, the commercial interests of that place were not, on the whole, in favour of the construction of a Tunnel. There was much evidence to show that heavy goods would not go by the Tunnel; that although in certain instances possibly fragile and perishable goods might go by the Tunnel, it was not in the slightest degree essential, from a commercial point of view, that the Tunnel should be made. He contended that in a national question of this grave character, in which the national safety was believed, at all events by many, to be involved, a very strong case ought to be made out before the Tunnel was sanctioned. The right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) had alluded to the opinion of General Adye; but the Committee had had before them 10 military and three naval witnesses. They were selected as leading authorities upon this matter; and out of that number only one was in favour of the Tunnel. Only one military man was in favour of the construction of the Tunnel; and he stated that he believed it could be constructed without serious danger to this country. He would not trouble the House by reading the very strong statements made by any of the most able authorities who were examined. He did not know whether hon. Members had read the Blue Book; but if they or any unprejudiced men would do so, they would come to the conclusion that serious danger would accrue to this country if the Tunnel was made; and he would tell the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), as he believed he had heard the hon. Gentleman cheer in favour of the Tunnel, that if he desired the Standing Army to be increased to 1,000,000, and to see the conscription introduced into this country, he ought to vote for the scheme. When once the frontier which Nature had given them was destroyed, this country would be placed in the position of Continental Powers; and that being so, they would have to do what every Continental Power had had to do—namely, to create a Standing Army at least as large as those of their neighbours. If this scheme was sanctioned he was certain they would be driven from panic to panic, and would end by the creation of a great Standing Army which would be their only security. He was not prepared to say that if they had a Standing Army of 1,000,000 men he would not permit the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) to make this Tunnel; but until they had such an Army the Tunnel would be a source of considerable danger to this country. It was all very well to ignore the authority of their greatest military and naval men; but was that wise? When they consulted a doctor or any other expert, did they always say he was an old woman if he did not agree with them? It seemed to him that they must either place confidence in their experts, who knew perfectly well what this all meant, or they had better not have them at all. The House might be certain that if a scheme of this kind was passed, they would have perpetually recurring panics; and in the end they would have to increase their Army to an extent which would prevent the possibility of an invasion of this country. It was a very serious question, and what the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz) had said was perfectly true. If the Channel Tunnel was made, it would probably be one of the conditions of peace, if they sustained reverse in a war, that the Tunnel should be permanently in the hands of the enemy. If he could see any advantage in the Tunnel from a commercial point of view he might, perhaps, support the scheme; but he could see nothing whatever of the kind. While, on the one hand, the risk was enormous, on the other hand, the probable gain was very small; and, therefore, he hoped the House would reject the Bill, and that the House might no longer be troubled with this scheme.

SIR ROBERT PEEL said, he thought that, after the admirable speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, it was not necessary that this debate should be much prolonged; at all events, the question laid in a nutshell. It had been clearly put by the President of the Board of Trade. It was not so much a question whether now or hereafter this Channel Tunnel should be made; but it was one of those questions which were constantly coming before the House—namely, a question of confidence or no confidence in the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin). That was the real point at issue; and the President of the Board of Trade had shown most clearly that the hon. Baronet was a man in whom the House could place no confidence whatever in regard to this proposition. He had read a statement of the shifting allegations of which the hon. Baronet had been guilty in regard to the works; and after that statement the House must concur in the view that this matter ought to be in the hands, not of a private Company, but of the Government. The greatest interests were involved in this matter. The hon. Baronet asked the House whether they wished to be at peace with other nations, or to be in a state of isolation? He said the legal aspect of the question was in an entirely satisfactory condition, and that as a great scientific experiment the matter had been decided entirely in his favour; and he then went on to ask whether the noble English nation would still oppose his action in trying to push forward this great work? Now, he must say he was sure the House of Commons, with regard to anything in which the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) was interested, would be anxious to promote it; for he agreed in what had been said in this discussion—that no man was entitled to greater consideration than the noble Lord for his exertions to save the Government in times of difficulty. The noble Lord was concerned with the hon. Baronet in the progress of these works; but with all his sympathy for the noble Lord, he could not give him his support on this occasion. The right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) had recommended the House to pause before they came to a decision on this subject; and he had entreated them to carefully read the evidence given before the Committee. He could not see why they should pause about the matter; they had had the question before them two or three times, and he thought the House ought not to be constantly pestered with this scheme by the hon. Baronet. The hon. Baronet knew perfectly well that the House would reject schemes put forward and endorsed by him on a great national subject. Then an hon. Member had recommended the hon. Baronet not to divide on this occasion. He greatly respected that hon. Member; and he would advise the hon. Baronet to follow that hon. Member's advice and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter), and not divide, but let the matter drop. At all events, it was quite certain, after the speech of the President of the Board of Trade—and looking at the subject from the national point of view, and looking at the dangers which, according to the great military authorities, would arise to this country—there could not be a shadow of doubt that it would be most impolitic to allow this measure to proceed, or, at all events, to entrust it, not to the Government of this great Empire, but to the hon. Baronet who proposed it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was entirely in favour of a Channel Tunnel being made; but he should vote against the proposal of the hon. Baronet. Several hon. Members had got up and given reasons why this Tunnel should not be made; but those reasons seemed to him to be futile. He had had put into his hands a pamphlet, by which a friend seemed to think he could convert him to his view against the Channel Tunnel, and some of its reasons were not worse than those put forward by hon. Members. It was a pamphlet addressed by the Rev. Thomas Burnley to the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone, M.P., and it stated that the application of brandy and common salt to the top of the head, and a small quantity taken internally, was an effectual preventive of sea sickness. That was on a par with some of the reasons given against this Tunnel. Although he was in favour of a Channel Tunnel, he intended to vote against this particular Bill. He had always regarded the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe as an exceedingly practical gentleman; but he was a practical gentleman who sought to hide his light under a bushel. He seemed to imagine that the House of Commons was composed of the sort of persons who were Railway Directors, and he addressed them as a philanthropic Chairman of a Railroad. He did not want to make money for himself or for his shareholders. He was a philanthropist, and wanted to do good to his fellow-men. His first idea with regard to the Tunnel was that it would be a benefit to the whole human race, and especially to those members of the human race inhabiting France and England. That was the only motive that actuated him; but now he had come forward not only as a philanthropist, but as a man of science. It had occurred to him that he could benefit the country in another way, by searching for coal-mines under the Channel; but the President of the Board of Trade, after his experience of the hon. Baronet, was not to be caught by that sort of chaff. He did not believe in coal-mines under the Channel, and he fancied the right hon. Gentlemen did not believe in the philanthropy of the hon. Baronet. He would give one or two reasons why even those who were in favour of a Channel Tunnel should vote against this proposal. As the House was aware, last Session there were two Bills brought before the House on this subject—namely, the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) and the proposal of the hon. Baronet. They were both referred to a Select Committee, and several witnesses were examined. That Committee seriously considered the matter, and came to the conclusion to throw out both Bills. He wished to say, as the question was always raised as to a Member's position with regard to these matters, that he had no financial interest in the scheme of the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire, and he was merely stating the facts as to what occurred. The noble Lord and his Friends had considered whether or not they should bring their Bill forward again; but they had come to the conclusion that they had no right to waste the time of the House of Commons upon a matter upon which the House had already come to a decision. They did not bring it forward, because they knew the House would reject it, following in the lines of the Committee of last year. It would be unfair, therefore, that because the hon. Baronet had chosen to take a different line, and had chosen to call upon the House to reverse the decision of last year, the noble Lord and his Friends should be prejudiced in this matter. The hon. Baronet seemed to think he was the Lesseps of England, and that he alone had the right to have anything to do with the Channel Tunnel—why, he did not know; but when the hon. Baronet talked of this as an independent scheme, everyone knew that it was a scheme, vamped up by the Railway Company of which the hon. Baronet was Chairman. It was a scheme promoted by the South-Eastern Railway Company, with the money of the South-Eastern Railway Company; and the hon. Baronet, when he came forward as Chairman of this scheme, simply wanted to get into the hands of the South-Eastern Railway Company the communications across the Channel. The hon. Baronet told the House that he did not want a monopoly; but, as the Committee of last year showed, if the House now reversed their decision, enormous fortifications would be necessary where the Tunnel opened on the English side of the Channel, and consequently the South-Eastern Railway Company would, in the nature of things, have a monopoly. The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Robert Peel) had put the matter very clearly. Last night there was a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government proposed, and the hon. Baronet on this side voted against it. He regarded this question as a vote of confidence or no confidence in the hon. Baronet; and as he had no confidence in the hon. Baronet, he should most assuredly vote against him.

Mr. WILLIS said, that if he thought that this was a question of confidence in the Mover of the Motion, he should not address the House; nor if he thought the matter was contained in a nutshell. But this was a matter of great public interest; and in the few observations he should address to the House he wished to call attention to two or three matters upon which Members of the House of Lords and the House of Commons Committee were agreed, and particularly to the Report, in which the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) acquiesced. It was important that the House should know that. The passages in that Report to which he should refer were substantially the same as the passages in the minority Report. Nine Members of the Committee practically reported these two results—first, that the feasibility of constructing the Tunnel need not be doubted—that was an important conclusion—and, secondly—

> "That should the Tunnel be constructed, it would give to commerce and to the general interests of civilization a large and growing development."

That paragraph was not in the Report drafted by the hon. Baronet; but the hon. Baronet voted for the draft Report of Viscount Barrington, which contained both the passages he had read, and that Report was supported by Lord Aberdare and the right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter); while Mr. Speaker supported the Marquess of Lansdowne's Report, which contained passages more explicit than Viscount Barrington's Report. He was justified in saying that nine Members of the Committee arrived at these two conclusions; while against the feasibility of constructing the Tunnel, and against a scheme which would be in the general interest of civilization, there was only the opinion of military men. He was astonished that the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) should have given weight to what he did not hesitate to say, having regard to the polity of nations and their intercourse, were the most discreditable opinions ever pronounced by military men. If it were a question of moving a particular body of troops, or conducting an operation in the field, he should acquiesce in the view of the military men, from the Duke of Cambridge downwards, and should never think of criticizing their view; but they had been at peace with France for 70 years, and a character of permancy had been given to our peaceful relations with that country; and it was discreditable to say that the French would act like corsairs and bandits, and would land men on English shores and seize the Tunnel. If those opinions were not correct, then there was nothing to place against the Resolution of the nine illustrious men who formed that Committee. Whenever there was a question of the interests of civilization, so far as they were involved in the intercourse of nations and the maintenance of friendship, military men were always on the wrong side. He was old enough to remember that when steam was first employed for maritime warfare, it was said that troops would be landed by France, without notice, upon our shores at different points; and he would like to take this opportunity of saying that no man had rendered such service in endeavouring to maintain friendly relations with France as the late Lord Beaconsfield. The Duke of Cambridge did not think there was any fear of troops passing through the Channel and seizing the end of it; but that the only danger was that troops would be landed from vessels at a moment's notice. The very same thing was suggested 30 years ago, but, thank goodness, the opinions of military men were overcome in the interests of civilization. On that occasion the President of the Board of Control, speaking on the relations between France and England, said—

> "I do not think there will be a regular war with the French; but I will tell you what you will have. You will have a body of men constantly thrown upon your coasts. How would you like that? How would you like your wives and daughters to be subject to that?"

Then, on the same subject, Mr. Disraeli said—

> "I say that the men who conceive this to be possible must imagine the bravest and the most polished people to be no better than corsairs of Tunis and Morocco."

He repelled that opinion of military men, which has found a revival in the person of the Duke of Cambridge, and in the acceptance of the hon. Baronet. The Duke of Cambridge said they were to have fortresses as large as those of Metz and Strasburg at Dover, and 10,000 men there in time of peace, and 15,000 or 20,000 in time of war. To prevent what? The landing without notice or warning, and in spite of all our intelligence and strength, a body of pirates—which the people of France have never been, nor likely to become. The Duke of Cambridge actually said that such a thing was possible. That any man in his senses could say such a thing was astonishing. Did the Duke of Cambridge think that the peace which had lasted 70 years would not stand the construction of one Tunnel, or of three, or four, or five Tunnels, but would end in a war which would be the scandal of the civilized peoples who constructed them, and the lasting disgrace of the people who could undertake it? Considering these things, he should support the Motion of the hon. Baronet. He cared not about the South-Eastern Railway Company, nor whether the hon. Baronet had betrayed the President of the Board of Trade; but if the President of the Board of Trade were not seated where he now was, the right hon. Gentleman would never have listened to the opinions of the military men—opinions which, if followed in past years, would have given them fortifications on the South Coast, an entrenched camp at Croydon, and fortifications at London. These opinions were discreditable to those who made them, and it was shameful that they should be accepted by public-minded men; and he protested against a work which, in the language of Viscount Barrington, would promote the interest of civilization, being prevented by opinions that ought to be relegated to a barbarous past, and not uttered at a time when Christian doctrines were mitigating and softening the hearts of men.

Sir JOHN HAY said, the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Willis) had thought it right to attribute to members of the Military and Naval Professions who gave evidence before the Committee discreditable motives. The hon. and learned Gentleman had shown himself most profoundly ignorant of the matter in debate; and he was inclined to ask if the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman was to be taken on a question of this kind in preference to that of Lord Wolseley, Sir Lintorn Simmons, Admiral Sir Cooper Key, and Admiral Rice? To these gentlemen was confided the arrangements for the defence of the country; and the defence of the country, he supposed, was dear to the House of Commons. He had read all the evidence given before the Committee; he had read the various Reports which were laid before the Committee; and he confessed he was surprised that the noble Chairman (the Marquess of Lansdowne) came to a conclusion different to that which the majority of the Committee arrived at in their Report. After the careful investigation which that Report received, he (Sir John Hay) was astonished that the hon. and learned Gentleman, who knew nothing of military or naval matters, should come down to the House and discredit not only the Commander-in-Chief, but all the most distinguished officers in the Service, including Lord Wolseley and Sir Lintorn Simmons, besides his (Sir John Hay's) friends—two most able naval officers—Sir Cooper Key and Admiral Rice. True, the opinion of Sir John Adye, for which he had the greatest possible respect, was in favour of the construction of the Tunnel; but he was the only military authority who held that opinion. The hon. and learned Gentleman had just told the House that a surprise in war was never to be expected. But surprises were possible; and he, as a naval officer—it was not for him to speak of the Military Force—could tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that if the end of the Tunnel were seized by any Continental Power the defence of the country by the Navy would be utterly impossible. If a hostile Force were landed in the country, under the present circumstances, it must be supplied; and if its supplies were to be sent across the Channel it was quite possible for the Navy to cut them off. If there was a Tunnel under the Channel, however, the Navy could be of no use whatever. Once let the ends of the Channel be seized, and men and supplies could be poured into the country with the greatest ease. When the hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of surprises not to be expected, he quite forgot that Rome had been seized very lately—within the last 30 years — by the French. If the French were at war with us, they would be unjust to their country if they did not attempt, by every means in their power, by surprise, by every strategy which could be conceived, to bring destruction upon us and success to themselves. He assured the House that if this Tunnel were made—not six tunnels, but only one—this country could not be defended as it now could be defended by its present Naval Force. The Committee came to a conclusion which had been supported by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade; and he (Sir John Hay) trusted that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Willis), who had just now told the House what he thought was necessary for the military defence of the country, would learn the A B C of the case before he addressed the House again on the subject.

MR. HOPWOOD wished to disassociate himself from the purely personal view which had been taken of the matter under consideration. He desired that some such project as the Channel Tunnel should be carried out, and he cared not who promoted it. The right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay) was very indignant with the hon. and learned Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis); but he thought that right hon. and gallant Gentleman had misunderstood the hon. and learned Member. No one could have admitted more generously or more fully than the hon. and learned Gentleman had done that if this were a mere military question—a question of the conduct of some military expedition, for instance—he would defer to the judgment of military men. He (Mr. Hopwood) held strongly that the House never should be governed by the mere opinions of any Profession—whether legal, medical, or military; or if it came to a narrow view of a trading matter, of commercial men. The House had now to deal with a matter of policy; indeed, they were to decide what the policy of the country was to be. The right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay) inferred that the desirability or otherwise of constructing a Tunnel under the Channel was a matter in which military and naval men were best able to judge. He seemed to say the French would be justified if they attacked us by surprise. A more glaring act of treachery could not be conceived; and if the right hon. and gallant Admiral represented the naval and military authorities of the country in expressing that opinion, it would be justifiable to use the phrase of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Willis)—namely, that it was a most discreditable opinion. He (Mr. Hopwood) submitted there was no fear of their being surprised. He adopted the words of Lord Beaconsfield quoted by his hon. and learned Friend; and he thought every right-minded man who gave the French credit for all those generous qualities which we attributed to them, and which we expected them to attribute to us, would adopt those words. Did we not live in the midst of alarms now? The right hon and gallant Admiral said we were defenceless as it was; that we were open to attack. Surely this small perforation under the sea would not add greatly to our danger in that respect. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) had defended the view of those who proposed this measure; and he had undertaken to prophecy what would be the development of trade if the Tunnel were made. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) reminded the House of the denunciations which followed the proposal to construct the Suez Canal, and of the fears which were expressed that it would interfere with our hold upon India. From a commercial point of view, too, it was argued that the Canal never could prove to be a profitable undertaking on the part of those who constructed it. Of the passages of English history, with regard to which they had to feel ashamed of the want of discrimination and foresight on the part of their statesmen, the Suez Canal stood a memorable monument. The real question at issue in this matter was whether it was our policy to live on such terms of trust with our neighbours as to show that we desired their friendship; that we honoured it; that we honoured their qualities; and that we placed our entire trust in their plighted word to us. If it was not our policy to live on such terms with France, every Treaty we had with that country was not worth the paper it was written on. In the future, it would be a matter of pride for some of them to look back and think that they had recorded their vote in favour of the construction of this Tunnel. He shared the regret of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Willis) that his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade should have been placed by the irony of fate in such a position that it was his duty to oppose this measure. He had not the slightest doubt that were the right hon. Gentleman free, he would be found favourable to the construction of the Tunnel; he would rise superior to these small prejudices and these petty military fears; and he would feel he was furthering the permanency of that friendship with France, which it ought to be their highest aim to support.

Mr. DAWSON said, he had listened in vain to hear something as to the apprehensions of France with regard to the construction of a Tunnel under the Channel. It seemed to him that this great nation was quivering in its shoes at the thought of the existence of a work which would equally affect another great nation. Did they hear that France was paralyzed with fear lest this nation should go over and invade her? How changed was history. It was not long ago that England was wanting to make France fear her; but now England was cowering at the idea that the prowess of France should be made apparent to the world. He was surprised to hear not only those who knew not war, but those who were skilled in war, confess that this country was so weak, miserable, and fearful in this matter. He had heard nothing as yet to prevent the carrying out of this great social and international project; indeed, he thought a complete answer to the opponents of this scheme had been afforded by the illustration of that great work of science and civilization —the Suez Canal—against which this House rammed its head for many a day. This country stood in fearful opposition to the advance of science, lest it might open ways to other nations to compete with her monopoly. How long was this opposition to the evidence of science, this opposition to the progress of civilization, to last? How long were these fearful prejudices to prevail when any great scientific work was proposed, or any great scientific discovery was made? This country opposed the introduction of the New Calendar, simply because it sprang from the Roman Pontiff—from the Court of Rome. How long was this country going on in its old ways? It must abandon them in the end in favour of that new progress, in the pursuit of which this Tunnel should be made. He did not mean to say that he supported the particular Bill before the House, because it might have its faults. He was sorry to hear from the lips of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, whom he had always regarded as the personification of everything that flavoured of progress, so retrogressive and so cowardly a policy as he had that afternoon enunciated. He was very much afraid that when men ascended to the Treasury Bench they threw off whatever was free, and independent, and progressive, and they became shackled as with adamantine chains. He believed that eventually, when the fears of hon. and gallant Gentlemen should have been assuaged, this Tunnel would be made; and then they who had advocated this great scientific, social, and international work would have the satisfaction of recollecting that they, at any rate, had had the courage and manliness to recommend its adoption.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he would not examine what might have been the adamantine chains which had bound the right hon. Gentleman the

President of the Board of Trade upon this question since his assumption of Office, nor did he wish to follow, at any length, the hon. Member (Mr. Dawson) into his terrible denunciations of England for not imitating the silent resignation of the French nation in this matter. As he understood, the gist of the argument that had been used against the Bill was that their country, being differently situated and differently constituted to France, saw in this Tunnel a possibly threatened danger from a powerful nation, and saw, as a result of that possible danger, a dread of a large Standing Army being required in this country, and of conscription following in its track. Happily, up to the present time, owing to their insular position, they had been preserved from the necessity of competing with foreign nations in the art of war; and he confessed that he believed that was one of the strongest reasons which had influenced not only the Committee who investigated the matter, but the nation, which he was persuaded was opposed to the scheme. The nation believed that the danger was a real one; and that, as a result of that real danger, they might see themselves driven into a position from which up to this they had been happily preserved. He would like to make one remark, and he did it with the greatest possible hesitation, about what fell from the lips of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis). The hon. and learned Gentleman was so much respected for his vast and varied attainments, that he (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) paused when the hon. and learned Gentleman told them that the military authorities were not to be listened to in this matter; and he was almost inclined to believe that the hon. and learned Gentleman's universal knowledge had probably convinced him that those military men knew nothing of their business, and that he himself was the sole repository of military knowledge.

Mr. WILLIS denied that he had said the military authorities knew nothing of their business.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, that on a question of this sort military evidence was sought in order to arrive at a knowledge of the future military position and safety of the country; and humble and ignorant people like himself (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) believed that those men, whose whole lives had been devoted to a study of these subjects, were as equally capable as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Colchester to give valuable information upon the points raised by the scheme under consideration. On one point the hon. and learned Gentleman had shown that he suffered from want of knowledge, and that point was the practice of the House. He laid great stress upon the fact that the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) voted as one of nine opposed to two clauses of the Report which he mentioned. If the hon. and learned Gentleman had had the misfortune to serve on as many Committees as he (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had done, he would, perhaps, have learnt that in a case in which every Member of the Committee presented a separate draft Report, the draft Reports were read a second time, in most instances, by the assent of certain Members, who wished them discussed as to their details, and who wished to support some of those details without pledging themselves to the whole Report. If the hon. and learned Gentleman had been as often on Committees as he had in Courts he would have known that the mere fact of a Member recording his vote for the second reading of a Report did not pledge him in any way to all the proposals contained in that Report. As a matter of fact, the hon. Baronet (Sir Massey Lopes) meant to support certain details of the draft Report; but he was not in favour of the two clauses which the hon. and learned Gentleman had cited; therefore, the attempt to enlist the hon. Baronet as a supporter of the Tunnel had absolutely failed. To his (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson's) mind the dangers to the country which might result if the proposed Tunnel were constructed completely outweighed any commercial advantages—he was not prepared to admit there would be any—that might accrue. It had been said that, recollecting what took place in the case of the Suez Canal, the House ought to hesitate before it refused its sanction to the scheme now submitted to their consideration. Home influences had nothing to do with the Suez Canal; it was a mere question of commerce that was at issue. He remembered something of what took place at the time, because he had some share in the work. He went out with M de Lesseps to survey the Isthmus. The English engineers opposed the construction of the Canal purely from an engineering point of view; but the opposition of the Government of Lord Palmerston was based on a belief in the dangers which might result to their Indian Empire. But the dangers to their Indian Empire from the construction of the Suez Canal were far more removed from that Empire than the dangers to their own country were by the construction of the Channel Tunnel. It was said that wars were not made without notice. Was that so? Did not the history of the world show that there had been many instances of wars being made and begun without notice? He did not care to dwell upon the point; but he thought that the action of their great Neighbour of late, in Madagascar and other places, pointed to a possibility of attack without any great amount of notice being given. As a Representative of the people in the House of Commons, he was not prepared to sanction for a moment what he believed would be a great danger to the country. He should, therefore, vote against the Motion which had been made by the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin).

Mr. M'LAREN said, the feeling of the country upon this question had been referred to. He did not pretend to understand what the feeling of the country on the subject was; but he thought he did understand the feeling of the borough he represented (Stafford), and in which a considerable trade was carried on with the Continent. The question had been discussed in that borough very thoroughly; and he found that the people there were quite in favour of the Bill, which they believed would be of benefit to the ordinary business of the place. He was sure, therefore, they would read the report of the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade with great regret. He could hardly conceive anything more unfortunate than to find a Minister of Trade and Commerce getting up in that House and using his officical and moral influence in opposition to a scheme calculated to prove so highly beneficial to the country as the proposal contained in this Bill. They who were engaged in industries that would be advantaged by the carrying out of such an enterprize had a strong feeling on the matter, and considered that, in the present depressed condition of trade, anything that would tend to put British commerce on a better footing as compared with their foreign neighbours, would be of great benefit to the country. But the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, instead of reciprocating these views, got up in his place in that House and seriously advanced reasons against the Bill—reasons which he (Mr. M'Laren) regarded as being as ridiculous as they were unfair. The right hon. Gentleman had failed to put forward a single argument that would convince any mercantile man. The observations of the right hon. Gentleman had been directed to a point on which he was in harmony with the opinions entertained by most of those who had spoken from the Opposition Benches, and especially from the Front Bench. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) had put the matter on the right footing when he stated that the House had been discussing, not the Channel Tunnel, but the question of a vote of confidence in the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin). It was hardly indicative of a good case that the President of the Board of Trade should endeavour to relieve himself of a difficult task by attacking another Member of that House in anything but an indirect manner, for there could be no question that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had been levelled, not against the Bill before the House, but against the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, who had had the misfortune to offend Her Majesty's Government by several independent votes on recent occasions. He should have thought Her Majesty's Government would have given their opinions on the merits of the Bill, rather than endeavour to meet the case offered by its promoters by strong accusations against the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe. The right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Board of Trade had quoted from the correspondence that had gone on between himself and the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, and he had done this in such a way as to leave wholly out of view one side of the question, the extracts he had read being only such as suited his own purpose.

He (Mr. M'Laren) had no doubt whatever that if hon. Members would go through that correspondence they would find there was another side to the question; and that if the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe were afforded the opportunity, he would doubtless be able to disprove the allegations and inferences of the President of the Board of Trade. He (Mr. M'Laren) had risen for the purpose of supporting the measure; and in doing so he had felt bound to enter his strenuous protest against the course pursued by the President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. HICKS said, as he had been somewhat pointedly alluded to in reference to the course he had taken on this subject last year, he trusted the House would pardon him if he took up a few minutes of its time by offering an explanation of the occasion referred to. In the belief, at the beginnig of last Session, when this Bill, or one with a similar object, was first placed on the Order Book, that the evidence in favour of the scheme, although then somewhat meagre in its character, pointed to the creation of a great national danger if the Bill should be permitted to pass, and being also under the belief, from all he could gather, both in private and in public, that there was a growing feeling among the people of this country that they ought not to be called upon, merely on the ground of a small commercial advantage, to surrender the great national benefits England had so long enjoyed as the consequence of her insular position, he had taken it upon himself—no Member of Her Majesty's Government, and no hon. Member of longer standing in that House than himself having undertaken to do so—to block the second reading of the Bill, in order to enable Her Majesty's Government, as well as that House and the country at large, more thoroughly and minutely to examine the subject and to consider all the important questions it involved. He thought he was quite justified if, at the present moment, he experienced a feeling of satisfaction at the result of the action he then thought fit to take. Since then they had had a Joint Committee, appointed at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, and they had also had the Report of that Committee, and the evidence it had taken, laid before them. That Report showed that the most eminent of the naval and military authorities, with one single exception, were of opinion that the proposed Tunnel could not be made without very great danger to the interests of the people of this country. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe had asked the House whether it was not the fact that this country and France were not, at one period, joined together, and whether anybody would say that Providence was wrong in having so joined the two countries? Whether they had ever been joined together or not, he (Mr. Hicks) did not know; but, taking the facts as they were at the present day, he should like to turn the question back on the hon. Baronet, and ask him whether the country was not justified in feeling content and grateful that it had pleased an all-wise Providence to divide the two countries? For hundreds of years they had prided themselves on their insular position, and had been thankful for the peace they had enjoyed for so long a time. He felt sure the country was thankful for the appointment of the Committee which sat last year for the purpose of investigating this subject, and which had been the means of saving it from a danger that had been impending over it as the consequence of passing such a measure as that now before the House. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe had asked the House whether it wished, by continuing in its present state of isolation and separation from the Continent, to run the risk of a war with France? He was sorry to hear the hon. Baronet make that remark. For his own part, he could not conceive the possibility of a war, or anything at all resembling a warlike state of feeling, as likely to arise out of this question. At any rate, if war was to be brought about between France and this country on this or any other question, he would much rather that it should take place before the Tunnel was made than afterwards. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) had asked the House why did they feel the anxiety that had been expressed in many quarters, when no such anxiety was entertained on the other side of the Channel? The proper answer to this question had been given by the hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian), who had remined the House that while they were in their present insular position, and only connected with the mainland by the sea, they were only put to the expense of maintaining a small Army; but if they were to be brought into immediate contact with foreign nations, through the medium of the proposed Tunnel, they might find themselves called upon to follow their system, and maintain an Army in which thousands of men would represent the hundreds that were now deemed sufficient, while it might also be found necessary to resort to the objectionable Continental system of conscription. That was the answer to be given to the sneer of the hon. Member for Carlow. The reason this country did not think it advisable to construct a Tunnel between it and France was, not because the English people were more fearful of the consequences than the French, but because they in England knew that at the present moment they were not in such a condition of defence, with respect to their Standing Army, as their neighbours were, and because they did not wish to be put to the expense and inconvenience which a large Standing Army, levied by means of a conscription, would inevitably entail. He should like, also, to say a few words with reference to the remarks that had fallen from the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren). That hon. Member had spoken of the bad state of trade in this country. There could be no doubt that trade was bad at the present moment, and that it had been in that condition for a considerable length of time; and he (Mr. Hicks) was afraid that if they were to persist in their present system of commercial policy, it would go on from bad to worse. But the hon. Member for Stafford recommended, if he had understood the hon. Gentleman rightly, that the sole remedy for the existing distress was to be found in a greater amount of competition. He should like to know whether the shoemakers of Stafford would thank the hon. Gentleman for bringing French shoes into their town, supposing that should be the effect of this proposal? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members on the other side of the House laughed at this remark; but he asked them whether that was not, in reality, what the argument of the hon. Member for Stafford really amounted to? The hon. Member's idea was that the House should pass this Bill for the purpose of supporting the trade of Stafford by affording the means of competition with the French manufacturers of boots and shoes. That, at any rate, was what he understood to be the argument of the hon. Gentleman; and if he had misstated it, the hon. Gentleman would probably correct him. In maintaining these views, he (Mr. Hicks) was glad to see the position Her Majesty's Government had taken with reference to this Bill, and he trusted that the overwhelming majority they would have on this question, when they came to a Division upon it, would at least have the effect of setting it at rest, not only during the existence of the present Parliament, but also during that of the present generation.

Mr. PERCY WYNDHAM said, this Bill had been supported on the ground that it was in furtherance of the spread of civilization. When he heard the word "civilization" mentioned, in the course of this debate, he was reminded of the frequency with which the same word had been used in the House of Commons; but he had never yet been able to arrive at its true meaning from the mode in which hon. Members were in the habit of applying it. What, he asked the House, was meant by that word? It appeared to him that, if it meant anything at all, it meant money. But whether it was applied to the endeavour to push the interests of commerce, or to any other effort in a similar direction, it certainly never meant the bringing about of a state of things that would be more conducive to peace than to war; and for this reason, he regarded with aversion the arguments of hon. Members who brought this measure forward as likely to increase the chances of peace. He must say that a more unfortunate time for bringing forward any argument founded on the supposed analogy of the Suez Canal could not have been chosen, because it was a time when the convictions of Lord Palmerston on that subject were shown to have been most fully justified. That statesman entertained the view that if the Suez Canal were made it would be necessary that England should become master of the land as well as of the sea in that quarter of the globe, and that she would also be liable to the involvements of war. He would, however, put this part of the subject on one side for a moment. As things now stood in the political world, they were obliged to accept everything that had been done, and to say they liked it. If they were to have manhood suffrage imposed upon them to-morrow, every Member of that House would have to tell his constituents that he thought it the best thing in the world. They were similarly obliged to say they thought the Suez Canal the best thing in the world. For his own part, however, he doubted this assertion. He was more inclined to regard that undertaking as being a great curse to this country and to Egypt as well. It had done as much harm to Egypt as another route did to the Republic of Venice; for it had acted as a scare to her trade, instead of as a feeder. Before the Suez Canal was made, the Egyptians derived advantages from the large amount of commerce which passed through their country, but which now went from one side to the other by means of that water way without their being able to obtain any benefit from it. If it had not been for the Suez Canal they would not have had the late discussion on the Vote of Censure; and had England been content with her old sea route to the East, she would never have had the present Prime Minister, as the historic successor of Caliph Omar, burning and bombarding the town of Alexandria; nor would she have had the Soudan crisis at the present moment. An allusion had been made to the principle applicable to declarations of war—a principle which he was inclined to treat with the greatest respect; but he would remark upon this point that the principle which formerly governed such declarations had long since been renounced all over Europe as well as by the rest of the world. There was no declaration of war when the French took Tunis, nor when they commenced their operations in Tonquin. Neither was there any declaration of war when the present Liberal Ministry bombarded Alexandria. They had all listened with great pleasure to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis); but he (Mr. Percy Wyndham) could not accept the opinion of that hon. and learned Gentleman on military affairs. He believed the hon. Member was once a distinguished Nonconformist divine. [Mr. WILLIS: No.] He would prefer to take the opinion of Lord Wolseley on the doctrine of final perseverance, rather than that of the hon. and learned Member for Colchester on military questions. There was this difference between the position of England and France in regard to the making of a Tunnel between the two countries—that, whereas England was now cut off from France by the Channel, there was in France not only a large standing Army, but behind France there were the Armies of the whole of Continental Europe; and it was not improbable that if we were to go on as we had been doing—indeed, it was very probable, that one day we might have the whole of Europe against us. Therefore, the difference between having a Tunnel made and doing without it was this—that if there were no Tunnel, and a hostile force should land upon our coast and make its way to London, it might be able to exact hard terms from us before we got rid of it; but it would very likely be unable to insist on their fulfilment, as it might find great difficulty in getting back again. As long as we retained possession of the sea and had no Tunnel we should be comparatively safe; but if an invading force had the power of calling in reinforcements we must accept any terms it chose to dictate before we could hope to be again at peace.

MR. ILLINGWORTH was of opinion that the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) would be well advised if he went to a Division on this Bill. No doubt, there was a great mountain of prejudice existing in this country upon the subject under discussion. In respect to the Tunnel enterprize, he knew of no method which would be more likely effectually to remove that mountain of prejudice than debates of this character. Doubtless, the hon. Baronet would not have a very large number of followers into the Lobby. It was very possible that there might be some individual prejudice in regard to this particular measure; and, for his own part, he was not enamoured with the method by which the hon. Baronet had dealt with the question in relation to the President of the Board of Trade. He desired to dissociate himself altogether from some of the preliminary proceedings on this matter, and to look at the question on broader and more public grounds. He ventured, notwithstanding the severe reprimand that had been administered from the other side of the House to hon. Members on that (the Ministerial) side, to distrust altogether the opinions and testimony of military and naval men on questions of this kind. He could not profess that which he did not feel, and that was, unhesitating confidence in these military gentlemen, even when the question at issue was a purely scientific one affecting their own Profession. He thought he could point out numberless mistakes which those military and scientific men had made in the past in regard to their own Profession when advising this country as to the expenditure of public money on naval and military matters. But this was not wholly a question of defence. When Parliament had resolved that, in the interests of this country and of the world at large, the Channel Tunnel might be made, the time would then come when the military opinion might be asked as to the best way of defending our end of it; but he did not think the virility of the country was so emasculated that people were inclined to view with any great amount of apprehension, or with any thought of real danger, the prospect of such an enterprize. It was customary to assume that any real advantage to this country was only to be obtained by the interchange of goods traffic; but this was only the fringe of the question. It should be remembered that not only France, but the whole Continent of Europe, was open to all the Eastern hemisphere, without the trouble and danger and annoyances of a sea voyage, while the people of England were in a much worse position in this respect than the hundreds of millions who travelled on the Continent. The advantages to be derived by this country would be immensely greater if we had the same facilities for communication as they had on the Continent. The number of persons coming to this country and spending their money, and thereby improving their acquaintance with the English people, would be greatly increased if they had the facilities that would be afforded by the proposed Tunnel, instead of having to undergo a disagreeable, though short, sea passage. But as it was we had no other way of escaping from our Island; while, as between Continental countries, it was very different. The desire to come here was, in a great degree, neutralized by the fact that there was this very disagreeable sea voyage; and it was highly desirable that those who lived on the Continent, and were not accustomed to the painful experiences of a sea passage, should have the advantage of the scheme offered by this Bill. And then there came the question of whether this scheme could be made a paying enterprize? But, surely, the House of Commons must leave this matter to the promoters, and should follow the course it was accustomed to take in regard to all other Bills of a commercial character, and allow it to go to a Committee upstairs. He ventured to say that the time would come, and was not so far distant as some hon. Members imagined, when they would be ashamed of the attitude they were taking up on this question. He could only wonder, from the course taken by the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), that he was not a more enthusiastic friend and advocate of the introduction of working-men Representatives into that House, and of a broader suffrage. It was the misfortune of that House that it was made up of a few interests—that it was not made up of the full and free representation of the nation; but was crowded by the Representatives of the prejudices of a small and special class. He anticipated a near future when questions of this character would not be considered in accordance with the miserable opinions of men who only looked at these questions from the point of a narrow prejudice. Therefore, he rose at this stage to support the second reading of the Bill. He could not concur in the course that had been taken on this measure by the President of the Board of Trade; but he rejoiced to see that there were so many young Members of the Government upon the Treasury Bench; and he thought he might congratulate them on the fact that they would probably not reach the period of middle life before they found themselves enabled to give their support to this project.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, his name was on the back of this Bill, and as he was the only other Member who was associated with the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe in bringing it forward, he hoped he might be allowed to say a few words in support of the vote he was about to give. He desired to say at once that he should not be tempted into any discussion upon the observations of the last speaker, except to say that he disagreed with what the hon. Gentleman had just said. The hon. Member seemed to contemplate this question as if the views of the whole House ought to be expressed by one class. But, passing from that, he desired to say that he could not agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Hythe, as to the great results that would follow from the passing of this Bill, in the direction of establishing an amicable understanding between ourselves and France. He did not anticipate any such consequences in that direction; because he believed there always had been great jealousy of this country on the part of those who lived on the other side of the Channel. They were jealous of us in all matters, and always had been so for generations, and probably would continue to be so in the future. He did not consider that any such undertaking as the construction of a Tunnel between the two countries would make any great alteration in the feelings of the French people in this respect. But while he did not agree with his hon. Friend in the views he had expressed on this point, he could not concur in the views that had been expressed by hon. Members on that—the Opposition—side of the House. There was, no doubt, a strong opinion entertained by military and naval authorities that certain consequences inimical to the safety of this country would follow the construction of the proposed Tunnel. But, in the same way, it was said, a great many years ago, that when steam came into general use the effect of its introduction would be to do away with the protection hitherto afforded by the "wooden walls" of old England, and to render it an easy matter for foreign nations, by means of steam vessels, to land troops at the most vulnerable points on our coasts. These results, however, had not happened; and he believed that the construction of a Channel Tunnel would not endanger our national safety any more than it had been jeopardized by the introduction of steam vessels. It was not, however, on this point that he desired to address the House; but rather on the question whether this Bill ought to be read a second time, in order that the House might have the advantage of sending it for the consideration of a Committee upstairs. He regretted to see the condition of the Treasury Bench at that moment. There was no responsible Minister upon it who would be likely to take into consideration what he was about to say; because at the time he was speaking Her Majesty's Government were represented by one unpaid Lord of the Treasury. He must, therefore, content himself with addressing the Treasury Bench through the Speaker. He wished to say that ever since he had been a Member of that House he had always understood that they could only refuse the consideration of a Bill by a Committee upstairs on one of three grounds—either that the matter had been considered before by a Committee, or that it involved a proposal which was entirely contrary to public policy, or that it was a subject on which the House had already pronounced a decided opinion. He maintained that all those three elements were wanting on this occasion. It was clear that the Bill was not against public policy, because the proposal to connect France and England by a Channel Tunnel had already been virtually approved by Her Majesty's Government in the year 1872, and again in the year 1874; therefore, it could not be said that any previous Government had considered the scheme as being against public policy. Again, there was not the objection that there had been any Resolution of that House against the project, so that that ground for refusal was wanting in regard to this Bill. When they came to the question as to whether or no the question had been already adequately considered and disposed of by a Committee upstairs, he would point not only to the Report of the Committee of investigation, in which a great divergence of opinion was manifested, but also to the speech made by the right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter)—and a very able speech it was—in support of the Bill, as well as to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for South Devonshire (Sir Massey Lopes), who sat on that Committee, and who had spoken in that debate against the Bill. When they looked at the military opinions which had been expressed on the matter, he put it to the House whether it would be possible to find a greater divergence than in the views pronounced for and against the scheme? On these grounds he asserted that the Bill ought to have a fair and impartial consideration before a Select Committee of that House, in pursuance of the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Hythe that the Bill be read a second time. He had altogether failed to gather from the speeches made by hon. Members who had opposed the Bill any valid reason why the House should not agree to this proposal; and, therefore, he should confidently give his vote in favour of the second reading of the Bill. If it had not been for the objections urged by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who, he regretted to find, was so neglectful of his duty as not to be in his place at that moment, he should not trouble the House with any further remarks. The House would be aware that when the right hon. Gentleman answered the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, and moved the rejection of the Bill, he did nothing more nor less than make a series of imputations against the Directors of the Company who were the promoters of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had in his hand a manuscript, and he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) was not surprised that he should have quoted from that manuscript. He had risen to ask, as a point of Order, whether the paper from which the right hon. Gentleman was reading had been laid on the Table of the House, and the right hon. Gentleman had referred him to the Blue Book—or rather what had been a Blue Book—which he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) then held in his hand. He was in the recollection of those who had heard the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman when he said the President of the Board of Trade had spoken of the time an arrangement was being made for his paying a visit to the works then in progress for the construction of the Channel Tunnel, and that the tone in which he had spoken could only be construed in the way he had mentioned. Being acquainted with the circumstances referred to, he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) desired to give to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the strongest contradiction one Member of Parliament could give to another; and in support of this Contradiction he would refer to the Correspondence to be found in the Blue Book. That Correspondence was too voluminous to be read at length at the present moment; but he was prepared to say, without the least hesitation, that it fully bore out the contradiction he had given to the right hon. Gentleman. There was, however, one point which he hoped the House would allow him to refer to—one of the documents contained in the Correspondence. One of the letters had this passage—

> "I say, on the part of the Channel Tunnel Direction, that these postponements had nothing whatever to do with any intention to deprive him (the President of the Board of Trade) of the opportunity of seeing the Tunnel."

But what, to his mind, was more remarkable was what was stated in a letter dated the 29th of June, 1882, and addressed by the Secretary of the Channel Tunnel Company to the Board of Trade—namely—

> "If the President of the Board of Trade, who several times has been invited to visit the works, and who three times agreed to do so, but in no case joined the special trains provided for him, had inspected the works personally, as the Prime Minister and the Minister of War did, it is believed that no difficulty of any kind would have arisen, always assuming that the President is in favour of the construction of the Tunnel and not opposed to it."

He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) remembered that once, when the right hon. Gentleman was expected to join the special train, an excuse was sent down at the last moment to the manager's office to the effect that he had been kept up all night in the House of Commons by the Irish Members, and consequently could not get down to the train. Without going further into the Correspondence he might say that it was impossible on a perusal of it to arrive at any other conclusion than that the charge which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was absolutely unfounded. The right hon. Gentleman had held in his hand a manuscript, the effect of his reference to which was to make the House suppose that the Channel Tunnel Company had been guilty of some *mala fides.* As to Colonel Yolland, it was clear that he had made a great mistake in his affidavit, as was acknowledged in one of his own letters; for in that affidavit he had stated that the Tunnel had been lengthened by about 70 yards beyond the distance agreed upon; but he was afterwards obliged to write a letter in which he said that he was entirely mistaken when he made that statement. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade why it was that when he referred to this matter and to the affidavit of Colonel Yolland, he did not tell the House at the same time that there was that letter in which Colonel Yolland contradicted that which he had previously sworn?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has misunderstood the charge which I make against the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe. That charge is, that in the beginning of April he gave me a personal pledge that the work should not be continued further than was absolutely necessary for the safety of the men engaged upon them; and on July 8 and 15, when the first inspection was made, I found that in spite of that pledge the works had been carried not 70 but 600 yards further than they were at the time the pledge was given. Then I stated that subsequently to the order of the Court, which required the further prosecution of the works to be restrained, there was a further progress made to the extent of 70 yards. I did forget to mention that there was some trifling error in the second survey taken by Colonel Yolland which he afterwards endeavoured to correct; it was a matter of some 30 yards; but that in no way affected the accuracy of the statement or the force of the charge that I have brought that the works were carried very much further than they ought to have been.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK remarked, that this was the point on which he and the right hon. Gentleman were at issue; and if the matter were gone into it would be found that the facts did not justify the statement which the right hon. Gentleman had made. That was one reason why the Bill should be sent before a Select Committee, and that was a tribunal which could fairly decide the question. Colonel Yolland swore that the Channel Tunnel had been carried 70 yards further than the limit agreed to, and yet afterwards he wrote contradicting that—it was in the Blue Book—and admitting that he was mistaken as to half the distance. The only difference which had been made in carrying on the works was exactly the difference which was required to be made for the safety of the people who were engaged in the construction of the Tunnel. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) made this statement in the presence of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, believing it to be an altogether accurate statement, and one which would meet with the hon. Baronet's approbation. He merely referred to this matter to show how very undesirable it was that there should be a contest and controversy over the question. It would be far better that the whole subject should be examined by a competent tribunal. He thought that as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had made these imputations against the promoters of the Tunnel, that formed a very strong reason why the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, by whom it could be properly investigated. As he had already said, all the conditions which would justify the rejection of the Bill were wanting in this case. The measure was not against the public policy, nor was it against any Resolution of the House; and for these reasons he supported the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, and asked the House to reject the Amendment which had been proposed to destroy it.

Mr. GREGORY apprehended that the question now under consideration was not the conduct of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, or the dispute between him and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. The real question was a very much larger and more important one, and one which concerned the serious interests of the country. That question was, in his opinion, whether, for purposes of trade or commerce, they were to abandon the natural frontier of the country. They could not conceal from themselves that many of the arguments, both for and against the Bill, partook to a certain extent of a conjectural and inferential character; and it might be desirable to separate the elements of certainty in the case from those which were purely conjectural. On the one hand, it was stated that there would be a material increase in their trade with France and other countries in consequence of this improvement in their communications. But that was an argument which was of a conjectural character. They possessed, at the present moment, great facilities for carrying on a very considerable trade. Folkestone was not the only port from which they traded with France and the Continent; but there were Southampton, Newhaven, the mouth of the Thames, and London itself. All these were ports of the country through which a great trade was carried on with the Continent; and it did not follow that if the Tunnel were made, all the trade would be concentrated in it, or that it would always flow in that direction. So, again, the various military considerations were matters of opinion among military men, who differed materially upon them; but there was a consensus of opinion to this extent—that if the Tunnel were made it would be absolutely necessary to increase their military defences in respect of the Tunnel; and, of course, that would involve additional armaments and an increase in their military expenditure. These were, more or less, the conjectural elements. The increase of trade was altogether inferential, and was not directly ascertained; and the military arguments also possessed some elements of uncertainty. But, on the other hand, it was a fact that they had a natural frontier provided for them on which they could rely with great success and security. In times past that frontier had placed them in a safe and independent position in respect to their intercourse with the Continent; and they had been able to hold a high position in Europe in consequence of that fact. They had perfect security so long as that frontier remained, and our maritime supremacy was maintained. Again, they had this fact pretty well ascertained—that the intercourse between this country and France would be materially facilitated even under present conditions. There were harbours on both sides of the water which would, with certain improvements which were being carried out, accommodate much larger vessels, and by those larger vessels much of the discomfort of the present passage would be obviated. He would ask anyone who went from Holyhead to Dublin in one of those splendid steamers which now run between those ports, whether they would suffer much inconvenience if steamers of the same class and kind were run across the English Channel? Where would be the elements of inconvenience or discomfort in a passage on board such vessels? The harbours on both sides were being improved, and larger vessels were being made, and before long they would have between England and France a satisfactory service, like that which they had between England and Ireland. Under these circumstances, he thought that the case for the Bill was to a great degree disposed of, and such an amount of convenience and comfort would be secured by the present service, when improved in the way he had mentioned, as would render such an increased national expenditure as the Bill would entail altogether unnecessary. He did not think the Suez Canal had been an unmitigated boon to this country. He had an opportunity recently of having some communications on this subject with some of the leading merchants and manufacturers in the City of London, and they told him that the effect of the Suez Canal had been to divert a considerable amount of trade from this Metropolis, and to carry it directly to Genoa and the Mediterranean ports, instead of letting it go through London and the other ports of this country as it used formerly to do, so that they had, been to a great extent, losers by the opening of the Canal. He did not refer to the political arguments on the subject—they opened a much wider field—but he could not help thinking that, having regard to the communications which existed at present, to the prospect of their improvement, and to the serious expense, not to say danger, which the completion of the Tunnel would involve, and having regard also to the inferential and conjectural nature of the advantages which the Tunnel would create, the Bill before the House was not one which ought to receive the sanction of Parliament.

Mr. WIGGIN said, that, like many of his fellow-countrymen and countrywomen, he had very painful recollections of the horrors of the Channel passage; and when this scheme was first proposed he certainly looked upon it with very great pleasure, and it had his warm and most hearty approval. Up to the time that the naval and military authorities published their opinions he was strongly in favour of the scheme promoted by the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe; because he looked forward to, and would have supported with pleasure, any scheme which would increase the facilities for bringing together the people of Great Britain and the Continent; but after the express opinions given by the naval and military authorities, who declared that the making of this Tunnel would increase the facilities for the invasion of this country, and would impose on us an enormous outlay in the erection of fortifications and increasing our military power, he felt that such a scheme would necessarily tend to increase the taxation of this country, and, therefore, he should certainly oppose it. On that ground, and notwithstanding the fact that he had hitherto supported the Bill, he should vote against it now.

MR. MONK said, he had seen with regret that a great deal of personal matter had been introduced into this discussion. He had heard, and he might say with pain, the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel), who had stated that this was a personal matter between the House and the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe. In reality, it was nothing of the sort—it was a great national question, which ought to be approached from a national point of view. His hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) had stated that the Chambers of Commerce were invited to attend before the Joint Committee last year, and give evidence upon this subject. The hon. Gentleman certainly spoke to him (Mr. Monk) personally, and asked him whether he would, as the President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, give evidence, and express the views of the Chambers. But his reply naturally was, that as this matter had not been specifically considered by the Associated Chambers, he did not feel that he was in a position to state their views. He (Mr. Monk) did, however, request his hon. Friend to invite the separate Chambers to send witnesses before the Committee, and he believed that in several instances that was done. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had said if hon. Members were satisfied that the formation of a Channel Tunnel would be adverse to the security of this country, they must be mad or wicked to support the Bill of the hon. Member for Hythe; but it was because they were satisfied that this scheme for a Channel Tunnel did not militate against the safety of this country that they were prepared to support the Bill. Speaking personally, he believed, from a commercial point of view, that the creation of a Channel Tunnel would be a vast advantage to the commerce of this country, and it would tend to promote goodwill between ourselves and Continental countries. There had been an immense amount of prejudice introduced into this question; and that prejudice, no doubt, was mainly created by the opinions of a certain number of military gentlemen who gave evidence before the Committee last year. But the House had before it a most able Report by the present Governor General of Canada—a Report warmly acquiesced in by four Members of that Committee—and that Report he commended most heartily to the perusal of all hon. Members who had not read it. Of the majority of that Committee who opposed Lord Lansdowne's Report no two Members could agree to any other Report; and that fact was, *primâ facie*, condemnatory of their own opinions. They did not seem to know their own minds; all that they were agreed upon was to reject that Report of Lord Lansdowne. It was because he believed in that Report, and in the conclusions which were arrived by the minority, of whom the right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) was one, that he should now give his hearty support to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was somewhat surprised at the statement of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), that those who adopted the views expressed by military authorities were actuated by feelings of panic. To his mind, anything less like panic in the matter could hardly be imagined. The majority of Englishmen entertained a strong opinion that the defences of their country must not be weakened, and on such a matter were willing to be guided by the experience of military officers. On that understanding, and with that view, they cheerfully acquiesced in the appointment of that carefully selected Committee which sat on the Bill last year. That Committee obtained the best possible evidence that could be obtained, and the opinion of the highest military and naval authorities; but that military opinion did not rest quite alone, for it was perfectly well known that not only the military authorities here, but those in other countries, supported the opinion that the defences of the country would be seriously weakened by the construction of the Tunnel. Now, they were told that the Members of last year's Committee could not agree to an unanimous expression of opinion. That was quite true; but, at all events, the majority of the Committee considered that the military question was the paramount one to guide their conclusions; and he thought that the fact of the Committee not being able to agree on the question left it more incumbent upon Members of Parliament, whose paramount duty it was to take into consideration all matters connected with the defence of the Empire, to consider for themselves the weight of the evidence given before the Committee. They could not doubt in the slightest degree that the weight of military evidence was against the proposal for a Tunnel; and, that being the case, he thought the course taken by the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), and those who supported him, was a very extraordinary one. The least that any military authority suggested was that if the Channel Tunnel was constructed some kind of military defences of an important character should be carried out. It might be supposed that persons in the position of the hon. Member and his friends, coming forward with a scheme of this kind in another year, would have put before Parliament some method of meeting this strong opinion; but here was found the same Channel Tunnel scheme projected, and no provision made to meet the strong expression of opinion by military authorities. He thought it was incumbent on the House to ask, after the careful consideration given to the subject last year, on a Bill which was thought so important that it was sent to a special Committee, why the Bill should now be referred to a Committee appointed in the usual way for ordinary Bills? He really thought the House would not be doing justice to the subject if it now committed itself to the second reading. He would not sit down without a remark upon the sort of notion people had of the condition of the defences of the country. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) spoke of the "virility of the men of England" not being "emasculated." Surely they had not, most of them, been left in entire ignorance of what was passing around them, and that a nation which was not prepared to meet with disciplined force, the force another nation brought against it would not be protected by the "virility" of a mere mob. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood) spoke about Switzerland. Had he ever been in a Swiss town and observed the Swiss children as they left school? Had he seen boys from the earliest years put into training, that they might be prepared to take their share in the defence of their country, taught to carry knapsacks, and the semblance of those arms they would afterwards have to bear? His hon. and learned Friend, if he reflected upon the past history of Switzerland, and went back less than a century, would find a time when that country was the theatre of a portion of the bloody and devastating wars that then desolated Europe. And he must also know that if Switzerland was now an independent Power it was more from the fact that it was not the interest of other Powers to disturb her, than from the power of Switzerland to resist invasion. He felt no doubt that, under all the circumstances, the House would refuse to read the Bill a second time; and he hoped that would be the last they would hear of the project during the present Parliament.

Mr. CARBUTT said, there had been much personality introduced into the discussion; but he would not on that occasion give a silent vote. He intended to vote in favour of the Bill, and in doing so was sorry to find himself in opposition to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He was sorry to hear the latter refer to the question which had arisen between himself and the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), for it seemed a very small matter whether the cutting had been made a few yards more or less under the bed of the sea; there would be no harm if it were made for two miles under the sea. It became not a national question whether the Chairman of the Railway Company stopped the operations a day earlier or later. What the House had to consider was whether England should have this Channel Tunnel to connect them with France. His own feeling was that the more they could get people to communicate, the more intimately they became known to each other, the more likely they were to be friends; and he believed that if this Channel Tunnel were made it would add materially to friendly intercourse, and to the keeping of peace in future generations. Before the age of railways there was that feeling among the ignorant inhabitants of a place to "fling half-a-brick" at the head of a stranger. Railways opening the means of constant intercourse did away with that feeling; and with a railway by which they could visit France, and Frenchmen could visit England, they would entirely get rid of that antagonistic feeling which the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) spoke of as always existing between the two countries. He was sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman made a sort of attack upon the junior Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), as an unpaid Member of the Government and sole occupant of the Treasury Bench. Of course, everyone knew that Members of the Government had other work to do, and could not be present the whole day. His main reason for supporting the Bill was not entirely from considerations of trade, though he believed it would work wonders in that direction. Military men, if called upon, could find means to properly protect the Tunnel entrance. As the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz) said, they must be a nation of idiots if they could not protect a rabbit hole like this Tunnel. If they trusted entirely to military theories they would be often led astray. If they had listened to military opinion they would have continued the construction of all those circular forts around the coast which they now knew would be of no avail. He hoped the Bill would be read a second time and sent to a Committee; and he felt that the more the subject was ventilated the more the feeling of the country would support it, and in a few years this Channel Tunnel would be an accomplished fact.

MR. NEWDEGATE rejoiced that the President of the Board of Trade opposed the Bill. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was conscious that the interests of commerce had been promoted greatly at the expense of the National Exchequer, and greatly to the detriment of many other interests of the country, and, to the detriment of agriculture; and that it involved in its vicissitudes quite large enough a proportion of the population of this country, so far as related to their employment and maintenance. Now, what were they doing? They were providing great defences, not before great defences were eminently needed, for the safety of the country. And what was the House now asked to do? To sanction this project for a Tunnel under the Channel, which must involve a great increase of their great defences, for not a military or naval man had given evidence or spoken, who had not said that the mouth of this Tunnel where it debouched on this country must be surrounded by large works. If they had large works they must have large augmentation of expenditure; and though he would not go the length of saying that the accomplishment of this project would entail the necessity of conscription, he would say this—that the House could not pass the Bill without being prepared to provide for a large addition to their military defences. A right hon. and gallant Admiral, who spoke recently (Sir John Hay), said it would involve a large increase in naval expenditure, and this question of expense was subsidiary to the question of national safety. They had the highest authorities, military and naval, warning them that, take what precautions they might, the making of this Tunnel would be in itself a danger; and, if that was so, one circumstance which ought to be considered, not only from the the grandmotherly feeling, as it had been called, of national safety, for he would not believe that Englishmen could not make their hands keep their heads; still, they were bound to consider the effect of this project, if carried out on their national finances and on the national credit. Every circumstance that endangered this country damaged its credit; and he believed that the credit of the country had risen to the point at which it stood at present, and at which it had stood for years, mainly on account of the safety which she had enjoyed from her insular position. He believed that that circumstance had added to their credit; because it gave them an assurance of safety which the centre of such an empire as the British Empire ought to possess, looking at the variety of races over which Her Majesty had to rule.

MR. MAC IVER said, his hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt), who had likened the proposed

Channel Tunnel to a rabbit-warren, quoting the words of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), had forgotten how dangerous such a rabbit-warren might be if both ends of it should ever come into the possession of a Power hostile to this country. It seemed to him (Mr. Mac Iver) that this was a question for the common sense of all Her Majesty's subjects rather than for military opinion. What did it mean? If the Tunnel were carried into effect they would have a means of communication then laid open which those who had been their antagonists in days of yore might make use of—a means of communication which they did not at present possess. Therefore, clearly he was not one of those who, as at present advised, were in favour of the construction of the proposed Tunnel. Still, he hoped he might be able to vote with the Ayes on the proposition to refer the measure to a Select Committee. He did not think that on the present occasion the House of Commons should decide this question; and he was influenced in voting for the second reading to let the Bill be committed to a Select Committee by the speech that the President of the Board of Trade had delivered against it; because he could not help feeling, from past experience, that however able and plausible the right hon. Gentleman might be when he was making his personal attack upon the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), that the time would come when that hon. Baronet would have the right of reply, and would be able to answer the personalities made use of towards him better than anyone else. His (Mr. Mac Iver's) sympathies had been rather with the hon. Baronet than against him. He knew something of the Board of Trade; and he must say that it seemed to him monstrous that a great Department of the State like that should be concentrated into one individual like the right hon. Member for Birmingham, for he, undoubtedly, was the Board of Trade at that moment. There was much in that question that he might, if he desired, dilate upon; but he would not delay the House by going into it. He hoped to be able to go into it further on some future occasion. The scheme before the House had been compared with the question of the Suez Canal; and it had been pointed out how great English statesmen, when that project was advanced, had opposed it. For his own part, he could not help thinking that Lord Palmerston had been right in the discussion to which he referred; and that if he had been here to-day he would have opposed the proposition for the construction of a Tunnel under the Channel. He (Mr. Mac Iver) maintained that the construction of such a subway would be a misfortune to this country, as undoubtedly it had been a misfortune to them that the Suez Canal had been made. The question was, what would be the benefit or otherwise to this country of the construction of a Tunnel to France? Let hon. Members turn to their commercial relations with France—what were they worth? Their commercial relations with France were mainly relations of enjoyment—they were mostly relations affecting the rich. As to the working populations of this country, he did not believe that they were in the slightest degree improved by our trade with France. Supposing our commerce with our neighbour across the Channel were stopped to-morrow—what would it mean? It would mean that we should no longer import silk dresses, claret and other wines, and that we should no longer be able to bring into this country French sugar, which was at present introduced to the detriment of our manufacturers at home. The stopping of trade between this country and France would mean that we should no longer go to France for the purpose of breaking our own heads in regard to many of our industries. No doubt, if the Tunnel were made, we should trade with France as we had done in the past, and that the trade would increase; but what he wished to point out was, that at the present moment, and for years past, France had sent to this country, in the form of luxuries, a produce much greater in value than anything we had sent to France of any sort or description; and yet the advantages put forward in favour of this Tunnel by the promoters of the Bill were all for us and nothing for France. Whilst wishing to support the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin), who, to his mind, had been unjustly attacked, and wishing to have the matter further considered, he should vote for the second reading; but if he were called upon to decide finally that day whether there should or should not be a Channel Tunnel, he should emphatically give his vote in opposition to the scheme.

MR. PULESTON said, he did not wish to occupy the time of the House for more than one moment; but he wished to point out that the observations of the hon. Member who had just sat down went in the direction of reversing all their preconceived ideas of trade. In this country they had become great, commercially and otherwise, because of increased railway facilities, because of their constant endeavours to increase and promote those facilities; and, at the present moment, there was a Committee of the House sitting upstairs to consider the question of the further development of railway communication in India. They knew that people could now go all the way from the North of France to Constantinople by railway without breaking the journey; but in this country anyone who wanted to go to the South of Europe had to suffer the horrors of a Channel passage. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken depreciated their trade with France, and asked what loss it would be to us supposing that trade were put a stop to? In reply, he (Mr. Puleston) would ask the hon. Member, would it not be a gain if they very largely increased their trade with France? He did not, for his own part, believe that any hon. Member sitting on either side of the House would venture to say that the opening-up of a communication by means of a Tunnel with France would have any other effect commercially than of largely increasing their relations with France. It would, he believed, largely increase their national as well as their commercial relations with that country, and, he (Mr. Puleston) might add, their friendly relations; and not only with that country, but with other countries of Europe. The Tunnel would have the effect of opening a through line to countries far beyond France, and not oblige us, as now, to be handicapped by having first to go over to France before we could start anywhere. He was surprised to hear the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) dilate on the question of improved cross-Channel accommodation, and say that all they needed was increased boat accommodation. He was surprised to hear him speak about the comfort of the boats between Dublin and England, and recommend the adoption of that class of vessel as a model for those which should convey passengers from England to France, and *vice versâ*. He (Mr. Puleston) must say that he should visit Ireland much oftener than he did if it were not for the sea passage and for those boats. He had only crossed on two occasions, and each time he had suffered martyrdom. In this he was not singular, for many people suffered as he did—many had never visited the Continent because they knew what to expect in crossing the Channel. He deplored the fact that this discussion had assumed such a personal shape. The technical questions which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had raised, as to whether the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) had drilled one yard more or less under the sea, were really of no consequence to the House at the present moment. It was not for them to go into the minor and personal differences between the hon. Baronet and the President of the Board of Trade when discussing a question of national importance; and he trusted the time had not come when hon. Members would sit there, when important national questions were awaiting solution, discussing such narrow issues as those which had been brought before them on the present occasion. He would venture to say that any stranger sitting under the Gallery in the House, or in one of the Galleries upstairs, would, after listening to the debate that afternoon, go away and ask himself whether it really was a fact that they were living in the 19th century, if so much time could be occupied in considering such a simple question as whether they should or should not construct a Tunnel from this country to France. He could understand this stranger asking whether they were to stand still while other countries were making rapid advancement in every direction in the development of their resources—whether they were going to stand still, or to maintain the reputation they had earned, of being the foremost commercial nation in the world, and let other nationalities go a-head of them? It seemed to him that from a Tunnel between England and France the advantages would be incalculable. The opposition to it was particularly varied, coming from so many sources, and being founded upon so many different reasons; whilst those who approved the scheme did so on the one ground of the highest interests of the country.

Mr. GILES said, the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver), who had declared his intention of voting for the second reading of the Bill, had spoken in the strongest possible way against it, and had used all the arguments he could to induce other hon. Members to offer opposition. He should have thought the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), in advocating the second reading, would have given them some evidence of the necessity for the Bill, and would also have said something in its favour. Nothing, however, of the sort. It had been left to the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) to say all that he could say in favour of it—namely, that it would improve the goodwill existing between this country and France. But what did that amount to? Why, it amounted to this—that France would flood this country with goods, and would send to them more loaf sugar, upon which she got a kind of bounty, than she was sending at the present time, to the detriment of our own refineries. France got a great deal more advantage from Free Trade with this country than we got from France; and if this Tunnel were made, and these commercial advantages were increased, it would still further enrich France, and still further impoverish us. A great deal had been said as to the military part of the question; and though he was not one of those who feared the construction of the Tunnel, or believed that it would endanger the security of this country, he was led to think that it would be much better for them to keep as they were, than to admit the element of danger which other people feared, however small it might be. If they were to be guided at all by men competent to guide them, who were there who would be more likely to give them sound advice in regard to this Tunnel than men who had made military tactics and the defence of their country their special study? He had heard exceptions taken to the engineering qualities of this scheme, of the engineering difficulties of it; and, on the other hand, he had heard gentlemen in favour of the project treating these suggestions quite lightly, and looking upon the practicability of constructing a Tunnel as a matter of course. Well, as an engineer, he was not one who wished to talk of impossibilities so long as they had unlimited means at their disposal to carry out their objects. But when they talked about a Tunnel nearly 30 miles long, under the sea, and through strata which could not be very well defined, they were subject to risks of such an enormous extent that they could hardly be calculated. They must bear in mind the tunnels that were already in construction. Let them look, for instance, at the Severn Tunnel, and the number of years that it had been in progress, and the unexpected difficulties that the projectors had had to encounter. Then, look at the Tunnel under the Mersey. These Tunnels were mere child's play compared with the proposed long Tunnel under the Channel. The material taken out of the Tunnel as the work progressed would have to be brought, as they approached the centre, 10 or 15 miles to either end. When they talked of these vast undertakings, he confessed he did not think any engineer could calculate the cost of such a work, or the time that it would occupy in completion. He was perfectly convinced that many hon. Members who advocated this work could never live to see it carried out, even under the most favourable circumstances. As to the cost, he believed the estimates ranged from something between £5,000,000 and £20,000,000. And there was another difficulty which had not been mentioned in the House, but which, to his mind, was a very serious one. How were they going to ventilate a Tunnel 30 miles long, rising towards the ends and dipping towards the centre. It could only be done by the use of very expensive mechanical appliances. They could not have blowholes in the Tunnel, as they had in the District Railway on the Thames Embankment. If they could have this means of admitting fresh air the ventilation would be easy enough; but the adoption of such means as these was impossible. As to the "horrors" of the passage from Dover to Calais which the hon. Member who had last spoken had referred to, he (Mr. Giles), for one, did not suffer at sea as some people did; but he would undertake to say that nine-tenths of the passengers who go between England and France would prefer, even on the roughest day, a Channel passage by steamer, to an underground railway journey of 30 miles in a stifling atmosphere. If there had been any commercial necessity shown for this great and difficult work, what was the next best thing to do? He would say, improve the harbours on this side, either at Dover or Folkestone, and improve the harbours on the other side, either at Calais, Boulogne, or some other convenient port. Make these harbours deep enough to admit such vessels as now ply between Kingstown and Holyhead. If they encouraged traffic by some such means as that, they would do away with the necessity for this Tunnel, and would, at the same time, increase the shipping industry of the country; for it must be borne in mind that if the Tunnel was to be of any substantial benefit to certain trades in the way of carrying articles of commerce, it would, in the same ratio, or nearly in the same ratio, destroy their shipping interest. Altogether, he ventured to hope that the House would not assent to the second reading of this Bill.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN said, he he had no doubt that the House would like to go to a vote; but previous to its doing so he desired to be permitted to say a word or two with regard to the course of the debate. The hon. Member who had just sat down evidently had not studied the question very deeply when he spoke of the Tunnel being 30 miles long, because, as a matter of fact, it was not proposed to cut a Channel passage of more than 22 miles in length. He would not go into the engineering question at all; but would merely point out that the greatest strategist in the world—namely, Count Von Moltke, had declared that the idea of invading England through a Tunnel was ridiculous, and was almost like suggesting the invasion of Germany through his library door. All he (Sir Edward Watkin) asked, on behalf of the 600 subscribers to the cost of the experiments, was that there should be inquiry and further experiment. To his mind, there was no reason whatever why the question should not be inquired into; and the very differences of opinion which existed on the snbject were the very best arguments for searching inquiry, in which counsel would be engaged, and witnesses would be cross-examined. It might be said—"You have had two or three Committees or Royal Commissions already to inquire into the matter; and you, therefore, can gain nothing in the way of information by further investigation." But it must be borne in mind that they had never hitherto had an inquiry when counsel could appear to advocate the scheme, and when it was possible to cross-examine persons who gave evidence against it. The President of the Board of Trade ought especially to assent to this form of inquiry; and if he did, he (Sir Edward Watkin) would take care that the right hon. Gentleman should be personally called as a witness on oath, and out of his own mouth he would make him retract every one of the charges he had made against him. It was not very usual for a Cabinet Minister, in objecting to a measure, to make a gross personal attack on an individual; but the right hon. Gentleman had done this. Knowing the facts as he did, the right hon. Gentleman must have been aware that he was acting towards him with the greatest injustice. The right hon. Gentleman, in answer to the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), said that Colonel Yolland was merely in error in regard to levels, or something of that kind; but the right hon. Gentleman knew better, for he must be aware that Colonel Yolland, although he had sworn twice over that the experimental Tunnel had been extended 70 yards, and that the engineer of the Tunnel had sworn erroneously; had himself to admit, under pressure, to the Board of Trade, that he had made a mistake of one-half the distance — that the distance was only 35 or 36 yards. It had been admitted, in a letter written by this official, that he had made not a trifling mistake—a mistake of half the distance. The right hon. Gentleman did not deal fairly with that House in this as in other matters. As to the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman concerning himself (Sir Edward Watkin), he repudiated them; and the right hon. Gentleman would not dare to allow them to take the Bill before a Select Committee, because he knew perfectly well that if he did all these matters would be cleared up. They could be cleared up now; but to do so would take up too much of the time of the House. He did not wish to weary hon. Members, who had other things to consider that day. It was a matter of entire indifference to him what attack the right hon. Gentleman made upon him, for he could point to a record of a long life of hard work; and it could not be charged against him that he had risen to fortune by the grossest of monopolies, or that he had been blown into Office by the bad breath of the Caucus. He believed that if they had an inquiry, the House would be convinced that no possible harm would result from the construction of this Tunnel. It was supported by very eminent personages, including, he might mention, the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), who, if he had been here that day, no doubt would have entirely answered the arguments of his two Colleagues. Considering the number of wise men and great men who had advocated the idea of the construction of this Tunnel, he hoped the House, at all events, would not refuse inquiry; but that they would do that small amount of justice to individuals who had subscribed largely for the purpose of conducting these experiments—not for the gain of money, but for the good of mankind. He intended to divide the House.

Mr. WARTON protested against the present attempt, which was only a repetition of that which had taken place on previous occasions, to force a Division by jumping up to make a reply on the debate and to an Amendment, before those who wished to speak, and who had risen many times for the purpose of doing so, had had an opportunity of saying what their duty to their country required that they should say. He (Mr. Warton) had three times before this protested against the practice. This was now the fourth time; and he ventured to say that it would be his duty, whenever such an attempt was made, to condemn it. He should do it even though he had to repeat his observations again and again. No doubt, it was perfectly right and fair that the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) should have an opportunity of replying, especially after the manner in which he had been attacked; but it was also fair that Members of the House should, in the undoubted exercise of their right and duty, be heard, if they wished to speak, before the reply was made. It would be better, also, that this should be done in the interests of the promoters of the Bill, because it might be that some arguments might be used, even by the humblest Member of the House, to which an answer ought to be given, but to which it would be impossible for an answer to be given after the reply had been made. The consequence of the course which the hon. Baronet had adopted might be that, a little later on, he might desire the opportunity of making a reply which he had been in too great a hurry to offer at an earlier period. He could not claim to have been a Member of the Committee, because, as a matter of fact, he had not been put upon it; but he could claim something which, perhaps, the majority of Members who had taken part in this debate could not claim—namely, that he had, as an Englishman, read the whole of the evidence taken by the Committee. How many could say they had discharged their duty so laboriously and carefully in the interests of their country as he had done? He had on many occasions read through Blue Books, in order to inform himself upon important questions under discussion before the House; and what he deprecated most was that, although such an amount of trouble was taken to inform one's self upon a subject like this, the President of the Board of Trade should, after opposing the measure, intimate his wish that a *coup de grace* should be given to the proposal at once, and that no further discussion should be had. Whether he was friendly to the Bill or not, he was, at any rate, in favour of free, fair, and full discussion; and he deprecated the idea that because the right hon. Gentleman had spoken there was an end of the question. It was like the old declaration—"Rome has spoken, and the cause is finished." He had not the same respect for the right hon. Gentleman that he had for the "grand old Church;" he would not compare the right hon. Gentleman with Rome; but he certainly did think it presumptuous in him to say that because he had spoken the matter was ended. Let the right hon. Gentleman remember what a *coup de grace* really was. It was a blow given to a craven knight—given to the vanquished—as an act of mercy——

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. and learned Member to confine himself to the Question. I may have to call the attention of the House to the irrelevancy of the hon. and learned Member's remarks if he does not confine himself more closely to the Question.

MR. WARTON said, he was trying to do so. A Paper had been put into hon. Members' hands containing certain arguments in favour of this Bill; and he thought he was entitled to refer to the reasons upon which the House was asked to support the Bill. On analyzing the Paper, he found that it contained two declarations—one by Lord Granville and one by Lord Derby; one made in 1873, and the other in 1874. He thought the very dates of these declarations—which he admitted were favourable to the scheme of 1873-4—showed the importance of a full discussion of this question. The very fact that great statesmen on both sides had, to a considerable extent, changed their views showed how important it was to fully and fairly discuss the question. It was hardly right, on the present occasion, to bring forward the opinions even of such eminent statesmen as Lord Granville and Lord Derby, when those opinions were dated so far back as 1873-4. But there was a matter nearer than those in point of time. There was a Report of the minority of the Committee; and, with all respect to the minority, their Report seemed to him an eminently weak production, because, after all, it simply came to this—they expressed confidence that there would be an immense development of passenger traffic; that the goods traffic already existing would be expanded; and that, owing to its peculiar position, this country would gain more than other countries. All these grand phrases simply meant that there would be an expansion of traffic. Very likely there would be if the Tunnel was made; but when the minority spoke of the peculiar position of this country they should remember what that peculiar position was. It was the proud distinction of this country that it had that peculiar position. Its peculiarity consisted in its being surrounded by the sea. The sea was their great defence, and they might be proud of their insular position, cut off, as they were, from the intrigues and entanglements of the Continent. It was because this measure was an attempt to sacrifice that proud insular position that he was bitterly hostile to it. How did that scheme originate? In Mr. Cobden being subject to sea-sickness. The hon. Baronet had mentioned a name which everyone respected—namely, the name of the late Prince Consort. With every wish to speak with respect of the late Prince Consort, he thought he might say that, like Mr. Cobden, the late Prince Consort had an idea in connection with the Exhibition of 1851, and many other movements of that sort, that they were to live under a different state of things, in which all the world would be at peace, and there would be no more wars. That was his impression; but his anticipations had not been realized. Human nature remained the same, and they were all likely to go to war. Going back to the paper he had mentioned, he found that 16 military and naval witnesses were called; but the opinion of one only was given—namely, Sir John Adye. Was that a fair way of treating the country? Was it fair to give the opinion of one, and not of all the rest? He sympathized with the hon. Baronet to some extent when he complained of the President of the Board of Trade for not stating the whole case; and he now sympathized with the House in being unfairly treated by having the opinion of only one witness put forward. The paper concluded with the opinion of five Frenchmen—four French statesmen, and M. de Lesseps. He did not wish to say anything harsh about France; but he must say deliberately that he had no confidence in the peace of 70 years with France. He believed their interests clashed with ours all over the world, and they were trying to extend their power in every way they could. He did not believe in an alliance with France; our position and interests forbade that; and we must not live in a Fool's Paradise, or cry "Peace, Peace!" where there was no peace. It was because we must resolutely maintain our insular superiority, and believe in ourselves and not in the smooth promises of French statesmen, that he should oppose this measure.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 84; Noes 222: Majority 138.—(Div. List, No. 93.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

(*Mr. Arthur Vivian, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Acland.*)

[BILL 13.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR VIVIAN: In rising to move the second reading of this Bill I shall be briefer than I should otherwise have been, because, Private Business having taken over four hours, there remains very little of the Sitting left to discuss this Bill. It has, however, been already so fully considered by the House that I hope much it will be seen fit to give it a second reading before the Sitting concludes. In the county of Cornwall the feeling has always been very intense in favour of Sunday closing; but it was not until 1881 that it was decided to bring in a Bill of our own. The Sunday Closing Association of Cornwall was then formed. The gentlemen of position who now head it first ascertained, before joining, that the feelings of the majority—the overwhelming majority, I may say—of classes concerned in the county was in favour of Sunday closing. Well, Sir, at the head of the Association was the Lord Lieutenant —the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe—and among the Vice Presidents the Bishop of Truro, the High Sheriff, and all the Mayors of the boroughs except one. The names of the four county Members were on the back of the Bill of 1882, and are still so; and I may say, Sir, as a proof of the feeling of the county, and I think a very significant proof, 11 out of the 13 Members from Cornwall are in favour of the Bill. And there is another proof, Sir, of the feeling in Cornwall in the fact that every candidate for Parliamentary honours since the introduction of the measure has announced his intention most cordially to support the Bill in Parliament. I hope Gentlemen on the other side of the House will bear this in mind, before they talk the Bill out, that the candidates of both Parties, one and all, have expressed themselves decidedly in favour of our Sunday Closing Bill. We have clergy and ministers of all denominations in our favour. I presented in 1882, the first Session of introducing the Bill, a Petition with over 120,000 signatures in its favour. I am quite aware objection has been taken to that Petition, and it is said there were many signatures in duplicate; but after having been gone through with the utmost care, I am happy to say we still had 119,485 good signatures. Now, Sir, the population of Cornwall in 1881 was 330,685. Only those over 16 years of age signed that Petition. By the Registrar General's Returns it appears that 60 per cent may be taken as the proportion of a population which would be above the age of 16; therefore, there would only be 198,000 people above 16 in the county; and, considering that the population of Cornwall is so scattered, and that there are so many seafaring men who would be away on their duties, I think so large a proportion as 120,000 out of 198,000 possible signatures shows that the feeling in the county is very intense for this measure. It has been alleged that some of these signatures were of lunatics. That was a startling assertion, and certainly deserved the closest investigation. But when this was looked into, it was found that the signatures which came from the lunatic asylum were those of the attendants. I must say the attendants in a lunatic asylum are certainly well entitled to sign a Petition in favour of temperance, when they see around them such frightful examples of the results of intemperance. Well, Sir, our opponents endeavoured to get up some counter meetings; but, as far as I could see by the accounts in the public papers, these meetings were all very badly attended, and almost entirely by those connected with the beer interest. It is true, Sir, that a counter Petition was got up, which had nominally 22,042 signatures attached to it; but when the Petition was overhauled it was found that many of these signatures came from outside the county—from such distant parts as the Principality of Wales; not only that, but there were many signatures of persons absolutely unknown, and of persons who had been dead for years. That shows pretty well, I think, that this counter Petition of 22,000 was of very little value indeed. Very late in the Session of 1882 I was able to get the Bill before the House; and after a lengthy debate, in which endeavours were made to count the House out, we got a Division, and the second reading was secured by 41 votes to 8. That was on the 13th of August—too late to go on with the Bill that Session. Last year I endeavoured to bring the Bill before this House, and was very unfortunate in the ballot. Consequently, it was introduced into the House of Lords. It went through all its stages without opposition until the third reading, and then a sudden division was taken against it, resulting in a tie, which, under the Rules of the House of Lords, involved the rejection of the measure. Last year 181 meetings was held all over the county of Cornwall, to endeavour to gauge whether the feeling for the Bill continued, and at all these meetings Resolutions were passed in favour of the measure. In fact, at none of the meetings was there any opposition at all. This year the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, before we came to Parliament, was again very anxious to ascertain for himself the feeling of the county with regard to the Bill, and he addressed a private letter to 227 parish clergymen of the Church of England. The letter was as follows:—

> "Rev. Sir,—As the Sunday Closing (Cornwall) Bill will be re-introduced next Session in the House of Lords, it will be a great assistance to me to know how far the feeling of the county continues to be favourable to the measure. I shall, therefore, be much obliged if you will kindly tell me whether, irrespective of your own personal opinions, you have reason to believe that the feeling in your parish is in favour of it or the reverse."

Of those 227 clergymen, 188 replied, of whom 162 were in favour of the Bill, 16 were doubtful, and only 10 against. That shows pretty well the feeling in the parishes of Cornwall. But, in order to test it still further, the Association, being anxious to work only on the real feeling of the classes concerned, sent 152 letters to the Nonconformist ministers. They received 118 replies, and these replies were all in favour of the measure, pressing the Association to do their best to get passed into law this Bill, which is so earnestly prayed for by the people. I know there will be the old arguments against this. Yesterday I received a Memorandum from the Licensed Victuallers' Parliamentary Committee with eight reasons against the Bill. Their first objection was that this is piecemeal legislation. Of course, there is no denying that; but I must say this—that the county of Cornwall is singularly adapted for piecemeal legislation. It is isolated, having the sea on three sides and a great river along a great portion of the fourth side. Another point is that we have no large towns; for the largest town in Cornwall has only 13,600 inhabitants. This is a great consideration as to the working of such legislation. The second objection raised by the Licensed Victuallers is that the Lords' Committee was against Sunday closing — that is, of course, against the general Sunday Closing Bill, for the question of a local Bill did not come before the Lords. The third reason is the most extraordinary, and I cannot understand how it can be put forward. It is that Cornwall is already so sober we are not to have the benefit of this legislation. My humble opinion is that it is because the people are so law-abiding, and so peaceful, and so temperate, that they regard with more jealous eyes the existence of the temptation to drink on Sunday. We are proud of being so sober in Cornwall; but I think it is very unhandsome to urge this reason against the Bill. The fourth reason is that the Welsh Sunday Closing Act is not successful. [Mr. Warton: Hear, hear!] I have been myself, as it happens, living in Wales for a good many weeks of the past winter, and I can say from experience that the Sunday Closing Act in the rural districts is a very great success. I have several letters here which I could quote, but time will not allow of it. I may say, however, that one of the strongest proofs in favour of the Welsh Act is this—that many of the employers of labour will tell you their men come to work on a Monday morning much more regularly than they did before the Sunday Closing Act. I am aware that in the large towns of Wales, such as Cardiff, with 85,000 inhabitants, within three miles of the Border of England, where those who are determined to drink can go over and get drunk, it is very difficult to work the Act. In Swansea, too, with its 65,000 inhabitants, and a railway running down, with a return ticket for 4*d.*, to a seaside village, where people can go and get drunk, the case is the same. But these are not faults of the Act; they come, as I am told, from a misunderstanding of the *boná fide* clause of the Act. But, even if it was otherwise, in Cornwall we have no large towns, so that the argument against the Act from Cardiff and Swansea does not apply. The fifth argument against us is that about the Petition, and I think I have dealt with it already. As to the Petition against the Bill presented by our opponents, in the 10 small towns which happened to be gone into it was found that 412 of the signatures were unknown, 82 were those of strangers, and 152 were forged; 44 had signed twice, 4 three times, and 1 four times. There was the signature of a gentleman who had been dead four years. The sixth reason against our Bill is—

> "That it is absurd to assert that those depending on the public-house supply are in favour of that supply being stopped."

That is a general and loose assertion, to be taken for what it is worth; and that I think is very little. The seventh argument against the Bill is that the working men of the Metropolis are against it. I cannot speak for the working men of the Metropolis, to whom this Bill does not apply; but I know that of the working men in Cornwall an overwhelming majority are in favour of this Bill. As a proof of this, I may state that there is a large iron foundry at a place called Hayle. That place was canvassed, and out of 549 men employed 87 per cent were in favour of our Bill, 8 per cent only against it, and 5 per cent neutral. The last reason against the Bill is that if it becomes law those who have invested capital in the drink trade will suffer. Then, Sir, it resolves itself into this—that this House is asked not to grant this measure to an overwhelming majority of a peaceful, law-abiding population of the county of Cornwall, because a certain number of gentlemen, strangers to the county, who have their money invested in the drink trade, think it is an attack on their interests. I feel confident, Sir, that if we have the opportunity of going to a Division—and I really hope we may be allowed to do—the House will support the earnest prayer of the overwhelming majority of the classes concerned, and grant them this measure, which they believe is for the benefit of themselves and of those who are near and dear to them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Arthur Vivian.*)

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he opposed the Bill because he thought a general measure might be brought in with regard to this question. His objection to the present Bill was that it would interfere very much with the happiness of the working classes. His hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Arthur Vivian) said that Cornwall generally was in favour of the Bill; but they should look back to what had followed the introduction of this measure in Scotland; and he thought that if the same principle were carried out in Cornwall and in other counties it would lead to that most pernicious of all vices—secret drinking. There was no doubt that Irishmen, as compared with Englishmen, had many opportunities of obtaining whisky privately on Sunday; but there was no doubt also that if in England they deprived the working man of his beer on Sunday, the only day when he was at home with his family, they would find it turn out to be much more disadvantageous than the present system. There was no doubt, at the same time, that it was desirable to have some change in the law. He quite admitted that the hours on which public-houses were open on Sundays should be limited; but he could not see how it could accrue to the advantage of Cornwall, or, indeed, England generally, that there should be a total closing on Sunday. He earnestly hoped that the House would carefully consider the question; because whilst in favour of limiting the hours during which public-houses were open on Sunday, he was of opinion that the total closing of them would prove more disadvantageous than under the present system.

Mr. WARTON said, that the hon. Member for West Cornwall (Mr. Arthur Vivian) had moved the second reading of the Bill with such moderation and courtesy, expressing, no doubt, what were the deep convictions of his heart, that he was reminded of the story of a Judge who, when a member of the Bar conducted a case before him with similar courtesy and good feeling, said to him—"Mr. ——, I am greatly pleased with the manner in which you have now pleaded; and, if anything could warp my decision, it would be your courtesy." In the same manner, a sense of duty constrained him (Mr. Warton), notwithstanding the courteous manner and temperate speech of the hon. Member, to protest strongly against this Bill. He did not charge the hon. Member with wishing or attempting by unfair means to interfere with the enjoyment of his fellow-creatures; but he would maintain that it ought not to be allowed to such a majority as was here contemplated to press tyrannically on the minority. That was the broad ground on which he based his opposition to this Bill. This very simple Bill involved an important principle. If the whole of the people desired Sunday closing it might be a very different thing. If all the people of Cornwall desired it, he might say that, so far as Cornwall was concerned, there would not be a tyranny of the majority over the minority. But it had been admitted that 22,000 signatures had been obtained against the measure. Was it to be supposed that these 22,000 had no right to have any drink whatever? What he would like to press upon his Radical Friends was, that until they changed their views in regard to this question, they had not learned the first idea of politics—namely, that individual freedom was the right every man had to do what he chose, so that he did not interfere with the rights of others. Supposing he (Mr. Warton) wanted a glass of beer on Sunday, and had no desire to break the peace with his fellow-creatures, why should he not do this? Why was he prevented from doing it? What harm would he do in obtaining the drink if he injured no one? He said it was absolute tyranny. It was undue interference with his liberty, undue interference with his undoubted right to gratify a reasonable desire. And, therefore, he said the legislation was opposed to a broad and general principle. He did not rest his case on minute details; but he asked the hon. Member for Cornwall if it was right that he and his 150,000 should prevent him (Mr. Warton) and his 20,000 from going into a public-house on Sunday and having a glass of beer? Much had been said about the difficulties in pressing forward this Bill in previous years. He sympathized with his hon. Friend when he said, with such touching pathos, that the life of a Member in charge of a Bill was not worth living. But he hoped that when he came to introduce a Bill, interfering as this Bill did with the liberties of his fellow-subjects, that he should be treated in the same way. The measure was not only an interference with National freedom, but it was also an interference with individual freedom. He wanted his Radical Friends to feel happier at that fact, and go away fully persuaded that as long as Englishmen lived they would protest against tyranny. He was afraid some hon. Gentlemen could not comprehend this. God forbid that he should impute motives to hon. Gentlemen. He believed they were actuated by the most proper feeling. But it often happened that a great deal of harm was done by good men. Indeed, it was not so much evil men as good men who could not restrain their own goodness that produced harm — good men, who tried to force their ideas into other people's minds — good men who tried to control ordinary men by their own ideas. It was these good men who did very much harm to their fellow-creatures, and it was only because they were so good that they were able to do so much harm. He had the misfortune, or good fortune, to have been imbued with the principles of law; and the first question he asked himself in regard to this subject was the nature of the wrong and the character of the remedy. What was the state of Cornwall at present when it was proposed to pass a law almost unexampled in its severity? He did not believe any hon. Member in the House would get up and say that one in 500 Cornish men was accustomed to get drunk on Sunday. He defied the hon. Member for Cornwall to contradict him when he said that there was not one in 500 people there who got drunk on Sunday. Was it, then, a wise piece of legislation to provide for an evil so small, a remedy so severe? Four hundred and ninety-nine out of every 500 people were sober and good. They did not get drunk on Sunday. And so this majority of 150,000 were going to prevent the 20,000 having any drink at all, because less than one in 500 men got drunk. He had given the hon. Member credit for possessing the innocence of the dove. He would now also give him credit for possessing the wisdom of the serpent. He knew what might be said in regard to the operation of this Bill in Wales, and he tried to anticipate its force by reference to the rural districts. The hon. Member belonged to a school which never learned from experience. In the discharge of his (Mr. Warton's) duty he gave to the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill his most earnest opposition; but it was at last passed, though its operation was suspended through bad draughtsmanship for another year. It had now been tried, and the hon. Gentleman knew the results; but perhaps they did not care for facts when facts were so clearly against them, or perhaps they argued, "So much the worse for the facts." They had now obtained proof, overwhelming proof, from the most responsible authorities in Wales, not from those quiet rural districts where the hon. Member appeared to refer for proof of the working of his Bill, but from places "where men do congregate." He found, according to the Report of the Chief Constable of Cardiff, that there had been established no fewer than 13 clubs since the passing of the Act in 1883. These clubs were resorted to since the Act came into operation. He asked this question—whether it was better, in the interest of temperance, that these clubs should be opened and drinking carried on in them without restraint, or that in licensed houses everyone should be allowed to take his liquor like a man? The hon. Member made much of the signatures of the clergy to the Petition in favour of his Bill. He noticed a difference in the proportion of Nonconformist ministers to clergy of the Church of England. The clergyman of the Church of England was more independent on account of his social position than the Nonconformist minister; and the Roman Catholic clergyman was more independent because of the support he received from a powerful organization. Indeed, Nonconformist ministers were more like flocks of sheep in the manner in which they were driven by the influence of their congregations. He noticed that these ministers were unanimous; but that was not so with the clergymen of the Church of England.

Mr. ARTHUR VIVIAN: There were only 10 against.

Mr. WARTON said, he had got the figures. It appeared that, out of 227 clergymen written to, 162 answered in favour of the views, 39 did not answer at all, 16 were neutral, and 10 were against. But they ought to mark the form in which the Lord Lieutenant put the question, which left it a matter of doubt whether he desired to have the personal opinions of the clergymen, or the opinion of the parish independent of the personal opinion of the clergyman. He should now like to bring before the House the opinions of two or three Roman Catholic clergymen as to the working of the Act at Cardiff. First, he would bring before then Father Richardson. He said it seemed to be the practice on Saturday night to get in as many barrels of beer as they could in the shebeens. That seemed better by their virtuous friends than taking a glass on Sunday morning, and he said a more terrible sight could not meet the eyes of a clergyman than the vice which was thus encouraged by these virtuous people. Neighbours were at the same time handing their jugs in over the wall. It was considered more virtuous, but some people would not learn by experience. Again, he found in some of these places young girls sitting on the knees of young men with their arms round their necks, and both girls and men the worse for drink. Little children were taken into the room and dosed with beer until they got drunk. It was one of the features of a properly licensed house that drink should not be supplied to a child under 16 years of age; but these little children were allowed to get drunk in this way in this wretched shebeen. A more abominable thing people could not suppose possible to be inflicted on a town. Next they had clubs. These places were not only drinking-places like the shebeens, but they did their work in a more methodical way. They were not the rendezvous of friendship, but dens of terrible drinking, and sometimes gambling, which was commenced on Saturday night, and continued till Sunday morning. These were all facts stated by Father Richardson. He was at one time in favour of this legislation, and he signed the Petition for it; but he did not know what the result would be. Yes, he signed the Petition; but his experience had changed his opinion, and he now felt that no Act of Parliament could make people sober. It was quite true that no legislation could make people sober, but they could regulate the sale of drink, and by these prudent and cautious regulations they could prevent the rise and abuse of these clubs, which were such horrible dens of infamy. Let them hear some further evidence; another Catholic clergyman, Father Butler, expressed his opinion in about 10 words. He wondered that the Sunday Closing Bill for Wales was not called a Sunday Opening Bill. There were only five clubs before the Act came into force, and there were then over 30. They had thus increased six-fold, and his district was infested with them, and he added, there was more drunkenness, more sin, more iniquity of every kind committed in Cardiff than ever there was before. He would trouble the House with only one more authority. Father Williams——

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

STRENSALL COMMON [COSTS AND EXPENSES OF COMMISSIONERS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Costs and Expenses incurred by the Land Commissioners for England, and of any fees payable to them, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to provide for ascertaining any rights of Common, or other rights, in or over Strensall Common, in the north riding of the county of Cork.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 4) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Nenagh Union, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 202.]

FACTORY ACTS EXTENSION (SHOPS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to extend the Factory Acts to Shops, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Pell, Mr. Burt, and Lord Randolph Churchill.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 203.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 15*th May,* 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Settlement and Removal Law Amendment * (97); Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) * (98); Commons Regulation Provisional Order * (100).

Select Committee—Report—Greek Marriages.*

Committee — Criminal Law Amendment (45-99).

Committee—Report—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (The Labourers Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * (54); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * (55); Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment * (78); Greek Marriages * (39-96).

Report—Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment * (60).

Third Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order * (75), and *passed.*

PRIVILEGE—HOUSE OF LORDS—THE COURT OF APPEAL—LORD DENMAN.

Lord DENMAN, for the third time, called attention to a case of Privilege. He had complained of his name not being on the rota of Peers, hearing the appeal by Mr. Bradlaugh, of not having seen the decisions of the Lord Chancellor, of Lords Blackburn, Watson, and FitzGerald, although he had given his own judgment to the Lord Chancellor. If he had seen those opinions he might have referred to the case of Dunn *qui tam* against Hinchily, by which in Lord Raymond's Reports, second and third volumes, it was ruled, that a suitor for a penalty need not repeat, at the end of his declaration, that he sued for himself as well as for the Lady the Queen; because as defendant had paid neither, he must pay 40*s.* a-day to the informer. He (Lord Denman) further complained that his words —which he had handed up at the time to the reporter—were not included in the Law Report of cases in the House of Lords, for he had attended to every part of the argument; and having been for above 17 years at every cause at Nisi Prius before the first Lord Denman and the Judges who assisted him at Nisi Prius, and having heard all the eminent lawyers, from 1832 to 1849, he was competent to form an opinion as to which of any set of advocates or Judges was right. He also found that in the O'Connell appeal, not only the name of

Lord Wharncliffe, but also the names of three other noble Lords were inserted in the Law Report—namely, of the Earl of Stradbroke, of the Marquess of Clanricarde, and the Earl of Verulam, which with their reasons for not voting were given; and the only cause of their abstention from voting was, that they had not heard the whole of the appeal; and the Marquess of Clanricarde specially declared that he had the right to vote, if he should insist upon it.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 45.) COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN rose, in accordance with the Notice on the Paper, to present Petitions from Aberdeen and 41 other places in favour of the Bill.

EARL CAIRNS, rising to Order, said, the Petitions should have been presented before their Lordships went into Committee.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, he would present the Petitions on another occasion.

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

PART I.

Suppression of Prostitution.

Clause 2 (Procuring a woman to be a common prostitute or to enter a brothel).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN moved an Amendment so as to limit the penalties for procuring women to leave the United Kingdom for the purpose of leading an immoral life to the case of girls under 21 years of age, so as to assimilate that part of the clause to the former part, which related to the offence of procuring girls to lead an immoral life within the Kingdom. He could not see why protection should be afforded to women over 21.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, line 13, after ("girl") insert ("under twenty-one years of age.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Lord Denman

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that the clause, as it stood, was framed upon the recommendation of the Committee which was appointed to consider the whole subject of the Bill, and he saw no reason for accepting the alteration proposed. The clause was in the same form as that in the Bill of last year as it passed the House. It was not the opinion of their Lordships' Committee that there was no occasion for extending the proposed protection to women over 21 years of age.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, that false pretence was the essence of the offence; and, for that reason, it was deemed inexpedient to adopt any limitation of age. It was in evidence before the Committee that women were induced to go abroad under false pretences.

Amendment *negatived.*

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he proposed to amend the paragraph of the clause which gave the Court power to exclude the public on the hearing of a case by inserting instead of "the public" the words "all minors." He could not see why the community and the accused persons should be deprived of all the security derived from the attendance of the public.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, line 25, to leave out ("the public") and insert ("all minors.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in opposing the Amendment, said, it was opposed to the recommendation of the Committee of their Lordships' House. He pointed out that the clause gave discretionary power to the Courts to exclude the public. Besides, how were magistrates or Judges to determine who were under 21 years of age?

LORD FITZGERALD supported the Amendment. The carrying out of the Act would be in the hands of the police. They could trust to the discretion of Judges; but they could not trust to the discretion of all magistrates, to whom they proposed to give power to direct the exclusion of all persons from the Court. He considered there was great danger to the proper administration of justice if they allowed the introduction into the law of the power of excluding the public from Courts of Justice. As an instance, he would refer their Lordships to a case which occurred some years ago, in which a man was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude. All the auditors in Court were dissatisfied with the verdict and the sentence; and such was the force of public opinion that the Secretary of State for the Home Department intervened, and the man was discharged. Was it intended that the proceedings were to be conducted entirely *in camerâ* and in secret? He protested against the clause, as admitting a principle which endangered the administration of justice, because it proposed to exclude the Press, whose presence and criticism constituted a valuable security that justice would be done. He would suggest that, in order to meet the view of the noble Earl in charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie), the Amendment should run that such persons as appeared to the Court to be under 21 might be excluded.

LORD BRAMWELL said, the question was, whether only minors should be excluded. The Courts had always assumed power to do that. No one was more sensible than himself that there should be full publicity given to the hearing of all cases in Courts of Justice, and of the great advantages resulting therefrom; for nothing had so great an influence upon those who had to administer the law, as the knowledge that what they said and did would be criticized, and criticized with uncommon sharpness on many occasions. Still, no benefit could accrue from the public being admitted to the hearing of those filthy and disgusting cases which sometimes came before Judges and juries. An exception in such cases as those might be fairly allowed without the slightest sacrifice of public good. While quite admitting the value of the principle of publicity, he could not see that the small sacrifice of it suggested by the clause in the Bill would do any harm.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he wished to point out to their Lordships that the Bill of last year passed through that House in a scramble, several Amendments having even been introduced after the third reading; and he thought that the noble Earl who had charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie) should not quote it as a precedent for their proceedings on this occasion.

EARL CAIRNS said, he differed from the noble Earl who had just spoken (the Earl of Longford). He contended that the Bill of last year was very much discussed, and that the clause under consideration had been carefully considered by a very large Select Committee, and that the Members of that Committee were unanimously in favour of it. He agreed with what had been said by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) as to the value of publicity; but thought an exception should be made in disgusting cases.

LORD BRABOURNE said, he was opposed to the clause as it stood, and therefore cordially supported the Amendment. Without it, the clause would be an infringement of a fundamental principle of English law. Possibly, the Judges might be safely entrusted with the power of clearing their Courts, as they would doubtless act with discretion; but their Lordships must remember that the law would not be worked by Judges only, but by all the magistrates in the country; and the clause under notice would confer on every magistrate in England the power to hear cases *in camerâ*, and would thus take away the greatest safeguard of English justice. To that he strongly objected. What protection or guarantee would the public have of justice being properly administered, if they were all excluded from the Courts on these occasions? And how would public confidence in these Courts be affected?

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he was also in favour of the Amendment.

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 91; Not-Contents 58: Majority 33.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Bedford, D.
Westminster, D.

Northampton, M.

Belmore, E.
Cairns, E.
Camperdown, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Derby, E.
Ducie, E.
Granville, E.
Haddington, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Jersey, E.
Kimberley, E.
Morley, E.
Nelson, E.
Northbrook, E.
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Saint Germans, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Stanhope, E.
Sydney, E.
Waldegrave, E.

Eversley, V.
Exmouth, V.
Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)

Powerscourt, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
Carlisle, L. Bp.
Chichester, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
Lincoln, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Oxford, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Albans, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Aberdare, L.
Alcester, L.
Balfour of Burley, L.
Bramwell, L.
Breadalbane, L. (*E. Breadalbane.*)
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Carew, L.
Carlingford, L,
Carrington, L. [*Teller.*]
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Colchester, L.

Cottesloe, L.
Crewe, L.
Denman, L.
Douglas, L. (*E. Home.*)
Gerard, L.
Hammond, L.
Hothfield, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kenmare, L. (*E. Kenmare.*)
Lawrence, L.
Leigh, L.
Lovat, L.
Monson, L. [*Teller.*]
Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Mount-Temple, L.
Norton, L.
North, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Ribblesdale, L.
Ross, L. (*E. Glasgow.*)
Sandhurst, L.
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Sudeley, L.
Sundridge, L. (*D. Argyll.*)
Thurlow, L.
Tollemache, L.
Truro, L.
Winmarleigh, L.
Wrottesley, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Grafton, D.
Rutland, D.
Somerset, D.

Bristol, M.
Salisbury, M.

Ashburnham, E.
Bathurst, E.
Cowper, E.
De La Warr, E.
Denbigh, E.
Fortescue, E.
Innes, E. (*D. Roxburghe.*)
Leven and Melville, E.
Lucan, E.
Malmesbury, E.
Manvers, E.
Mar and Kellie, E.
Milltown, E. [*Teller.*]
Mount Edgcumbe, E.
Redesdale, E.

Gough, V.
Hardinge, V.
Hawarden, V.
Hood, V.
Hutchinson, V. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
Sherbrooke, V.

Brabourne, L. [*Teller.*]

Calthorpe, L.
Clanbrassill, L. (*E. Roden.*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Cloncurry, L.
Colville of Culross, L.
de Ros, L.
Dinevor, L.
Dorchester, L.
Ellenborough, L.
FitzGerald, L.
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Houghton, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Kinnaird, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lovel and Holland, L. (*E. Egmont.*)
Lyveden, L.
Meldrum, L. (*M. Huntley.*)
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Poltimore, L.
Saltersford, L. (*E. Courtown.*)
Saltoun, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)

Stanley of Alderley, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Stratheden and Campbell, L.

Templemore, L.
Teynham, L.
Tweedmouth, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)

Amendment *disagreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Procuring defilement of woman by fraud).

On the Motion of The Lord BRAMWELL, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 27, leave out from ("who") to end of page, and insert—

"(1.) By threats or intimidation procures or endeavours to procure any woman or girl to have unlawful connexion, either within or without the Queen's dominions, with any man;

"(2.) By false pretences, false representations, or other fraudulent means, procures any woman or girl to have unlawful carnal connexion, either within or without the Queen's dominions, with any man: Provided that this subsection shall not apply where such woman or girl knew such connexion to be unlawful;

"(3.) By false pretences, false representations, or other fraudulent means, endeavours to procure any woman or girl to have unlawful connexion."

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 32, insert the following subsection:—

"Or (4.) induces a girl under the age of twenty-one years, with intent that she shall have unlawful carnal connection with any man, to enter a brothel, she not knowing the same to be a brothel nor being a party to the intent."

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN moved an Amendment, to provide that no persons should be convicted of offences under the Act on the uncorroborated evidence of any woman or girl bringing a charge against him. He pointed out that the girl would be *particeps criminis;* and it would be against the first principles of our law, and highly dangerous, that a man should be liable to a conviction on her unsupported testimony. The provision was similar to that which was enacted when the principals in an action for breach of promise of marriage were made capable witnesses.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 3, after ("labour") insert ("provided always that no person shall be convicted under the provisions of this section by the uncorroborated evidence of any such woman or girl.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he must oppose the Amendment, on the ground that discretion should be left to the Courts in the matter.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that convictions on uncorroborated evidence would very rarely take place in such cases; and he thought it was undesirable to establish any absolute rule that more than one witness should be necessary. It would be an anomaly. The rule was the other way—perjury being the only exception.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN proposed the insertion of a new clause, making it a misdemeanour, punishable by imprisonment for any term not exceeding two years, to procure the defilement of any girl under 21 years of age, whether there had been criminal knowledge or not.

Moved, after Clause 3, page 1, line 31, insert as a new clause (3*a.*):—

"Any person who procures, or induces, or endeavours to procure or induce, any girl under the age of twenty-one years to be unlawfully and carnally known by any other person, whether such carnal knowledge takes place or not, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable, at the discretion of the court, to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years."—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he could not accept the Amendment, as he believed it was in advance of public opinion on the subject.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, that public opinion was growing very rapidly.

LORD TRURO said, he would suggest the appointment of protectresses of girls between 12 and 16 years, who should have power after sunfall to stop these girls in the streets, and to obtain the addresses of their parents.

New Clause (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause 4 (Defilement of girl under twelve years of age).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN moved an Amendment providing for the extension of the clause to those who aided in or attempted the committing of the offence. He said that the attempt to commit the misdemeanour in the following clause was dealt with in the same way as the offence itself; and there was no reason why this most horrible felony should not be dealt with in the same way, the more so as it was extremely difficult to prove the full offence.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 11, after ("knows") insert ("or attempts to have, or aids or abets any other person in having or attempting to have, unlawful carnal knowledge of.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he could not accept the Amendment, for the reason that it was entirely unnecessary, as the law now provided for such cases.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER moved an Amendment providing that a prisoner convicted of such an assault should be liable to flogging, in addition to a term of imprisonment. Such miscreants dreaded whipping more than any other punishment. As a proof of that, he would refer their Lordships to the salutary effect the punishment had exercised on garotters, and he anticipated a similar result in the present case.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 16, after ("labour") insert ("and the court before which such offender shall be tried and convicted may, in addition, adjudge such offender to be privately whipped, and the number of strokes and the instrument with which they shall be inflicted shall be specified in the sentence."—(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that while he sympathized with the sentiments and with the object of the Amendment of the right rev. Prelate, and would be very glad to see it inserted in the Bill, he must oppose it, because he believed that it would endanger the prospects of the measure in "another place," where a large proportion of Members objected to flogging. He thought it would be better that it should be inserted in the House of Commons than by their Lordships. He believed that the diminution of the crime of garotting was not so much due to flogging as to the heavy sentences inflicted by some of the Judges upon such criminals.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in supporting the Amendment, said, he could assure the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) that the contrary was the fact, and that the dread of receiving a flogging had exercised a strongly deterrent effect upon garotters, since the punishment in question had been applied to such crimes.

Lord ABERDARE said, that that diminution, which he fully admitted, had taken place before the alteration in the law permitting flogging for garotting. For instance, the cases of garotting, which occasioned so much alarm, began in July, 1862, and in three months 95 cases occurred. He was appointed Under Secretary of State in the Home Office in November, 1862, and by that time the attacks had ceased. No more genuine cases of garotting occurred from that time up to the passing of the Act. The garotting had been put down by the police breaking up the gang, and by severe sentences that had been passed on some of those who were convicted. In regard to garotting, the results that were attributed to the passing and operation of the Act had, in fact, been realized before the passing of the Act; and, for himself, having official knowledge of the facts at the time, he believed there had not been one robbery with violence the less in consequence of the passing of the Act. He advocated flogging in cases in which it could be adopted as an alternative to imprisonment for young offenders; in that respect flogging might be carried much further; but, on this occasion, he opposed the adoption of the punishment.

Lord NORTON said that, in his belief, the punishment of flogging had had a deterrent effect in respect of other offences, such as shooting at the Queen and wanton injury to works of Art in public buildings. Punishments must be suited to the motives of offences, and pain and disgrace were, therefore, the fittest checks to a morbid itch for notoriety, which was the usual motive for these offences; and similarly suited to check a vile brutality on little girls under 12 years of age.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in supporting the Amendment, said, they had heard no good arguments adduced to show that it should not be adopted into the Bill; and he must be allowed to express his strong disapproval of the reason given by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) for not accepting it. He thought the punishment of flogging was of a character most likely to appeal to the feelings of those persons who were likely to commit these offences.

Earl NELSON said that, in his opinion, there was a very great probability of the Bill being characterized in the other House as a flogging Bill; and, as one strongly interested in its passing, he desired to avoid doing anything that would prejudice it. He, therefore, hoped the Amendment would not be pressed.

Lord DENMAN said, that it would be easy for the House of Commons to remove the clause; and if their Lordships might choose to re-insert it, as several of them had promised to remain from the 15th of July to the end of the Session, they might do so, and insist on its being part of the Bill. He protested against the timid course of withdrawing a clause only because it might be erased in "another place."

The Earl of DALHOUSIE said, he could assure their Lordships that it would affect very seriously the spirit in which the House of Commons set to work to consider the Bill if the provision for flogging were inserted.

Earl CAIRNS said, he was so anxious to see the Bill pass, that he thought it would be better for the advocates of flogging to get someone to introduce a clause in the House of Commons.

The Bishop of ROCHESTER said, that having regard to what had been urged by the noble Earl in charge of the Bill, and in the interests of the measure itself, he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Defilement of girls between twelve and sixteen years of age).

Lord MOUNT TEMPLE said, girls ought not to be treated as responsible for consenting to seduction and ruin so as to exonerate their seducers from legal guilt. The age of 16 did not develop the faculties of discretion, will-force, and knowledge of the world, required to appreciate the dangers to which they were exposed, and the way of escape. Though girls sometimes married at 16, they could not legally do so against the consent of parents. Ought they to be legally entitled to become prostitutes without the consent of parents or guardians?

Amendment *moved,* in page 2, line 26, to leave out ("sixteen") and insert ("seventeen.")—(*The Lord Mount Temple.*)

The Earl of DALHOUSIE said, the question had been already discussed, and a majority of their Lordships were in favour of the Bill as it stood. The Bill was of a tentative character, and the Government proposal to raise the present age from 13 to 16 was an experiment which it would be wise not to carry further. If the experiment answered, subsequent legislation might raise the age to 17. He hoped the Amendment would not be pressed; as, in his opinion, the feeling of the public was scarcely ripe for an extension of the age.

LORD BRAMWELL said that, in his opinion, even 16 was too high, and he should strenuously oppose its being extended to 17. He would remind their Lordships that girls were occasionally married at 16. The Bill was not one against immorality generally, but against offences which were, in a sense, unnatural.

LORD TRURO said, he looked upon the suggestion embodied in the Amendment as not in accordance with the experience of undoubted authorities among the clergy, who were most familiar with the lowest and most criminal populations. They had assured him in hundreds of cases solicitation for an improper intercourse came from girls of even so tender an age as 12 years.

EARL CAIRNS said, he failed to see what was the real object of the Amendment, and he hoped the clause would be allowed to stand as it left the Select Committee.

LORD BALFOUR said, he agreed with the noble and learned Earl who last spoke. He thought the provision in the Bill was a fair compromise which had been arrived at.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, that although, on a former occasion, a similar Amendment was carried, and he had voted for it, he hoped this proposal would not now be pressed, because the age of 16 had been restored by the Government after careful consideration; and, no doubt, they were better informed than their Lordships on the question.

LORD MOUNT TEMPLE said, he was willing that the Amendment should be negatived.

Amendment *negatived.*

Amendment *moved,*

In page 3, line 2, insert at end of clause ("Provided that when in case of any charge under this section any girl under the age of sixteen years appears to have solicited an offence under this section, such solicitation shall be deemed to be an offence, and on conviction thereof, the court may require such girl to find securities for good behaviour or sentence her to be sent to a certified home as if she had been convicted in pursuance of section eight of this Act.")—(*The Lord Mount-Temple.*)

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made: —In page 2, line 40, leave out from ("conducted") to end of clause and insert—

("If any person is charged before a justice with any crime under this Act, no further proceeding shall be taken against such person without the consent of the Attorney General or by the authority of the Director of Public Prosecutions, except such as the justice may think necessary, by remand or otherwise, to secure the safe custody of such person.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Householder, &c. permitting defilement of girl under sixteen on his premises guilty of misdemeanour).

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made: —In page 3, line 13, insert after ("labour") as a separate paragraph:—

"A justice of the peace, if satisfied by information made before him on oath by any superintendent or inspector of police, or other officer of police of equal or superior rank, or any parent, relative, or guardian of any such girl, or any other person who in the opinion of the justice is bonâ fide acting in the interest of any such girl, that there is reasonable cause to suspect any offence under this section to have been committed in or upon any premises within the jurisdiction of such justice, may grant a warrant under his hand authorising a superintendent or inspector of police, or other officer of police of equal or superior rank, at any time or times within the period named in the warrant, but not exceeding one month from the date thereof, to enter, with such assistance as may be necessary, and if need be by force, and make search in or upon such premises and every part thereof, with a view to the discovery of any offence under this section; and any such superintendent, inspector, or other officer so authorised, may apprehend and bring before two justices, or a police or stipendiary magistrate, any person guilty of an offence under this Act whom he may find upon such premises, and also any girl in respect of whom such offence is charged; and if the justices or magistrate so think fit, they or he may bind over any such girl to appear as a witness on the trial of any such person."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Abduction of girl under eighteen with intent to have carnal knowledge) *agreed to.*

LORD NORTON moved the insertion of a new clause, to provide that the guardian or master of a girl in domestic service or other employment who is guilty of an unlawful assault upon her should, on conviction, be liable to two years' imprisonment with or without hard labour, but that it should be a defence to a charge of the kind to show that the girl had been previously unchaste.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 3, line 33, insert as new clause:

"Any person who being the guardian of a girl under the age of eighteen years, or being her master in domestic service or other employment, unlawfully and carnally knows, or attempts to have unlawful and carnal knowledge of such girl, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour; and being convicted thereof shall be liable, at the discretion of the court, to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour:

"Provided that it shall be a defence to any charge under this section to show that such girl had been unchaste previously to the time of the offence charged."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was not opposed to accepting the clause if the words "or other employment" were omitted, and its operation were confined to cases of guardianship and domestic service, on condition that subsequently a provision against vexatious prosecutions was introduced.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he would suggest that the proposal should be limited to guardians and no other.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he objected to the clause. It converted immorality into crime, and that was the weakness of the Bill. They never would be able to make mere immorality a crime by Act of Parliament.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON hoped the suggestion of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack would be adopted, confining the operation of the clause to guardians.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD asserted that there was no offence more frequent in London than the seduction of young servants by their masters, and he hoped the clause would be pressed.

LORD DENMAN said, that masters were as responsible for their servants as guardians for their wards; and as to the defence of previous unchastity, a girl might have fallen, trusting to a promise of marriage; but if the master took advantage of her weakness he might entirely destroy her engagement with the man who had seduced her, and ruin her prospects in life.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he would agree to accept the clause modified by the limitation that it should only apply to guardians.

LORD NORTON said, he would accept the suggestion of the noble and learned Earl.

Clause *amended,* by leaving out from ("girl") in line 2 to ("employment") in line 4; and all after ("labour") in line 8.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to,* and *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following new clause, to follow the one just added to the Bill, *agreed to,* and *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

"If upon the trial of any indictment for rape the jury shall be satisfied that the defendant is guilty of an indecent assault, but are not satisfied that the defendant is guilty of the felony charged in such indictment, then and in every such case the jury may acquit the defendant of such felony and find him guilty of an indecent assault, and thereupon such defendant shall be liable to be punished in the same manner as if he had been convicted upon an indictment for the misdemeanour of indecent assault."

Clause 8 (Amendment of 2 & 3 *Vict.* c. 47, s. 54, and 10 & 11 *Vict.* c. 89, s. 28, as to prostitutes.)

The EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in moving an Amendment to substitute the offence of soliciting for loitering in the streets, said, that as the clause transferred the power now residing in the passer-by, but which was seldom exercised, to the police, and as it would give the police great opportunities, if so disposed, and some of them were so disposed, to levy black-mail, he proposed to make the offence more definite.

Amendment *moved,* in page 3, line 40, to leave out ("loiters") and insert ("solicits.")—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

EARL CAIRNS said he objected to "solicits" being substituted for "loiters;" and further he was of opinion that the police should have the power either in case of loitering, "or" of importuning. He would divide the Committee on the proposition of the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was ready to agree to the retention of the words "and importunes."

On Question, that the word ("loiters") stand part of the Clause? their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 26; Not-Contents 37: Majority 11.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Cairns, E. [*Teller.*]
Carnarvon, E.
Nelson, E.
Shaftesbury, E.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Chichester, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Oxford, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Albans, L. Bp.

St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Balfour of Burley, L. [*Teller.*]
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Denman, L.
Mount-Temple, L.
Norton, L.
Saltersford, L. (*E. Courtown.*)
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Strathnairn, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Grafton, D.

Bristol, M.

Bathurst, E.
Camperdown, E.
Derby, E.
Granville, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Kimberley, E.
Lucan, E.
Milltown, E.
Morley, E.
Mount Edgcumbe, E.
Redesdale, E.
Sydney, E.

Aberdare, L.
Bramwell, L.
Carlingford, L.
Carrington, L. [*Teller.*]
Cloncurry, L.
FitzGerald, L.

Hammond, L.
Howard de Walden, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Leigh, L.
Lovat, L.
Monson, L. [*Teller.*]
Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Ribblesdale, L.
Sandhurst, L.
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Teynham, L.
Ventry, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
Wrottesley, L.

Resolved in the *negative.*

Amendment *agreed to;* word *substituted* accordingly.

EARL CAIRNS said, unless the Government accepted the words "or importunes" in lieu of the words "and importunes" they would make the law a great deal weaker than it was at present, for it was now an offence to loiter. The chief difficulty in the way of conviction was the unwillingness of persons to come forward and say that they had been annoyed. Under the Bill, soliciting was not to be an offence unless it were combined with importuning. That was a retrogressive step. Under the pretence of correcting the existing abuses, he hoped the public would understand that the Government were going to make their streets much worse than they were at present.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, said, there was one thing the public would understand, and that was, that the remarks of the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) must be qualified by the explanation that, in future, the initiative would rest with the police, to whom great power was given with regard to the regulation of the streets in connection with this matter, and it was desirable that the power of the police should be defined as strictly as possible.

EARL NELSON said, he would suggest that the words following the Amendment just carried "and importunes" should be omitted from the clause.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the Government would agree to leave out the words "and importunes" altogether.

Amendment *agreed to;* words *omitted* accordingly.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, in rising to move the first of some Amendments to provide that the clause should be applied to every man who in any thoroughfare or public place habitually or persistently importuned or solicited any woman or girl for an immoral purpose, said, that the Amendments were identical with those which he proposed on the third reading of the Bill last year, and which then obtained 45 votes from the Members of their Lordships' House. Since that time he had seen and heard a great deal on the subject, and he was convinced that, unless the words he suggested were inserted in the clause, very heavy wrongs would be inflicted on poor girls. Their Lordships should consider the state of society and its industrial occupations. Hundreds—indeed, thousands—of women and girls were employed in the factories, workshops, and great houses of business far away from their homes. They returned home at all times of the night—some very late. Their Lordships should recollect that the many relaxations of the Workshops Act, granted by successive Secretaries of State, had greatly increased the mischief. Those employed at restaurants and railway refreshment rooms necessarily so. Their Lordships should hear the statements of these girls; they were beset on issuing from their places of work by vile and designing men, singly or collectively, who were on the watch for them, and who were there for no other purpose than to work their destruction. Many employers stated the same, and added that they gave protection as far as they could. These defenceless girls were fairly safe so long as they could keep together; but when obliged to separate, they were exposed to the most serious annoyance. But now women were to be subjected to far more fearful trouble. The law defining solicitation was to be altered, and the offence was to be determined by the judgment of the police constable. If a woman were seen speaking to a man, or being spoken to by a man, a constable could at once arrest the woman. Thus, a poor, innocent girl — timid, ignorant, defenceless—might be brought into a Court of Justice and ruined for life. Men were perfectly safe and enjoyed absolute impunity. The offenders were numerous and were found in all parts of London, and many of them were well-known to the agencies with which he (the Earl of Shaftesbury) was connected. He had it on the authority of officers of the London City Mission that they were known and designated as "night walkers," and, frequently, missionaries and others had interfered to save the girls from brutal assaults. His proposition was very simple and very just; it was no more than to place the men on an equality with the women, and to say that any man soliciting habitually or persistently should be subject to the same penalties as these wretched women. He should be met, no doubt, by the old argument that such a provision might be abused; possibly, it might be in some instances; but this evil would be far less than the terrible and frequent abuse of poor defenceless girls. He felt sure he had the sympathies of every woman in England. It must not be forgotten that a large discretion, together with very stringent powers, was given by the Act to the police. Now, he had great respect for that force, and he believed that, as a rule, they carried out their duties very well; but, however admirable a body the police might be, there must, in so large a number, be many who would abuse their power, and in this particular matter he was sorry to say they were sometimes the worst of all. Indeed, he had himself been informed by women that such abuse of power was by no means rare on the part of the police. Unless adequate protection were afforded to women, the greatest abuses would arise, and there would soon be an outcry against the Bill. It was for the reasons he had stated he proposed these additions to the clause.

Amendment *moved*,

In page 3, line 41, after ("prostitution,") to insert ("and (2) every man who in any such thoroughfare or public place habitually or persistently importunes or solicits women or girls for immoral purposes.")—(*The Earl of Shaftesbury.*)

The Earl of DALHOUSIE said, he was sorry the Government could not accept the Amendment of his noble Friend (the Earl of Shaftesbury), though they recognized his high intentions in moving it. The eloquent and earnest manner in which he had stated the case had added to their difficulty in refusing it; but they were bound to do so; for, if agreed to, it would be liable to great abuse, for there was nothing to prevent "black-mail" being extensively levied.

The Earl of ABERDEEN supported the Amendment. Inquiry into the matter would not fail to convince anyone who was unacquainted with the facts concerning it, of the absolute necessity of something being done to correct the evils against which it was directed. If the Government were not satisfied, they should make that inquiry. He would rather run the risk of the annoyance of the clause being abused than see it left out of the Bill.

Earl CAIRNS said, he was sorry the Government could not accept the Amendment. He thought the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) had not advanced a single valid argument against its adoption. It was impossible, with any show of justice, to deny that protection to virtuous women which was afforded by the Amendment. They were just as much entitled to protection in the public street from men, as men were from women. The cases, in fact, were on "all fours." He hoped the Government would re-consider the Amendment before deciding finally to reject it.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he must deny the truth of the assertion of the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns). He (the Earl of Kimberley) thought it was quite impossible to say that men and women were in the same position. This was a clause dealing entirely with women who frequented the streets for the sake of gain, and there was no class of men to correspond with that class. But, however that might be, he hoped the Bill would pass. Those who desired that it should not have the slightest chance of passing would vote for the Amendment.

Lord MOUNT TEMPLE said, were the women who solicited for gain of food and clothing worse than the men who solicited women for the selfish and cruel gratification of uncontrolled appetite? It might be difficult for a Parliament of men to appreciate the torture of pure women at being hunted through the streets by men who forced upon them infamous proposals. The young women required protection from importunities more than men; they suffered more, and were weaker in resistance.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he was of opinion that, on its merits, the Amendment should be agreed to. If they wished to act justly as between men and women they were bound to insert it in the Bill.

The Bishop of WINCHESTER said, he had presented a Petition in favour of the Amendment from the University of Cambridge, signed by Undergraduates of every College, including Cavendish College (the latter being for the education of young farmers) and praying their Lordships to consider that it would be impossible to put down vice unless they dealt with men in the same way as they dealt with women in regard to solicitation. He had also presented a Petition from more than 6,000 young women associated with the Girls' Friendly Society in his own diocese in favour of the change of the law proposed by the Amendment. As far as his own opinion went, he decidedly thought that most of the solicitations came from men. He thought in a Bill of this nature they should deal alike with men and women; and the measure of punishment meted out to the latter should be applied to members of the male sex who importuned or solicited females, be they women or girls, for immoral purposes.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council) said, there would be no real equality in the treatment of the two sexes under the words proposed. In the case of women one special and degraded class, or trade, capable of definition, was dealt with. In the case of men there was no such class, capable of being defined, and they were to legislate against all men, with the vague limitation of such words as "habitually and persistently." He protested against such legislation.

Earl CAIRNS said, he most strongly protested against the supposition of the noble Lord opposite (the Lord President), that the men described in the Amendment were not a degraded class, although they habitually and persistently tried to overthrow the morality and virtue of poor girls going home from their work at night. To his mind such men were the more degraded class of the two.

Lord ABERDARE, in supporting the Amendment, said, that women ought to be protected from molestation by men in the public streets.

The Bishop of OXFORD said, he also entirely approved of an Amendment which would mark their Lordships' detestation of this offence on the part of debased men. In the opinion of ladies a law to punish women for these offences, but excluding men from its operation, would be most unfair and unjust.

Lord BALFOUR said, that while he entirely approved of the principle of the Amendment, he would vote against it, on the ground that the Bill would have a better chance of passing if it contained as little debateable matter as possible.

Lord TRURO said, that he would point out to their Lordships that the Amendment was directed, not against isolated solicitations by men, but against the iniquitous practice of men habitually frequenting railway stations at all hours of the day for the purpose of making the acquaintance of young girls, and effecting their ruin.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 34; Not-Contents 20: Majority 14.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Cairns, E. [*Teller.*]
Camperdown, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Milltown, E.
Mount Edgcumbe, E.
Nelson, E.
Redesdale, E.
Shaftesbury, E. [*Teller.*]

Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)

Bangor, L. Bp.
Chichester, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Oxford, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Albans, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Aberdare, L.
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Denman, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Leigh, L.
Monteagle of Brandon. L.
Mount-Temple, L.
Saltersford, L. (*E. Courtown.*)
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Truro, L.
Ventry, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Grafton, D.
Derby, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Kimberley, E.
Morley, E.
Balfour of Burley, L.
Bramwell, L.
Carlingford, L.
Carrington, L. [*Teller.*]
Cloncurry, L.
FitzGerald, L.
Howard de Walden, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Monson, L. [*Teller.*]
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Ribblesdale, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
Wrottesley, L.

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, the following Amendment made:—In page 4, line 6, after ("prostitutes") insert ("and (2) every man who in any such street habitually or persistently importunes or solicits women or girls for immoral purposes.")

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 5, sub-section (2), leave out ("loiters") and insert ("solicits"); and in page 4, lines 8 to 17, leave out sub-section (3).

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Certified homes for girls convicted of prostitution.)

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, Clause *left out.*

Clause 10 (Prohibition of exclusion from trial, &c. of persons interested), *agreed to.*

PART II.

Suppression of Brothels.

Clause 11 (Summary proceedings against brothel keeper, &c.)

LORD BRAMWELL proposed to amend the clause by omitting a word which would make penal the ownership of premises which might be used for immoral purposes.

Amendment *moved,* in page 5, line 22, to leave out ("owner".)—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE BISHOP OF EXETER proposed to insert a new paragraph inflicting penalties upon keepers of immoral houses who induced girls to resort thither.

Amendment *moved,* in page 6, line 2, after ("aforesaid") insert as a new paragraph—

"If it shall be made to appear to the court that a person convicted under this section has induced or knowingly suffered any girl under the age of twenty-one years to resort to or be in or upon the brothel in respect whereof he is convicted, for an immoral purpose, such person shall in addition to the penalties aforesaid be liable at the discretion of the court to imprisonment for any term not exceeding twelve months, with or without hard labour."—(*The Lord Bishop of Exeter.*)

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

LORD MONTEAGLE moved an Amendment, that proceedings should not be taken against any person under the section except by order of the local authority.

Amendment *moved,* in page 6, line 5, after ("conviction") insert the following paragraphs:—

"Proceedings shall not be taken against any person under this section except by the order of the local authority.

"The local authority means the bodies of persons specified in the first schedule hereto.

"Any expenses incurred in respect of such proceedings by the local authority shall be paid out of the local rate.

"The local rate means the rate described in the third column of the first schedule hereto."—(*The Lord Monteagle.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he could not accept the Amendment, as it would shut out the general public altogether. Under the section as it stood, public associations could set the law in motion, and he saw no reason why they should not have the power to do so.

LORD MONTEAGLE said, the existing law already gave power to associations to take action.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Future tenancies determinable for keeping brothel.)

On the Motion of the Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendments made: In page 6, line 16, leave out from ("and") to ("that"), in line 17, and insert ("his assigns"); leave out from ("Building") in the same line to ("of") in line 24, and insert—

"Nor any part thereof, demised by such lease, agreement, or contract of tenancy, or to be erected on any land so demised, shall be used as a brothel, with power for the landlord, and all persons claiming any estate or interest through or under him, in case of any breach of such covenant, to re-enter the house or building in which or in any part of which the said breach has been committed, and to avoid and put an end to the said lease, agreement, or contract of tenancy so far as respects such house or building, and in the event of such house or building being subject to an undivided rent in common with other houses or buildings, the rent shall be apportioned as circumstances require.

"(2.) The conviction, whether in pursuance of this Act or otherwise,"); line 25, leave out ("such"); and line 29, leave out (" of such lease, agreement, or tenancy") and insert—

"So far as respects such premises, of any lease, agreement for a lease, or other contract of tenancy whereby such premises are held by him."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 13 (Search warrant for detection of brothel).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, Clause *struck out* of the Bill.

PART III.

Definitions and Miscellaneous.

Clause 14 (Definitions).

On the Motion of The Lord BRAMWELL, the following Amendment made:—In page 7, line 8, leave out from ("Act") to the first ("The") in line 13.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 15 (Repeal of enactments in Schedule) *agreed to*.

Clause 16 (Application of Act to Scotland).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made:—In page 8, after line 3, add as a separate paragraph—

"The expression 'Court of General or Quarter Sessions' shall mean the High Court or a Circuit Court of Justiciary."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Schedule *agreed to*.

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 99.)

SETTLEMENT AND REMOVAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law of settlement and removal—Was *presented* by The Earl of BELMORE; read 1ª. (No. 97.)

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to provide for the maintenance of the new streets at Hyde Park Corner—Was *presented* by The Lord SUDELEY; read 1ª. (No. 98.)

House adjourned at half past Nine o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 15th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Hon. John Stewart Gathorne Hardy, for Kent County (Mid Division).

WAYS AND MEANS—*Resolutions considered in Committee.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) * [45]—R.P.

Third Reading—Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) * [179], and *passed.*

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, AND LEGAL PROCEDURE.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and amended Clauses of the Bills referred to them.—(*Mr. Sclater-Booth.*)

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONE EXCHANGE LICENCES—THE TELEPHONE COMPANY OF IRELAND.

MR. DEASY (for Mr. PARNELL) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has refused to the Telephone Company of Ireland a licence for an Exchange at Cork, on the same terms as that granted for Dublin; and, whether he has insisted upon a condition which he has been assured by the Company it is absolutely out of their power to accept, viz., that they should sell to the Postmaster General instruments which they do not themselves own, and of which they have only the user?

Mr. FAWCETT: I have explained, in reply to a similar Question, that about two years ago it was decided, under certain conditions, to give telephone licences to all applicants. These conditions it was thought necessary to impose in the public interest; and the particular condition to which the hon. Member refers is one that has been inserted in all telephone licences which have been granted since the period mentioned.

Mr. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, If he could state, for the information of the House, the number of Telephones (being patents the property of the United Telephone Company) in use by the Post Office for Exchange purposes in each of the years since the Department undertook Exchange business; the total number of such instruments acquired by the Post Office, whether in use for any purpose, in store, or otherwise; the further number of such instruments which the Department has the right to call upon the Company, under agreement, to supply to it; and, the number of such instruments sold by the Department, if any, with the price and conditions, if any, of sale?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, but without going into the question of patents, I have to state that 177 telephones were in use by the Post Office for exchange purposes on the 31st of March, 1882; 598 on the same date in 1883; and 954 on the same date in the present year. The total number of such instruments acquired by the Post Office is 5,251, and the Department has the right, under agreement, to call upon the United Telephone Company to supply about 15,000 more. Three hundred and thirty-two telephones have been sold by the Department, and the aggregate price received for them is £3,315. No conditions were imposed on the purchasers.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION—LYEFIELD SCHOOL BOARD—DEATH FROM OVER-PRESSURE.

Mr. SEVERNE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he will cause inquiry to be made from the Chairman of the Lyefield School Board, Charlton Kings, county Gloucester, or others, as to the death from alleged over-pressure of Lilly Wood, a pupil teacher, and state the result to the House?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The pupil teacher in question was transferred with the National School to the Lyefield School Board in December last. On the 1st of April it was reported to the board that she had broken a blood-vessel the previous evening on her way home from school. The medical certificate states the cause of death as acute phthisis; and the school board unanimously declare that there is not the least evidence that death was due to her school work.

SCOTLAND—ALLEGED "BOYCOTTING" IN SOUTH UIST.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to a letter which appeared recently in *The Echo* newspaper anent two cases of alleged boycotting in South Uist; whether it is true that a factor there warned four crofters who travelled twenty miles to an auction sale, not to purchase, as he (the factor) had a black mark against them, and whether the factor in question forbade the vendors to sell to the crofters; whether these four men have been served with notices of eviction for giving evidence before the Royal Commission, and for joining the Highland Land Law Reform Association; whether a tacksman in South Uist refused permission to a tenant to go to the fishing, that he might earn three pounds of rent arrear, for his having joined said Association; and, whether, if these charges be true, the Government will at once legislate for the suppression of such intimidation?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have not seen the letter referred to; but since the Question was put upon the Paper I have made such inquiry as time permitted in regard to the matters set out in it. The result of that inquiry has been to negative all the three allegations or suggestions which it contains. It is true that notices of removal have been served upon three crofters in South Uist; but this was in consequence of their being largely in arrear with their rents, and of their having been guilty of various violent or menacing acts; and it is also the case that a similar notice was served upon a squatter in consequence of his having taken forcible possession of an island. None of these men had given evidence before the Royal Commission.

LAW AND JUSTICE—EXECUTION OF FOREIGN JUDGMENTS.

Mr. Serjeant SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received from the Italian Government an invitation to take part in an International Conference on the subject of the Execution of Foreign Judgments, upon the basis of resolutions adopted by the Conference of the "Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations," held at Milan in September last; and, if so, whether they have accepted the invitation?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have received a communication from the Italian Government upon the subject to which the hon. Member alludes, and have acceded to a proposal that a preliminary study of the question on the bases of the Resolution adopted by the Association be intrusted to a Conference at Rome of official delegates to be appointed by the several Governments.

THE MAURITIUS—MR. NAPIER BROOME.

Mr. WHITLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Is it true that Sir George Bowen, when Governor of Mauritius, authorized Mr. Napier Broome to receive a sum of 3,600 rupees over and above the salary which had been paid to him during the time he was acting as officer administering the government of the Colony of Mauritius, though there was a Colonial Ordinance clearly forbidding such additional salary to be paid; is it true that this sum was paid to Mr. Broome notwithstanding that Mr. C. de Joux, then acting Auditor General, had reported that such payment was illegal; and, has the amount been refunded to the Colonial Treasury?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: It is true that Sir George Bowen authorized the payment to Mr. Broome of the full salary of the Governorship for the period during which he administered the Government, although there is a Colonial Ordinance which specifies half the salary as the usual remuneration. Sir George Bowen was not aware of the irregularity of the proceeding when he made the order, and the Ordinance was not brought to his notice by the acting Auditor General, Mr. Stewart. It is not clear whether, after the order was given and before payment was made, Mr. de Joux, who had meanwhile become acting Auditor General, did or did not bring the irregularity to the notice of the Governor. As Mr. Napier Broome administered the Government for an unusually long period, the Secretary of State has, after much consideration, recommended that he should not be required to refund the amount, but that the payment should be legalized by a vote of the Legislature. I may add that it has been usual, when an officer has had to bear the expenses attendant on a long tenure of office, to allow him to receive the whole salary attached to it; and it is hoped, therefore, that the Legislature will legalize the over-payment.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DEATH FROM ALLEGED NEGLECT OF THE DISPENSARY MEDICAL OFFICER, BALLYMACARRETT, BELFAST.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Local Government Board had been drawn to the case of a poor person named Loughlin, who resided at 5, Memel Street, in the borough of Belfast, and who died without dispensary relief on the 26th March 1884; if it be true that a red line marked "urgent," and signed by Mr. John Reid, P.L.G. for the district, was delivered to Dr. Croker, the dispensary officer for Ballymacarrett district, on the evening of the 25th March 1884, to which no attention was paid; and, if any steps will be taken to inquire whether there was negligence in the case?

Mr. TREVELYAN: A complaint was addressed to the Local Government Board with regard to this case, and they made inquiry into it, and found that there was no blame to be attached to the medical officer; and they subsequently ascertained that the complaint had been made under an assumed name. The facts are that, at about 10 o'clock on the night of the 25th of March, the father of the patient left a visiting ticket with the doctor, asking him to visit his son, who was suffering from consumption, on the following day. He explained that he only left the ticket that night because he would be at work in the morning. The patient, however, died suddenly at 5 o'clock in the morning.

EXCISE—WEIGHT AND VALUE OF SMUGGLED TOBACCO, 1880-84.

MR. JACKSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he can state the weight and value of the tobacco and cigars seized by the Custom House authorities between the 1st of January 1880, and the 1st of January 1884; and, how such tobacco and cigars were disposed of?

MR. COURTNEY: In the four years 1880 to 1883 95,000 lbs. of tobacco and cigars were seized, valued at £27,000, including duty. The cigars were sold and the tobacco destroyed, except some 7,000 lbs. weight, which was sent to Kew and used for fumigating the plants.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS OFFICE (IRELAND).

MR. GREER asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury have not heretofore allowed the clerks in the Registry of Deeds, Ireland, thirty-six days annual leave; whether, although an Act, entitled "The Registry of Deeds (Ireland) Holidays Act," was passed last Session for the purpose of granting the officials four additional holidays, namely, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, and the two weekdays next after Christmas Day, the Registrar of Deeds has informed the staff that he has been directed to deduct these four statutory holidays from those thirty-six days; whether the late Sir Dominick Corrigan and the Royal Commissioners have reported on the unhealthiness of the Department; whether retirements from this cause have recently taken place; and, whether, in view of these circumstances, any steps will be taken to preserve to the clerks their full annual leave of thirty-six days in addition to the four days granted by Parliament?

MR. COURTNEY: I need only add to my former answers on this matter that we have no reason to believe that any clerks in the Deeds Registry have had their health injured by the state of the building, the defects in which have long since been remedied. The other parts of the hon. Member's Question have been already answered.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SERGEANT GALLAGHER.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Police Sergeant Gallagher, stationed at Granard, county Longford, who was accused of drunkenness, tried, on the 3rd of April, by a court composed of three inspectors, found guilty, and reduced to the rank and pay of constable; whether, in that case, there was a remarkable conflict of testimony, five Catholic policemen, who were present when the charge was made, deposing that Gallagher was sober, and two Protestant policemen deposing that he was drunk; whether Gallagher is a Catholic, and whether the three inspectors who tried the case are Protestants; whether, in the town of Granard, which has a population of nearly 2,000, of whom about forty are Protestants, there are a Protestant inspector of police, a Protestant headconstable, a Protestant sergeant, and four Protestant constables, the entire constabulary force consisting of thirteen men; and, whether he would direct a new inquiry to be held, before a court not exclusively Protestant?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sergeant Gallagher's case was carefully investigated by a Constabulary Court. There was some conflict of evidence; but the Court and the Inspector General considered the charge against him fully established. The religious profession of members of the Court, or of the witnesses, could not and did not in any way affect the conclusion arrived at. With regard to the rest of the Question, I am going to give an answer which I communicated to the hon. Member privately—that, in consequence of Questions which have been asked from more than one quarter of the House, the Irish Government have come to the conclusion that announcements in Parliament on the promotion and distribution of Roman Catholics and Protestants in the Constabulary tend to prejudice discipline and raise a feeling of religious animosity and jealousy in a force where it is most essential that it should not exist. The Government are confident that members of the force of all ranks honestly perform their duty without religious bias, and they have confidence that those charged with the duty of selecting for promotion do not allow a constable's religion to interfere with his advancement. Under these circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that I must respectfully decline to answer Questions from any quarter of the House relating to the religion of the Constabulary in any particular town or district.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: In consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I will, on the first opportunity open to me, draw the attention of the House to the whole circumstances mentioned in the Question, and move a Resolution.

MR. O'BRIEN: Might I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman's decision has been in any manner influenced by late votes in this House?

MR. HEALY: Twenty-eight.

INDIA—THE BANDA AND KIRWEE PRIZE MONEY.

MR. GREGORY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the proceeds of private debts (£11,915) due to the Ex-Princes of Kirwee (as well as the proceeds (£276,000) of their loan deposits) have been omitted from the Return No. 213, of Session 1876; and, whether those proceeds of private debts, as well as an allowance for interest on about £150,000 of admitted booty retained in specie by the Indian Government from 1858 till 1862, ought not to be included in a further Return, so as to fulfil the Order of the House dated 22nd July 1874?

MR. J. K. CROSS: In the strict letter of the Order, the amount of the private debts recovered at Benares might have been included in the Return. But as this Return was called for with the object of showing the actual amount of the Banda and Kirwee Prize its inclusion must have been misleading, for the Lords of the Treasury had already decided that the sum was not prize. Full information on this point is contained in the Return 264 of the 18th of July, 1871. With respect to the interest there can be no question. The specie consisted of coin not current, and quite useless as money. No interest, therefore, accrued on it, and there was nothing to include under this head in a Return of the proceeds of property which passed into the hands of the authorities.

THE MAURITIUS—THE FLOGGING LAWS.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has any objection to print, for the use of Members, that portion of the speech of the Governor of Mauritius, on closing the Legislative Session of 1883-4, under the headings "Flogging," and "Amendment of the Flogging Laws?"

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The portions of the speech of Sir John Pope Hennessy referred to in the Question shall be given to the House together with other Papers necessary to explain the circumstances connected with its delivery.

DEAN FOREST, &c. BILL.

COLONEL KINGSCOTE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, When the Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavel's Bill will be printed; and, if he will allow a sufficient time between the publication and the Second Reading for its consideration by the inhabitants of the district interested in it?

MR. COURTNEY: I am sorry that I cannot name the day when this Bill will be printed; but I can readily undertake that ample time shall be given between its publication and the second reading to enable it to be fully considered. As my hon. and gallant Friend is probably aware, the object of the Bill is to effect a settlement of conflicting interests which now impede the working of deep seams of coal in the Forest; and the Bill, when presented, will be offered rather as a scheme embodying equitable principles of settlement than as one to be rigidly maintained in all its details.

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE SALT LAWS.

MR. BURT asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Natives' complaints of the unusual stringency with which the Salt Preventive Establishment, Madras, has worked the Salt Laws during the past three years will be heard; whether it is true that 15,004 Natives were arrested in the official year ending 31st March 1883, for eating untaxed salt, and taken to distant courts for trial; and, whether, at this moment, the tax on salt in Madras is double what it was in the East India Company's day?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Any complaint which may be received on the subject of the hon. Member's Question will be carefully considered. During the year 1882-3 15,004 persons were accused of dealing in, or being in possession of, illicit salt to the extent of 10,000 tons. Of these persons, 48 per cent were dismissed by the Salt Department with a warning, and 7,836, or 52 per cent, were sent for trial before the nearest magistrate, of whom 93 per cent were convicted. To the last clause of the Question my answer is, Yes.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—TRIAL FOR INTIMIDATION AT NEWTOWNBARRY, CO. WEXFORD.

MR. J. E. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the trial, under the Crimes Act, of a number of young farmers at Newtownbarry, county Wexford, on a charge of intimidation; whether his attention has been drawn to the report that the presiding magistrate, Mr. M'Leod, R.M., in sentencing the prisoners, said, in reference to some ivy leaves worn by them, that—

> "They had come into that Court wearing bunches of green, in open defiance of Law and order. He would let them see the Law was too strong for them;"

whether it is against any Law for Irishmen to wear green; and, whether the wearing of the green can be legally regarded as an aggravation of the offence committed by the prisoners?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have received a Report from the Resident Magistrate, from which it appears that a number of young men—very few of them farmers, as described in the Question—were convicted of intimidation, that their conduct and demeanour on the occasion of the trial were reprehensible, and that, before passing sentence, the magistrate told them so in words to the following effect: —It would have been more seemly if the defendants had expressed regret for their misconduct, and would have given a promise that in future there would be no repetition of the offence, when the Bench would be only too glad to make the sentence light; but instead of that, they had come into the town of Enniscorthy, and into that Court, with a display of laurel leaves as if they wished to set the law at defiance, and glorified in intimidating a poor, inoffensive old man. He also said that they would find the law too strong for them.

ARMY—RE-ERECTION OF LONGFORD BARRACKS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the Military authorities to rebuild the large block of stabling recently burnt down in Longford Barracks; and, whether, considering the central position and healthy situation of Longford, its Railway accommodation, and its cheap and excellent supply of forage, the Government will improve the barrack accommodation, and make the place again, as it was for many years, the head-quarters of a Cavalry Regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, the question of how far the accommodation described should be replaced was at present under consideration. For military reasons, it was not desirable to make Longford the head-quarters of a Cavalry regiment; but it was intended that detachments of Cavalry and Infantry, with the headquarters of a Militia regiment, should stay there.

IRELAND—PALMERSTOWN RACES—GENTLEMEN RIDERS DRESSED AS FEMALES.

MR. LEAHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a report in the Dublin papers of May 6th, under the heading "Palmerstown Races"—

> "The contest for the Bachelor's Plate, which took place in the first race, proved highly diverting, the gentlemen riding being, in accordance with the conditions laid down, all dressed in ladies attire. The appearance of the 'ladies' upon the scene was exceedingly ludicrous, and as they advanced together to the course their comic costumes, in nearly every case strikingly at variance with their gait, excited general amusement. The race was exceedingly comic, the fantastic appearance of the 'ladies,' some of whom rode side-saddle and some astride, causing the most intense amusement, which was greatly heightened by one or two mishaps in the way of falls which occurred during the competition;"

if he is aware that the neighbouring Catholic Clergy felt called on to denounce, the Sunday before the races, this matter, and to warn their people against going to Palmerstown; and if several members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were on duty, gate keeping on said occasion, by whose authority and at whose request they so attended, at whose expense the cars that conveyed them a long distance were paid for?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The races referred to included an event which was intended, I suppose, to be comic, in which riders were dressed as women. I believe it is the case that the Roman Catholic clergyman at Kill spoke about these races, and advised his people not to attend them. With regard to the presence of the Constabulary, it is usual to have police present at race meetings. They attended on this occasion by the authority of their superior officers, to whom application had been made by the promoters of the meeting. The cars on which they were conveyed were paid for out of private sources, and it is not the fact that they were employed as gatekeepers.

Mr. SEXTON: Is not the conduct described in the second paragraph an offence against the law?

Mr. GIBSON: No, no.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have not been advised that it does constitute an offence.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statements are correct:—There are in Ireland twenty-four certified Industrial Schools for Girls and four for Boys in connection with National Schools; these National Schools are inspected by the District Inspector of the National Board, who examine for results, but the result fees are withheld in respect of the Industrial School children; the teachers are not paid by the State as in Workhouses both in England and Ireland; the teachers in these schools are the only teachers deprived of result fees in respect of children taught by them; whether repeated representations have been made to the Government on these points by the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools; and, whether the Government propose to consider these representations?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The facts are as stated with regard to the connection of a number of industrial schools with the National Board and non-payment of the teachers of those schools by the Board. The reason of such non-payment is that when industrial school pupils are admitted to national schools it is on the understanding that their education is paid for in the Government grant, administered by the Industrial School Department; in other words, their teachers are provided and remunerated by the industrial school managers. I am aware that Sir John Lentaigne has reported that some managers complain of this arrangement, and that he himself urges that, with the view of securing the benefits to education arising from periodical examinations, result fees should be paid in the case of these children. But the Government have not, up to the present, seen their way to comply with this recommendation, and I cannot undertake that they will do so.

PRISONS BOARD (IRELAND)—THE REPORT.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Report of the General Prisons Board will be presented?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The General Prisons Board inform me that they expect that Report will be ready for presentation some time in July. This will not be later than the usual time of presentation.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER CAMPS.

Mr. FORESTER asked the Secretary of State for War, How, if only 80 per cent of each Regiment of Volunteers are to be allowed to go into camp, and to draw camp allowance, the remaining 20 per cent are to make the battalion drills necessary for efficiency, seeing that, under Vol. Reg. par. 916, no travelling allowance may be claimed for them, and how the expectation mentioned in the same paragraph can be possibly fulfilled under existing circumstances?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Under Article 917 of the same Regulations, Volunteers unable to attend camp may be authorized to substitute company drill for a battalion drill.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. William Gray, who is one of the Sub-Commissioners for fixing rent in Ireland, is the same Mr. William Gray who is reported to have been in the habit of attending, and occasionally presiding, at political meetings where cheers for the suspects and the Land League, and cries of "no rent," and denunciations of landlordism were common topics, and who, in one speech, said—

> "If Griffith's valuation of a farm be twenty shillings per acre, and the taxes, say, three shillings, then eight shillings and sixpence would be a fair rent. But I am not certain that, when the forces represented by steam, and the contemplated arrangements in America are fully carried out and developed, even this will not be an exorbitant rent;"

in a speech on another occasion, is reported to have said—

> "The farmers did not get, as they should get, the benefit of the Healy Clause. . . . . . They would not, however, give up agitation; and, before 1891, they would have another Act, which would be a greater improvement on the Act of 1881 than the Act of 1881 was on that of 1870. . . . Lord Monck was a landlord, Judge O'Hagan, who betrayed the early traditions of his youth, Litton, who by false promises was elected for Tyrone, and who now betrayed the farmers, and Vernon, were all landlords;"

and, if, on inquiry, he finds that Mr. William Gray, who is reported to have made these observations, be a Sub-Commissioner, he is prepared to consider whether he possesses the qualifications which would comply with the rules laid down by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as guiding him in making such appointments, as expressed in a Letter to a reverend gentleman, dated 11th January 1883?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Mr. Gray made the platform speeches alluded to before he was appointed as a Sub-Commissioner, and the words he used were not known to the Lord Lieutenant when he appointed him. His Excellency selected Mr. Gray, feeling confidence in the recommendations of men like Lord Yarmouth, Sir Richard Wallace, and Mr. Stannus. Having regard to these circumstances and to the fact that the Land Commissioners have good reports of the way in which he does his work, Lord Spencer does not intend to take any action. It is only fair to Mr. Gray to say that he explained that he used the illustration of Griffith's valuation merely to repudiate any valuation as a standard of rent, and also that the political cries alluded to as having been made use of at meetings which he attended were used in opposition to him.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE: Upon what authority does the right hon. Gentleman suppose Mr. Gray was recommended by Lord Yarmouth and Sir Richard Wallace?

Mr. TREVELYAN: On the authority of Lord Spencer, and I have had in my hands letters from Lord Yarmouth and Sir Richard Wallace which, so far as my recollection serves me, bear out my statement.

Mr. GIBSON: Has the right hon. Gentleman obtained any explanation from this gentleman of the following words—

> "If Griffith's valuation of a farm be twenty shillings per acre and the taxes, say, three shillings, then eight and sixpence would be a fair rent?"

Does the right hon. Gentleman think he can expect the landlords of Ireland to acquiesce in this decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I gave the explanation supplied to me by Mr. Gray as to its being an illustration of the doctrine that no valuation rent was possible.

Mr. GIBSON: I shall put a further Question on Monday.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — POLITICAL EMBLEMS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the National Schools at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, are decorated with various political mottoes of a party character, including a portrait of Lord Beaconsfield surmounted with the words "Peace with Honour," "Success to the Rothwell Conservative Association,"&c.; and, whether such exhibitions are permissible in public elementary schools supported by State grants?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I received, a short time since, a complaint from ratepayers of Rothwell, embodying statements similar to those in the hon. Member's Question. I have communicated with the manager of the National Schools, and the Vicar has written to me the following letter:—

> "The use of the room was granted to the committee of the Rothwell Conservative Association for the purpose of holding their annual dinner. Among the decorations and mottoes

placed upon the walls by the committee were those you have enclosed in Mr. Broadhurst's question, and also the portrait of the late Earl of Beaconsfield, which was lent for the occasion by a member of the association. All the mottoes bearing any allusion to politics were removed before 9 o'clock on the following morning. The only ones remaining in the room are the following, bearing on agriculture, as lessons are being given in the winter months—'Success to Agriculture,' 'Unity is Strength,' 'God Speed the Plough.'"

On receipt of this letter I felt it my duty to ask the complainants on what evidence they had made these allegations, and I have received the following reply:—

"Rothwell, Kettering, May 14, 1884,

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday, May 13, asking on what authority the statement 'that the walls of the church schools here are decorated with the portrait of Lord Beaconsfield and his famous motto "Peace with Honour" was made, I beg to say that they have been seen on several occasions during the past 12 months by Mr. Barlow, secretary of the Rothwell Gas Company, who signed the letter; and by Mr. C. Palmer, collector of taxes, to either of whom reference may be made, as well as to many other persons, both old and young, if necessary. I have just been informed, on reliable authority, that the portrait and the motto were removed from the school walls between 12 and 2 o'clock this day, May 14th.

"I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

"D. B. Chamberlain."

Under these circumstances, there being a conflict of testimony, I consider it necessary that further inquiries should be made. The use of public elementary schools, out of school hours, for political purposes is very common. I believe it is a practice common to all Parties. But it would, undoubtedly, be undesirable that during school hours there should be any display of Party mottoes.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—VOTE OF THANKS TO OFFICERS AND MEN OF H.M. SEA AND LAND FORCES.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the precedents that the Thanks of Parliament were voted on the 28th March 1811 to Lieutenant General Thomas Graham (an officer on the Staff of the Army in the Peninsula) and those serving under his orders, being a force of 4,200 officers and men for the victory of Barossa; and, on the 12th February 1844 to Major General Charles Napier (an officer on the Staff of the Army of Bombay) and those serving under his orders for victories gained at Meeanee with 2,400 men, and at Hyderabad with 5,000 men, it is the intention of Ministers to propose to Parliament to vote its Thanks to Rear Admiral Sir William Hewett, the Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Seamen and Marines, and to Major General Sir Gerald Graham (an officer on the Staff of the Army in Egypt), and those under their orders for their distinguished services at the battles of El Teb and Tamanieb?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The precedents quoted by the right hon. and gallant Member are as he states them, and, no doubt, possess some points of similarity to the present case; but in arriving at the decision which I communicated to the House in reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), Her Majesty's Government relied on the more recent precedents of modern times, which they considered, and still consider, should guide them in the case of the actions in which Her Majesty's troops have been recently engaged.

Sir JOHN HAY said, that on Tuesday, June 10, he proposed to give the House an opportunity of expressing its gratitude to the troops by moving a Vote of Thanks to them.

Subsequently,

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked whether the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Member would come on as a question of Privilege at half-past 4, or whether it would have to take its chance like an ordinary Motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Precedence would not be accorded to a Motion of the kind made by a private Member.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE NATIVES IN THE CONGO TERRITORY.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received any information bearing on the news brought by the Royal Mail Steamer *Benguela*, which arrived in the Mersey on Saturday last—namely, that the excitement caused among the Natives in the Congo territory by the proposal to hand them over to the Portuguese was increasing, and had already spread beyond the district proposed to be ceded?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No information of the nature alluded to has been received by Her Majesty's Government.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Are the Government going to take any steps to ascertain the feeling of the Natives?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No doubt a Report will be made upon the subject by Her Majesty's Consul.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Is the noble Lord aware that this is the second Royal Mail steamer that has arrived at Liverpool bearing this information; and does he not think the news of sufficient importance to justify his making inquiries?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Whether the news is important or not is naturally a question of opinion; and anybody, including Her Majesty's Government, can form their own opinion.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Have the Government received any Report from Her Majesty's Consul on the subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In Mr. Cohen's last Report there was no information bearing upon this particular point.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Has the noble Lord, whose replies are exceedingly brief, caused any inquiry to be made as to the state of native feeling?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already answered that. ["No!"] With regard to the question of Native feeling, there have been several Questions put in this House, and the attention of the Government has naturally been drawn to the subject throughout the negotiations.

Mr. GIBSON: Have the Government lost any of their sympathy for Native races since Tuesday last?

INLAND REVENUE OFFICE—GRIEVANCES OF THE OFFICIALS.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has had under consideration questions in relation to the position and duties of certain classes of Inland Revenue officials which have been brought under his notice in a petition signed by upwards of 85 per cent. of the entire body affected; and, whether he proposes to direct any changes in the regulations with a view of the remedy of the grievances complained of?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The Petition to which I presume the hon. Member refers is included in the Papers laid upon the Table last year. The views of the Treasury are also given in those Papers. Since then the position of the Inland Revenue officials has been further considered, and early in this year changes were introduced into the organization of the Service which, it is believed, will, with the changes already made, materially improve the conditions and prospects of its members. No representations respecting them have since been officially brought under my notice.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay upon the Table of the House a Paper showing what changes have been made, and containing the reply to the answer of the Treasury to the statements of the officials?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I will see what I can do in the matter.

THE CITY LIVERY COMPANIES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having reference to his reply on the same subject last Session, The cause of the delay in presenting the Report of the Royal Livery Commission; whether he will take steps to prevent further delay in its presentation, considering that on 12th July 1883 the Report was formulated, and that the sittings of the Commission were deferred for something like nine months, and that only a few meetings have been held this year; and, if he would explain to the House the reasons for this delay?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: My hon. Friend asks me whether I will take steps to prevent further delay in the presentation of this Report; but I would point out that when the Queen appoints a Royal Commission I have no control over them. Therefore, all I can do is to inquire how they are getting on. I have so inquired, and I am informed that the Report is one of great complexity, and the evidence is very voluminous, so that the compilation of the document must necessarily be a work of time. The sittings have been delayed by the absence of one or two eminent Members; but the main Report is already complete, and a separate Report is now being drawn up.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—GUN LICENCES.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (for Lord BURGHLEY) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the cases of William Rawson and John Pratt, who were awarded imprisonment, with hard labour, in default of payment of fines amounting to £5 12*s.* 3*d.* at Thrapston, on March 4th, for carrying a gun without a licence; and, whether it is true that they were discharged by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue on March 17th, the penalties not having been paid, without communication with the committing magistrates, though there were over 20 previous convictions against Pratt, and three, including one of felony, against Rawson?

MR. COURTNEY: It is true that the Inland Revenue Board, in exercise of their statutory powers, released these men after a fortnight's imprisonment, considering that term sufficient for the offence of not taking out a 10*s.* gun licence. The Board were unaware of any circumstance which rendered it incumbent upon them to communicate with the committing magistrates in a matter entirely within their own authority.

NAVY—THE BRITISH AND FRENCH NAVIES.

MR. RYLANDS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in *The Times*, in which Sir Thomas Symonds "publicly defies" him to prove a statement made by him in this House, in contradiction of some figures published by Sir T. Symonds in reference to the relative strength of the British and French Navies; and, whether he could, for the satisfaction of the House, make any further statement to make clear the true relation of the facts on which the comparison between the two Navies has been founded?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, my attention has been called to the letter to which my hon. Friend refers. The remarks which I made in Committee of Supply last week did not relate to a comparison of the relative strength of the British and French Navies. I alluded to a statement made by Sir Thomas Symonds regarding the amount to be spent in the two countries in one year upon the building of armoured ships, which was in these words:—"The French thus vote £906,905 more per annum than we do in building 15 new armoured ships to our 12." This is the definite assertion the inaccuracy of which I thought it right to indicate to the House; and I stated that the amount of the error was about £1,300,000. As I have been defied to prove my statement, I must with regret trespass upon the patience of the House while I explain it as briefly as I can. The most important errors in Sir Thomas Symonds's calculations are two. In the first place, he included for the French ships the cost of materials as well as of labour; in the case of the English ships the cost of labour only. This may be estimated to cause a difference of nearly £500,000. In the second place, he correctly quoted from a summary in the French Estimates £1,025,360 as the total amount to be spent in France upon the construction of armoured ships, and then added to it the amount of the contract Vote—£794,000—apparently unaware that a great part of that Vote had no connection whatever with iron-clads, and that, so far as it did relate to iron-clads, the amount was already included, and had been placed to the account of the several ships in the summary from which he had quoted.

MR. GORST: I rise to Order, Sir. The Navy Estimates are not yet concluded, and the hon. Gentleman will have an opportunity of entering into this matter upon them. I ask your opinion, Sir, as to whether the hon. Gentleman is not now entering into a matter of debate?

MR. RYLANDS: In asking the Question, Sir, I understood that my hon. Friend would state facts, and not enter into matter of debate.

MR. SPEAKER: I have not yet seen any cause to interrupt the hon. Gentleman. This is a reply to a Question.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It may, perhaps, relieve my hon. and learned Friend's mind to know that I have just done. This amount of £794,000, together with the £500,000 for materials already mentioned, makes up the sum of £1,300,000.

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY.

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs, If the communication from the Manchester Cotton Spinners' Association to the Foreign Office, on the Congo Treaty, recently referred to by Lord Granville, contained any intimation of the fact that, at the meeting when the resolution was adopted, only six members were present; and, whether, under those circumstances, he will endeavour to obtain an expression of the deliberate opinions of the cotton spinners of Lancashire?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The letter referred to was signed by the Secretary, "in pursuance of instructions of my (his) Committee," and said nothing as to the number of members present at the meeting. The resolution was said to have been passed unanimously. In reply to the second part of the Question, I may say that the Foreign Office has had communications from the different Chambers of Commerce.

THE FIJI ISLANDS—MR. PATTERSON.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Mr. Peter Patterson was dispossessed of certain lands and property in the Fiji Islands after the annexation of those islands by Her Majesty's Government; whether Mr. Patterson, on making a claim for compensation, was informed that the question could only be reopened by the Colonial Office in London; whether Mr. Patterson has come to London for the purpose of seeking an interview with the authorities of the Colonial Office; and, whether such interview will be granted to him?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; Mr. Patterson was not dispossessed of any lands or property. His claim was under a deed from the late Chief Thakombau granting the cocoanuts over a very large district. Thakombau asserted that all he intended to convey was his own exclusive right during his lifetime as Chief to buy from the Natives of the district; but by no means an exclusive right to the nuts themselves, over which he admitted he had no control. Mr. Patterson's claim was fully considered by the tribunal appointed to investigate land claims, and was disallowed as entirely preposterous; and, further, that there was no case for compensation. By a local Ordinance the decision of this land tribunal is final. I, therefore, cannot believe that any question of the matter being reopened by the Colonial Office could have been suggested to Mr. Patterson. He has sought an interview; but as it would only be misleading if such an interview was granted, as encouraging the idea that the matter could be reopened, he has been informed that such interview would be of no use.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS.

MR. MAC IVER asked the Secretary of State for War, If his intention has been called to a letter from Sir Samuel Baker that appears in yesterday's *Times*, which contains a strong recommendation for the immediate despatch of three thousand Indian troops to Suakin; whether there are at least half a dozen steamers in Bombay at the present moment which, if despatched before the change of monsoon, which invariably occurs early in June, could make the passage to Suakin in about a week; and, if Her Majesty's Government, in the absence of direct intelligence from General Gordon, would yield to the appeal of Sir Samuel Baker and despatch Indian troops while the monsoon is still favourable and it is not yet too late?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My attention has been called to the letter of Sir Samuel, to which the hon. Member refers; and I notice that Sir Samuel Baker makes a great number of recommendations besides that alluded to in the Question. It must be obvious that the question of the despatch of 3,000 or any number of Indian troops to the Soudan involves many other considerations besides that of transport; and I am afraid that on this subject I cannot make any addition to the statements made by Members of Her Majesty's Government in the recent debates.

THE IRISH GLEBE, &c. PURCHASERS' ASSOCIATION.

MR. BERESFORD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant has yet received the reply from the Lords of the Treasury in relation to the representations made to him by the Irish Glebe and Church Lands Purchasers' Association, which, at the end of last month, was expected in a few days?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The reply of the Treasury has been received, and I have no doubt that the Lord Lieutenant will very shortly communicate with the Association on the subject.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PENSIONS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS.

Mr. SYKES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, To which class of pensioners the schoolmasters belong who were engaged before 1846, but did not obtain a certificate until after 1851, but before 1861, and are enabled to establish that they were appointed and gave satisfaction to the school managers until they obtained a certificate?

Mr. MUNDELLA: A Minute embodying the terms on which the addition to the pensions of elementary teachers is to be made is now under consideration, and will shortly be laid upon the Table of the House. Until this is done, I would prefer not to make any partial statement upon the subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—DISQUALIFICATION OF DISPENSARY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Dr. LYONS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table a Copy of any Rule made by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland by which the medical officers of dispensaries in Ireland are precluded from being placed on the Commission of the Peace; and, if he can inform the House whether any similar disability exists with regard to members of the profession of medicine in England?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The rule has not been formulated in precise terms, and I therefore cannot undertake to lay a copy of it on the Table. I have already more than once stated its substance to the House. It amounts simply to this—that the Lord Chancellor does not consider a dispensary doctor to be eligible for appointment to the Commission of the Peace in his own county, as he believes that the respective duties of the two positions are likely to clash. The rule was made in 1872 between the Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Chancellor, at that time Lord O'Hagan. I am not aware that such a rule exists in England. Probably no occasion to consider its desirability has arisen.

Dr. LYONS: I beg to give Notice that, in consequence of the answer o the right hon. Gentleman, I will, at the earliest opportunity, call attention to this subject.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether, in case of a stipendiary magistrate, who is paid by the Government, and whose son practices as doctor in the same district over which the father has jurisdiction, the same imputation would not exist which he now makes on the general body of the practitioners in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is really not fair to say that I cast any imputation on the Medical Profession of Ireland, because I gave the opinion of the Lord Chancellor that the duty of the two positions referred to would clash. The clashing of duty refers to the fact that a dispensary doctor may be called by any person who obtains a red ticket at any hour of the night or day, in which case the duty would most undoubtedly clash. If the hon. Member gives Notice of a Question I will answer it; but the fact that a rule such as this was made in 1872, and was acted upon ever since by successive Governments, in no sense conveys an imputation on the medical practitioners of Ireland.

Mr. GRAY: As the right hon. Gentleman is President of the Irish Local Government Board, and as he says the duty of a magistrate is inconsistent with the duty of a dispensary doctor, does he intend to recommend the Lord Chancellor to remove from the list of magistrates names of the medical officers who now hold the Commission of the Peace?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is a very different thing appointing a man afresh and removing from the Bench one who has already been appointed.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—INSTRUCTIONS TO SCHOOL INSPECTORS.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, When he can lay upon the Table the Instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors, of which he spoke in a Debate in this House before Easter; and, whether he can now name a time at which he hopes to move the Education Estimates?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Before settling the revised instructions to Inspectors it is necessary that the Department should be in possession of the recommendations made by the divisional conferences of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The recommendations of almost all the divisions are now in the hands of the Department, and the instructions referred to, which require very careful consideration, will be published as soon as possible. I am hoping to bring on the Education Estimates somewhat earlier than usual this year. I expect to get a day soon after the Whitsun Holidays.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF MR. P. N. FITZGERALD.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, now detained in prison at Sligo, is deprived of money which was taken from him at the time of his arrest; and, if so, whether directions will be given to the police to restore to him his money?

MR. TREVELYAN: When Fitzgerald was arrested £1 3*s.* in coin and halves of two £5 notes were found with him. The coin has been returned, and he has been told that if he will say where the other halves of the notes are, or if he will write for them, the sum of £10 shall on their arrival be given to him.

MR. O'BRIEN: May I ask the Solicitor General for Ireland what is the charge preferred against Mr. Fitzgerald? If he cannot answer now—["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: This is an entirely different Question, and Notice should be put on the Paper.

Subsequently,

MR. O'BRIEN: Perhaps the Solicitor General for Ireland could now state what is the charge against Mr. Fitzgerald at Tubbercurry?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I am quite unable to answer the Question without Notice.

EMIGRATION—IRISH PAUPER EMIGRANTS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement made by the Philadelphia correspondent of *The Times*, in a letter dated May 13th, to the effect that several steerage passengers on the steamer *City of Rome*, pauper emigrants from the workhouses in Kerry, have been detained at New York, in order that they may be sent back to Ireland; and, whether he will take any steps to discourage the deportation of paupers from Irish workhouses?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen the statement referred to by the hon. Member; but it is not the fact that any workhouse inmates have been sent out this year from the county of Kerry as State-aided emigrants. All the State-aided emigrants who went out in the *City of Rome* were persons carefully selected, who were going to their relations or friends, having produced letters of encouragement from them, and whose journeys were paid for to the towns or places where their friends lived.

TRADE AND COMMERCE — COMMERCIAL TREATIES — GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN.

MR. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the following statement, which appears in *The British Trade Journal*—namely—

> "By the Commercial Treaty recently concluded between Spain and the United States, the latter Country has obtained the removal of the differential Duties levied on cargoes conveyed to the Spanish West Indies in vessels flying flags other than those of Spain or her Colonies. These Duties are still in force against British vessels, and the Spanish Government has skilfully avoided the request for similar treatment for British vessels, by politely asking what concessions Her Majesty would confer on Spain in return for this advantage;"

and, whether, if the circumstances are as described, Her Majesty's Government intend taking such steps as may be necessary for the protection of British interests?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The hon. Member will learn from the Parliamentary Papers numbered "Commercial, 10 and 23, 1884," the present position of commercial negotiations between Great Britain and Spain. The latter Paper was distributed yesterday.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether General Gordon was informed of the intended withdrawal of General Graham's force from Suakin to Cairo, and his opinion asked as to its expediency; and, if so, what answer General Gordon returned; and, whether General Graham was asked if an expedition to Berber was feasible in March; and, if so, what was his reply?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Papers laid before Parliament, as I have repeatedly informed the hon. Member, contain a full statement of the communications with General Gordon, and there is nothing to add to them. The latter Question should be addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the second of the hon. Member's Questions, I have to say that I think he will find in the Egyptian Papers, No. 12, that General Stephenson telegraphed on the 5th of March that he was not prepared to recommend General Graham's force marching to Berber, owing to the scarcity of water on the route. I referred to this subject generally in the observations I made on Tuesday last; and I explained that, notwithstanding the opinion of General Stephenson, which I have quoted, operations were undertaken, from time to time, after the battle of Tamai, with the object of opening, if possible, the road to Berber; and I pointed out that the experience acquired in those operations satisfied us that we should not be justified in running what had been described by Sir Evelyn Baring, Sir Evelyn Wood, and General Stephenson the extraordinary military risk of sending a small force without any support from its base.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that the noble Lord had not answered the Question on the Paper, which was whether General Graham was asked if an expedition to Berber was feasible, and if so, what was his reply? He wished also to ask whether it was not the fact that Sir Evelyn Baring, on the 18th and 24th March, telegraphed home that both General Stephenson and General Wood were of opinion that such a march was feasible?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes; and that despatch was frequently referred to in the debate on both sides of the House. I can only remind the hon. Member that in stating their opinion that such an expedition was possible, they also spoke, at the same time, of the extraordinary military risk by which it would be accompanied. Under the circumstances which I have already explained in my answer to the hon. Member, and more at length on previous occasions, we did not think we should be justified in asking General Graham his opinion upon the feasibility of an expedition which we did not consider that we should be warranted in sanctioning.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, looking to the fact that the prompt announcement of an expedition to the Soudan at the earliest practicable opportunity might tend to ensure the safety of General Gordon, Her Majesty's Government will at once commence the required preparations, more especially by providing for the necessary steam transport on the Nile, so that it may be in readiness for the conveyance of troops and stores not later than July next?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question I cannot do better or more than refer the hon. Member to the speech delivered the day before yesterday by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, in which he fully stated the intentions of the Government with respect to the various matters touched upon in the Question, and stated that it was not desirable to make any announcement on the matter.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SIR FRANCIS CHANTREY'S FUND.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the manner in which the President and Council of the Royal Academy are applying the fund bequeathed by Sir Francis Chantrey "for the purchase of works of fine art," in the words of the sculptor's bequest, "of the highest merit;" and, whether steps cannot be taken for giving effect, in the interest of English art, to the express wishes of the founder?

MR. GLADSTONE: Since my right hon. Friend put this Question on the Paper, and since I gave a provisional answer to it, I have had a communication from the President of the Royal Academy, from which I find that the trust to the Royal Academy in relation to Sir Francis Chantrey's works is of an absolute character, and does not allow of any interference whatever from without, other than what may belong to the general provisions of law. Consequently Her Majesty's Government have no power whatever in respect to the matter. I have no doubt my right hon. Friend has made inquiries into the matter; but I am bound to say that nothing has come to my knowledge which would lead the Government to believe that there has been any abuse or any neglect in the administration of this fund.

Sir ROBERT PEEL asked where the pictures were that had been purchased by this trust?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not able to say. Having no power to interfere in the matter, I am not able to give an answer.

Dr. FARQUHARSON: Is it not the fact that the pictures are now on view at the South Kensington Museum?

Sir ROBERT PEEL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would grant an unopposed Return, for which he proposed to move, relating to this subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the Government could assent to the issue of a Return; but he was afraid they had no power to make an answer to such a Return.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—COINAGE AND CONVERSION OF STOCK BILLS.

Mr. HICKS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, seeing that the National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill and the Coinage Bill, though mentioned in his Financial Statement of April twenty-fourth have not yet been printed, he will postpone the Notice of the Second Reading of these Bills until such a date as will ensure honourable Members a full opportunity of considering them?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I have to say that full Notice will be given of the Second Reading of the Coinage and Conversion of Stock Bills. I must express my regret that the Conversion Bill is not yet in the hands of Members. I had hoped that it would have been circulated last Monday; but at the last moment difficult questions have arisen in connection of holdings of Three per Cent Stock by trustees, and it has been necessary to revise carefully the clauses relating to them. I have every hope that the Bill will be circulated either to-morrow afternoon or on Saturday morning. The other Bill will follow.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked whether it would be in Order to discuss in Committee of Ways and Means the proposals of the Government relating to the coinage and to the conversion of Debt, having regard to the fact that two Bills dealing with those subjects were before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER said, it would not be in Order.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, for the convenience of Irish Members, he will fix a day for the Second Reading of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill before the House adjourns for the Whitsuntide holidays?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would ask him if he is aware that the only Petitions presented in favour of the Bill during this Session was one from a society called the Rechabites of Belfast, and another from the Aldermen of the Royal Burgh of Montrose in Scotland; and if he considers those Petitions valuable Irish opinion?

Mr. M. BROOKS: May I also ask, whether he is aware that the Corporation of the City of Dublin have presented a Petition against the Bill, which has been presented at the Bar of the House by the Lord Mayor?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am afraid, Sir, owing to the distractions of other Business, that my attention has not been particularly drawn to those points, which are, no doubt, suitable matters for comment in debate. It is intended to place the Merchant Shipping Bill as the first Order for Monday, and the Irish Sunday Closing Bill as the second Order. As the hon. Member's Question includes a reference to the Whitsuntide holidays, I may as well say that what we should propose, as being probably the best for the convenience of the House relative to the necessities of Business, is that the House should adjourn on Tuesday week until Thursday of the following week.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

Mr. M'COAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or, if he cannot answer the Question now, I will give Notice of it for to-morrow, Whether there is any truth in the statement telegraphed from Paris, from two independent sources, that the French Government insist upon the scope of the proposed Conference being extended so as to include the whole Egyptian Question, and not merely the financial difficulty to which the Prime Minister said it was to be confined?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I certainly cannot undertake to answer that Question now; but I will endeavour to give an answer to-morrow.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister whether he accepted the words which had been ascribed to him by the hon. Member for Wicklow —namely, that he had stated that the Conference would be strictly limited to the consideration of the Law of Liquidation?

MR. GLADSTONE: My words are on record, and the hon. Member can refer to them.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be able to state generally to the House what is to be the order of Business next week?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Business for to-morrow is understood. On Monday we propose to take the Merchant Shipping Bill as the first Order and the Irish Sunday Closing Bill as the second Order. On Tuesday morning we propose to proceed with the Franchise Bill; and to-morrow I shall state what we propose to do on Thursday. Either Thursday or Monday will be devoted to Civil Service Estimates; but I will state the course we propose to take positively to-morrow.

MR. MAC IVER: I beg to give Notice that on the second reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill I shall move its rejection.

MR. GIBSON: The Chief Secretary has announced that he would make an important statement before Whitsuntide with respect to the Purchase Clauses of the Irish Land Act. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will give the right hon. Gentleman sufficient time to make his statement before a full House?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

MR. T. A. DICKSON: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, whether the debate on the Merchant Shipping Bill will be adjourned in time to permit the Irish Sunday Closing Bill being proceeded with?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Merchant Shipping Bill will be the first Order on Monday, and I cannot undertake to break it off.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE LOSS OF LIFE.

MR. MAC IVER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can give the House any idea of the extent of the loss of life consequent upon Military operations in Egypt and the Soudan, since, and including, the bombardment of Alexandria?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe the hon. Member put a similar Question to this to my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, and if he was not satisfied with the answer he then got I am afraid I cannot add anything to it. Of course, we can make a Return of the loss of British life from the Papers we have, and the information is at the command of the House; but as regards the general loss of life, that is a matter of estimate. We know it was extensive in the actions in the Soudan, and we greatly deplore it; but we have no power to make a Return of the general loss that would be of any trustworthiness to the House.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON.

SIR HENRY TYLER: I beg to give Notice that on Monday I shall ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate taking any step for the safety of General Gordon or for the relief of the garrisons in the Soudan?

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall take the opportunity of answering the Question now, and also with reference to the Question of the hon. Baronet below the Gangway, by saying that my noble Friend stated the day before yesterday, on the part of the Government, that we should not make any announcement on that subject at present; and also the reason why. That determination of ours will not be changed before Monday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EXCISE—IMPORT DUTIES UPON TOBACCO.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. MACFARLANE, in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, a revision of the Import Duties upon Tobacco is expedient and necessary; that the system upon which Duty is now levied upon unmanufactured and upon manufactured Tobacco is beneficial to home manufacturers only, and is detrimental to the interests of the consumers in the United Kingdom,"

said, the method of levying duties on tobacco was very inequitable. It was a subject which affected almost exclusively the working classes in this country, because the duties were imposed chiefly on the kind of tobacco consumed principally by the working classes. The present system was one of enormous protection—a protection in favour of a few English manufacturers. He had been informed that protection as now accorded to the British manufacturer of tobacco was granted practically to 12 men who were large manufacturers in the United Kingdom. When this system was first proposed it might not have been intended that it should be in fact a protective duty. It might have been only intended to meet what would be the supposed loss in the manufacture of dry-leaf tobacco on which duty was placed. He would show, however, that there was no foundation for this belief, and that it had come to be an enormous protection. If they took 100 lbs. of ordinary tobacco of commerce, as sold in this country and consumed by the working classes, it would contain about 65 lbs. of dry-leaf tobacco, on which duty had been placed. The remainder would be water, and the duty upon that 65 lbs. would amount to £11 7*s*. 6*d*. If 100 lbs. of the same material were taken, manufactured outside the United Kingdom and brought into the Custom House, it would be charged not only upon the increased weight due to the moisture used in the manufacture, but it would be charged 1*s*. 4*d*. per lb. more. The result was that 100 lbs. of foreign manufactured tobacco would pay a duty of £24 3*s*. 4*d*. as against £11 7*s*. 6*d*., the actual duty paid by the English manufacturer for the production of the same quantity of commercial tobacco for sale to the working classes of this country. Tobacco as consumed by our working classes was sold wholesale at 3*s*. 2*d*. per lb. or thereabouts. The duty on that tobacco was 3*s*. 6*d*.; the cost of the tobacco he took at the low figure of 6*d*. as it left the manufacturer, making up a total cost of 4*s*. per lb. How, then, were the English manufacturers able to sell at an apparent loss of 10*d*. per lb.? Where was the profit to come from? The profit came from the pump; the tobacco was soaked in water and saturated with moisture of every description; and for that reason they were able to sell at 10*d*. less than the cost. Now, the manufacturers themselves were not satisfied with this system, and at their meeting on the 2nd of February, the hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Wills) said that the addition of 4*d*. in thepound to the duty by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) meant the adding of more water to the tobacco. Now, Cope's work, *The Tobacco Plant*, stated that there was nothing worse for tobacco than water; that it destroyed and deteriorated it. Therefore, the present system in inducing adulteration was bad. But it was even worse in the case of foreign manufactured tobacco. Suppose that a tobacco manufacturer in India proposed to import tobacco into England, when he brought it to London or Liverpool he was charged 4*s*. 10*d*. instead of 3*s*. 6*d*.; and adding 8*d*. as the prime cost of the tobacco at the docks or bonded warehouse that made up 5*s*. 6*d*. per lb.; and that Indian manufacturer was expected to compete with the English manufacturer, who made a profit by selling at 3*s*. 2*d*. per lb. That was because the English manufacturer was protected by the differential duty and also by the enormous adulteration in the shape of liquid. Great injustice was done to India by the present system. Taking 100 lbs. of tobacco as it arrived from India, and assuming that there was the same percentage of dry tobacco in it as in the case of 100 lbs. manufactured here, the Chancellor of the Exchequer under that system, instead of levying 3*s*. 6*d*. on that dry tobacco, levied a duty of about 7*s*. 6*d*. per lb. The effect of that had been to prevent importation. Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer when tobacco was being re-exported from this country give a drawback on the water contained in it? By no means. He only charged for water; he did not pay for it. Now, his Motion would not interfere with the Revenue. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a small return to India for the £1,000,000 which she was obliged to give up on the demand of the Lancashire cotton manufacturers. India had levied a tax of 5 per cent on Lancashire goods; and what was the ground on which that tax was abolished? Not that its abolition would be an advantage to the manufacturers of Lancashire, but that it would be a great benefit to the people of India themselves. He did not ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer now to deal with the question of Indian tobacco on the same principle as was applied to Lancashire goods imported into India. He asked for nothing more than absolute equality between the English and the Indian manufacturers of tobacco. This was a question of policy as well as of justice. Was it a wise thing to treat India in this way—India that could give them a splendid and unlimited supply of the best tobacco, not like the stuff which the working men were now compelled to smoke? He thought that it was worth the while of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to encourage that country, especially as it would not affect his pocket. If this country was going to be a Protectionist country, let the fact be announced; but if we were to have Free Trade, then he wished to see it carried out with regard to India as well as to other countries. The system of Excise in America was a satisfactory one and worked well, tobacco being sold under a Government stamp. He did not wish to obtain any special favour; but he claimed that India should be allowed to manufacture tobacco and sell it to the working classes in this country without being handicapped by the system now in force, which, he believed, only existed because this question had never really been brought before the notice of the country. He had discussed the question with a good many Members of the House, and it was the universal opinion that the present system was indefensible. It was obviously desirable that the working man should have a really first-class tobacco instead of the rubbish which he was at present condemned to smoke. He was sure, if the facts of the case were known to the public, pressure would be brought to bear upon the Government, in order to bring about a change so desirable. He did not think that the argument would be made stronger by unduly prolonging it; but he desired to say that, under the present system, a premium was put upon smuggling. The extent to which this system was carried on around their coasts was enormous. Every day they had prosecutions; but still he did not believe that more than one case in every 10,000 was detected. Under the present system the temptations were great, and the amount lost to the Revenue was impossible to calculate. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to introducing a fair taxation upon tobacco when in a state fit for consumption. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution which stood in his name.

MR. WARTON seconded the Motion.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, a revision of the Import Duties upon Tobacco is expedient and necessary; that the system upon which Duty is now levied upon unmanufactured and manufactured Tobacco is beneficial to home manufacturers only, and is detrimental to the interests of the consumers in the United Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he hoped that the House would not consider it necessary to go into the whole question of the tobacco duties. The hon. Member had referred to the question of smuggling; but he thought the question of whether the tobacco duties as a whole were excessive or not was outside the present question, and he hoped that House would not discuss it; but he would say a few words on the actual Motion before them. The figures quoted by the hon. Member were accurate so far as he was aware. The hon. Member appeared to think that in the adjustment of duties on tobacco, as between tobacco manufactured at home and that manufactured abroad, especially in India, there was some unfair incidence of taxation, and that the tobacco manufactured out of this country paid more than it ought to do according to the principles of Free Trade. On this question he would remind the House of what the history was of the adjustment of the duties on tobacco. The former duties on tobacco, before the year 1863, were 3*s*. per lb. on unmanufactured tobacco, and 9*s*. per lb. on manufactured, including cavendish, with an addition in each case of 5 per cent. In 1862, the whole question of the tobacco duties was raised upon the representation of influential importers, not from India, but from Europe; and the Board of Customs undertook an exhaustive inquiry as to what would be a fair rate of duty to impose according to the principles of Free Trade. As the result of that inquiry, the following decision had been arrived at:—In the first place, there was an increase made of 4*d*. per lb. with respect to artificially-dried, unmanufactured tobacco coming from abroad. At the same time, the duty on manufactured tobacco brought from abroad was reduced to 4*s*. 6*d*., or 4*s*. if manufactured in bond. So the duties remained until, a few years ago, the late Government increased the duties by 4*d*. per lb. or thereabouts, making the rates on unmanufactured tobacco 3*s*. 6*d*. and 3*s*. 10*d*., and on manufactured 4*s*. 4*d*. and 4*s*. 10*d*. So far as could be ascertained from the Returns of the manufactured tobacco at home and the imports, the system had worked very fairly; and until the Notice of the hon. Member's Motion was put upon the Paper he was not aware that any considerable number of people disputed its justice. The hon. Member appeared to think they should deal specially with tobacco imported from India, because of its especial character; but, speaking generally, foreign manufacturers of tobacco were perfectly satisfied with the present duties, which were adjusted some time ago upon their own representations. When they established duties on imported articles as compared with duties on articles of the same character manufactured at home, they must do so upon general principles; and he could not consent to an alteration of the general duty on imported manufactured tobacco, with the simple object of giving India an opportunity of sending us more tobacco, to the detriment both of the foreign and home trades. They could not differentiate the duties on articles manufactured in other countries, so as to enable each to send us articles here at a profit. He quite admitted it was impossible for tobacco from some countries to come in at a profit; but it had never been the theory of our fiscal system that duties could be so regulated as between different countries that their produce could be imported alike at a profit. That was the fault of the circumstances of the country and its produce, not of the incidence of the duty. He could only say that he was not prepared to reduce the duty on imported tobacco; and with much regret he must oppose the Motion of the hon. Member.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, by declining to take the question of the tobacco duties into consideration, refused to avail himself of a method of increasing the Revenue. In the year 1864 the duties were reduced by an Act which was passed in the previous year. The revenue from tobacco in 1863 was £5,774,000, and in 1864, with a reduction of duty, it rose to £5,984,000. In 1878 the duties produced £8,000,000; in 1879, £8,500,000; and this year, £8,892,000, or not £1,000,000 more than in 1878. This slightly increased revenue, however, was raised upon a much lower amount, and, consequently, the consumer suffered. When the late Government raised the duty in 1878, the retailers found that the consumer would not pay the additional farthing per ounce, and the manufacturers thereupon added 10 per cent of water to the tobacco. The poor man, therefore, continued to pay 3*d*. per ounce for his tobacco, but he got 20 per cent instead of 10 per cent of moisture. This was really a poor man's question. As the case now stood, the rich man paid a comparatively small duty. A decent cigar might be had at the cheapest for 40*s*. the 100, the duty being 5*s*. 6*d*. But the poor man, whose tobacco was only worth 6*d*. per lb., paid 3*s*. 6*d*. per lb. duty. The latter, accordingly, paid many hundred per cent of the value he received, whereas the rich man paid a trifling duty. Last year a Paper was laid upon the Table, which showed that between 1881 and 1883 the value of the smuggled tobacco seized was £14,373; the penalties imposed, £22,000; the persons arrested, 3,000; and the quantity seized, 43,984 lbs. But these were merely the cases which had been found out, and which were but a small per centage of the whole. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should look into this question. The Government were going to lower the franchise, and they might depend upon it that the 2,000,000 voters they were going to add to the constituencies would look into the matter for themselves. Tobacco was the only luxury of the poor man, and his most innocent enjoyment. He could not conceive how Government after Government, with all their professions of Free Trade, and of their desire to promote the happiness of the lower classes, should fear to deal with a duty yielding, he believed, £9,000,000. If they reduced the duty, they would not reduce the revenue. That was proved by what had taken place in 1864, when the reduction of the duty increased both the consumption and the revenue. The effect of reducing the duty would be that the poor man would get a better and wholesomer article instead of the dear and adulterated weed which he now smoked. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to debase the gold coinage; why should he not rather lower the rates on tobacco? Representing a constituency where this question was much discussed, and which was given to smoking, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if he dealt with the matter he would add much to the happiness of the working people.

Mr. WILLS said, that every year the Revenue sustained a considerable loss through the smuggling of tobacco; but he was not in a position to suggest how the difficulties of the case could be dealt with. He was afraid that his hon. Friend the Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) was not as successful in obtaining correct information as he might have been before he brought this question before the House of Commons. As a practical man, he (Mr. Wills) entirely agreed with everything which had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he believed that very few beyond the Mover of the Resolution had any doubt that the duties which were fixed in 1862 were arranged on a fair and equitable basis. Those who adjusted them and worked them out had no pecuniary interest in the matter. Under no circumstances short of a preferential duty could Indian tobacco have any chance of consumption. On account of its inferior quality, it would never find a ready sale in the English market.

Mr. JOHN HOLLOND said, he would suggest that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might make some provision for facilitating the sale of cigars and tobacco in railway carriages. He thought some Revenue might be derived from issuing licences for this purpose.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, at a time when tobacco was an absolute necessity to the comfort of a large majority of the human race there should be a revision of the enormous duty upon it. They at present charged 3*s*. 6*d*. per lb. duty on the commonest tobacco, while the article itself was sold at a lesser figure through being adulterated with water and certain deleterious compounds. The Scotch people, although they smoked more than the English, consumed less tobacco, because the intelligent Scotch people after they had smoked a pipe took out the small portion of tobacco which remained at the bottom and placed it on the top of the next pipefull and resmoked it. The English people, however, had not arrived at that pitch of economy, and not only had they to pay 3*s*. 6*d*. for what was not worth more than 6*d*., but they had to throw away a considerable portion of what they put into their pipes. On the commonest tobacco the duty was 700 per cent, while only 10 per cent was paid on fairly good cigars. Therefore, while the Chancellor of the Exchequer paid only 10 per cent duty on the cigars he smoked, the poor man paid 700 per cent duty on the tobacco he smoked. If the Exchequer would insist on these obnoxious indirect taxes, to which he (Mr. Labouchere) was entirely opposed, there ought at least to be equality between rich and poor. Personally, he thought that the rich man ought to pay higher taxes than the poor man.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, this debate had raised a much larger question than that of the duty on tobacco; it raised the whole subject of the incidence of taxation in this country. It seemed to him that in seeking uniformity we had sacrificed justice. Her Majesty's Government had set up the principle that duties must be uniform, whether the articles were tea, tobacco, or any other. It was a monstrous injustice to charge several hundred per cent on the tobacco of the poor man, while they charged a very moderate percentage on the cigars of the rich man. If it was possible to charge *ad valorem* duties in other countries it ought to be possible in this, and much easier, on account of the greater simplicity of our system and the very much fewer articles that we taxed. From his experience, he could say that the principle of an *ad valorem* duty worked without any practical difficulty in India; and where there was a will there was a way. He hoped the day might come when they would be able to produce a superior tobacco in India. As it was, they had not got to that point; they had quantity but not quality. The result was that under the system by which cheap and dear tobaccos were charged at the same rate, the Indian tobacco was practically shut out, and injustice was done to our Indian subjects. This was undesirable and unfair at a time when they had abolished all import duties on articles sent from this country to India. He thought his hon. Friend had done very good service by bringing this matter forward.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, that the consequence of the existing state of things was that the trade of India with this country in tobacco was crushed out.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he agreed with the hardships that were inflicted on the working class by the present incidence of the tobacco duty; but he did not understand that was the question raised in the Resolution of the hon. Member for Carlow. The question now raised was solely with regard to the differential duty on manufactured and unmanufactured tobacco in this country, and as an adjustment of the duty had been made, not only in 1862, but much more recently, he could not support his hon. Friend if he went to a Division.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he sympathized with much that had been said during the discussion; but he could not see his way to any alteration of the duty on tobacco in the direction indicated by his hon. Friend the Mover of the Resolution. He also fully sympathized with the suggestion of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Hollond) relative to the sale of tobacco in railway carriages; but he feared it would raise the much more serious one of the sale of liquor in dining-cars. This, he confessed, he should be sorry to have to face.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE—DUTIES ON GOLD AND SILVER PLATE.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. SLAGG said, he rose to call attention to the following Motion, which he was unable to move by the Forms of the House:—

> "That, in view of the Report of the Select Committee on Hall Marking of Gold and Silver Wares (1879), which, *inter alia*, recommended that 'the Duty upon Silver Plate, Customs and Excise, be abolished as soon as the state of the Revenue may admit,' and with special reference to the facts and circumstances disclosed in Parliamentary Paper No. 347, East India, Gold and Silver Plate (1884), this House is of opinion that the Duties upon Gold and Silver Plate, and the system of compulsory Hall-marking, should be abolished forthwith."

He thought he was perfectly justified in characterizing the laws and regulations which related to the trade in the precious metals as barbarous, and as affecting the trade and industry in a very injurious manner. They were especially injurious in stifling a trade which was now largely increasing in rival countries. They also had the effect of stunting the artistic design of this country, and of imposing a grievous and unjust burden on our Indian Dependency. He looked in vain for any compensating advantages arising out of the enactments relating to Hall-marking. It was, of course, alleged that they protected the purchaser and gave a guarantee of quality. If so, there would perhaps be some excuse for them; but he thought he could show the House that they failed in doing anything of the sort. It was some six centuries ago since these restrictions were first imposed. They belonged, in fact, to an era in the history of our commerce when restrictions and regulations were placed not only upon the quality, but also upon the price of nearly every article; but we had outgrown all these restrictions, except in the case of gold and silver. The public was, no doubt, compelled, in regard to the quality of every commodity it purchased, to take such precautions to safeguard itself as might be necessary; but, as he had said, these laws were no safeguard. Our Colonies, America, and other countries had got rid of enactments of this sort, as it had been found that they were no longer necessary in the interest of commerce. In this country the trade in the precious metals was languishing under the influence of these laws, while in America the trade was rapidly increasing; and, what was a still more serious consideration, our best workmen were going there because their abilities could find no scope in this country. It was not possible, for want of time, to go into these laws in any detail; but he might state that they imposed, generally speaking, the following conditions:—That all gold and silver, with the exception of certain articles manufactured in the United Kingdom, should be assayed and stamped, the cost of the stamp being 17*s.* an ounce for gold and 1*s.* 6*d.* an ounce for silver. There were five legal standards for gold—namely, 22, 18, 15, 12, and 9 carats, and for silver two—namely, 10 ozs. 12 dwts., and 11 ozs. 2 dwts. If manufactured articles were found not to be up to the legal standard, it was allowable to the authorities to break them up. As a matter of practice, silver goods were sent in a rough state to be Hall-marked, and then taken back to be manufactured. The next question was, what was the advantage accruing to the Revenue from all this tremendous machinery? It was but a trifling amount, and he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would hardly assure the House that it was worth retaining at the cost and burden it imposed upon the country. The duty was gradually but surely effecting the extinction of the silver trade from England, though it might be said that the decline was to some extent due to the large increase in electro-plated articles. That might be so; but he could not think it was wholly accounted for in that way. In a rich country like this they might expect that the trade in articles of luxury would increase instead of diminishing. Besides, the extension of the electro-plate trade in America had not produced a diminution in the silver industry, which, on the contrary, was rapidly increasing there. The Americans now produced articles of exquisite beauty which put to shame the silver productions of this country. As to the guarantee to the buyer, he knew it was commonly supposed that in buying Hall-marked silver the purchaser obtained a valuable security for the quality of the article. But that was not the case as a matter of fact. Imitations were made with very great skill, and with so much ingenuity as almost to defy the detection of competent experts. If that were so, surely the last vestige of argument in favour of these laws disappeared. He now came to a branch of the question of the greatest importance—namely, its relation to the trade of India and the people of that country. The injustice done to the extensive artistic silver manufacture of that country was most grievous. The rupee was the most easily available, and in many cases the only form of silver in India for manufacturing purposes, and because the rupee was below our English silver standard, we practically refused to receive the silver productions of that country. When Indian silver articles were presented at our Custom-houses, if not up to the required standard of Goldsmiths' Hall, the articles were liable to be smashed up, and this right was sometimes exercised. At best the articles were refused admission, and had to be re-exported. This was a crying injustice. We had made India drop its duties on imported cotton goods from this country, and we ought to take steps to give them a free market for their silver goods. Although he did not think the two questions were quite on the same footing, he maintained that our treatment of their productions was extremely shabby, and he thought we ought to take steps at the earliest possible moment to remedy the injustice. The revenue derivable from this source was really very small. The duty paid in 1853 was on 837,000 ounces of silver, and in 1883 on 644,000 ounces. The amount of duty now paid was only about £80,000; and he dared to say that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to this Motion, it would not be difficult to find some means by which the loss of that sum could be made up. He was aware of the difficulty in regard to the drawback; but surely the resources of our financiers could furnish a remedy. He believed the way had lately been made easier, because he had been informed that for a sum of £100,000, or possibly less, the trade would be glad to make an arrangement with the Treasury by which the allotment of that sum might be spread over existing claims during a limited time, and thus the whole question of drawbacks be disposed of for a trifling sum. It was absurd to say that an important industry should be extinguished because a certain number of gentlemen interested in the trade would not allow the duty to be removed on account of their claims. He would rather ignore those claims altogether. All the authorities on the subject were on his side. Every sound economist was heartily in favour of abolishing the duty at the earliest possible moment. He was glad to say that both Lord Kimberley and the Under Secretary for India were not only heartily in favour of his Motion, but would, if official reasons did not prevent, give him a good word in Parliament in support of it. Certain correspondence had recently taken place in which the Under Secretary urged the Treasury to take early steps for the abolition of the duty on Indian silver. He was sure it would be gratifying to the Under Secretary and to all who took an intelligent interest in the subject, and above all to their fellow-subjects in India, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would to-night hold out some hopes of dealing favourably with the subject. He did not desire to prevent purchasers who wanted to have goods Hall-marked as a guarantee from getting them so stamped, but he objected to the Hall-mark being made compulsory. By the maintenance of this system they were inflicting a serious injustice on the trade, and perpetuating an economic heresy which was discreditable to a country professing Free Trade principles.

Mr. GORST said, he wished to bring a little friendly pressure to bear upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to this subject. He believed that it was admitted on all hands that this tax ought to be abolished. The Government themselves had, in three successive years, proposed to abolish it. The only reason that it existed appeared to be the difficulty of dealing with the question of drawback. If, as the hon. Gentleman stated, £100,000 could settle this matter, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, he thought, be delighted to settle it on those terms. But whether that sum would or would not be sufficient, he thought that if sufficient pressure in that House was only brought to bear on the Government they would find some way of getting rid of the drawback. It was most important to encourage as far as possible such manufactures as now existed in the country, and it was greatly to the advantage of the people of India that every stimulus should be given to all the manufacturing industries which now existed. In India there was a remarkable industry in the manufacture of Indian silver articles, and it was highly desirable that the trade should receive as much encouragement as possible. No doubt, if it were not for the Hall-mark an enormous trade might be done in this country of the silver articles manufactured in India. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a special law could not be passed for the assay of Indian silver articles, so as to prevent the shameful incident mentioned by the hon. Member for Manchester with respect to the articles bought in this country made of rupee silver, and which were smashed up and destroyed? That was a matter which might be dealt with without the abolition of the duty, and without the Chancellor of the Exchequer incurring any fiscal loss whatever. He hoped hon. Members of the House would press upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the extreme importance of this matter, especially from the Indian point of view, and that they would not have to wait long before justice was done to India.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR, who had the following Motion on the Paper, which he was precluded by the Forms of the House from moving:—

> "That, considering the unexampled liberality of the Government of India in freeing the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom landed on the extensive coasts of India, from all Import Duties, whereby the Home trade and industries have been largely benefited; also, looking at the assurances, and promises given, during the last three Budgets that all Silver Plate manufactured in India would be admitted into the United Kingdom, it is now expedient that, all Silver Plate manufactured within the Indian territories should be admitted into the United Kingdom, without any liability to either Customs or Excise duties; and in so resolving,

this House desire to record their wish to show respect to the claims and representations so strongly urged by the Government in India, and by the Indian Government at Home, to act justly and fairly in regard to the admission into England of Indian Silver manufactures,"

said, the House was indebted to the hon. Member for Manchester for having brought forward a question of very great importance to India. When he recollected that for two years India had removed all import duties, and that goods to the value of £35,000,000 had been freed from duty, he had said enough to show the importance of the sacrifice which India had made. He thought the example which India had set in this matter was one which put England to shame. especially when they considered that this country had taken pride in hitherto being foremost in advancing the principles of Free Trade. He wished, however, to do justice to the Prime Minister and to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1881-2 the present Prime Minister in his Budget Speech strongly advocated the abolition of the duties on silver brought to this country, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech of 1883 had also advocated the same course. The objections which had been raised by both right hon. Gentlemen were on account of the large sum which it would be necessary to pay with respect to the drawback. The Prime Minister had stated that the drawback would amount to £160,000 or probably more; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that a sum ranging between £120,000 and £200,000 might be the sum demanded. But he desired to point out that they were not now fighting for the abolition of the duty, because it had been admitted that this relief should be given, but only in regard to the amount of drawback which it was necessary to pay. By a comparison of figures he could show that this would not be so large as had been paid in the case of other duties which had been repealed, such, for instance, as the duties on glass, bricks and tiles, soap, and paper. In the case of soap there had been no drawback at all, and in the case of other articles the drawback paid had amounted to but a fraction of the annual duty upon each of this class of goods. He thought that £120,000 would cover all the claims that would be made on account of drawback. In the case of a country which had been so liberal in admitting English manufactured goods free of import duty, he thought he was justified in making an urgent appeal on behalf of a similar favour being extended to Indian manufactured silver articles. The important point was that probably in the history of the world they had never had such an example as that which had been set by India; and they had also had the Government in India and successive Secretaries of State for India all strongly appealing to the Treasury to abolish the duties on silver plate —a measure which would be but a fair and just return for the great benefits conferred on the industries of the United Kingdom by the repeal of the import duties on our produce and manufactures entering India. The justice of that demand had been over and over again admitted, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant to do any good in the matter it was to be hoped that he would now speak out plainly. It would be unworthy of a Liberal Government which had hitherto professed Free Trade principles not to deal fairly and justly by India on that subject.

Mr. ANDERSON said, that at present the question of the withdrawal of licences was not before the House; but, no doubt, before long that would be asked for from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the meantime, it was only the abolition of the duty that was asked for. The hon. and gallant General (Sir George Balfour) suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give £120,000 to settle the drawback. He objected entirely to the Chancellor of the Exchequer giving any such sum. He did not think it was justified in any way. That the duty operated most injuriously upon the trade has been shown by the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg). It was a diminishing trade. One American house, he was told, made as much as the whole British trade did. That in itself was a fact that could not be accounted for very easily on any other ground than the prejudicial effect of the duties. The American house to which he referred not only did this enormous trade, but it came over here and took away all our best workmen, and our trade was starved in workmanship as well as in other ways by the Americans getting ahead of us so much. In his opinion there should be no drawback, for several reasons. Since 1881, when it was first proposed to take off the duty, the making trade had been starved. Naturally the makers would not go on manufacturing anything they had not absolute orders for. They would not go on making for stock. Even the public would not buy anything more than they greatly wanted to buy; and, accordingly, even if the amount of duty-paid stocks on hand in 1881 was very large, the amount on hand now must be a very great deal smaller than it was then. That was one reason why no drawback should be paid. But there was another reason, which was much more conclusive. It was this. The duty was 1*s.* 6*d.* per oz., but from that there was the rebate of 3*d.* per oz.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. ANDERSON said, that at the time when the unsuccessful interruption took place, he was explaining that there was a rebate from the duty of 1*s.* 6*d.* of 3*d.* per oz., on the ground that the plate was sent into the Hall in an unfinished state, and that there was a certain loss of weight in finishing. The result of that rebate was that the makers contrived to send in their plate so nearly finished, that there was much less loss in finishing than the amount of the rebate they received. He was told that on plain goods, such as spoons and forks, the makers could actually make a profit of 2*d.* out of the rebate of 3*d.*, and that in one case a large manufacturer made a profit of £1,000 a-year out of the rebate. Of course, the manufacturer asked if the duty was done away with where was he to get this £1,000 of profit? But he did not think that was a ground for refusing the abolition of the duty. It was, however, a very good ground for refusing the drawback, because they could say to these gentlemen—"You have been making an unfair profit out of the Government tax, and if you add that up you will probably find that the last half-dozen years of it comes to nearly, if not quite, as much as any amount you could fairly claim for drawback on unsold goods at the present day." Apart from that, there could be no doubt that the sudden expansion of the trade immediately on the abolition of the duty would in a very short time recoup the makers for any loss by not getting drawback. That the trade would take a sudden bound he had not the slightest doubt. The mere fact of the trade being emancipated would tend to give it a new start. The House was, he thought, bound to consider India in that matter; and he entirely agreed in the appeal which the hon. and gallant Member (Sir George Balfour) had made on behalf of that great Dependency; but he did not think it would be necessary merely for that end to abolish compulsory Hall-marking, though in the case of India it would be necessary to give them a special Hall-marking suitable to the rupee silver, because that was the quality in which the bulk of their manufacture was made. It was only reasonable that the public should continue to have, while they wanted it, such guarantee of the genuineness of the goods which they bought as Hall-marking gave; but it should be voluntary, not compulsory. There was practically no Hall-marking of gold now except wedding-rings and snuff-boxes, and not much of it in the case of snuff-boxes, except, perhaps, the presentation snuff-boxes to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) for blocking Bills in that House. But he did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer made much revenue out of them. As to wedding-rings, they were constantly sold at prices which did not admit of paying the duty; and it was probable that many of them came from abroad fictitiously Hall-marked. He had not advocated greatly the abolition of the duty, because he considered the Chancellor of the Exchequer was already committed to that, and as to the drawback he did not think, as he had shown, that the circumstances of the trade warranted it. The drawback having been the sole difficulty in the way of abolishing the duty, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should throw that question overboard altogether—should simply abolish the duty, and tell the makers of silver plate that they must make the best of it.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, that it seemed to him a remarkable thing that all the speeches which had been made on the subject were appeals for justice to India, regardless that it involved injustice to Clerkenwell and the silver manufacturers of this country. He did not attribute the falling off in the trade to the operation of the duty, but rather to the altered taste of the public and to the circumstances of the time. People moved about now more than they used to do, and for that reason were more unwilling to have the risk and trouble involved in having a large amount of silver in their houses, which would have to be sent to their bankers everytime they moved. They had been told of the debt which England owed to India; but he could not see how that justified a proposal that India should be repaid by the silver plate manufacturers of London and other places in this country who owed nothing to India. He thought that such a proposal was wanting in common honesty. If the duty were repealed, the English manufacturers would still have to pay their licence duties, and he claimed justice for those who had paid their money on the face of the present law. All through the debate the English manufacturers had been lost sight of. He was not asking for any protection, but he asked that there should not be spoliation. If the duty was to be taken off, the plain, simple, honest, straightforward way was to pay back the duty that had been received for articles still remaining unsold. As to the question of the American manufacturers, the real reason of their being able to do such a large amount of business was the existence of considerable protective duties.

Mr. COURTNEY said, they had been told that the trade in gold and silver plate was declining, and that that decline was due to these duties. He was not at all sure that it was due to the duties; he thought that there were other causes. Under the present duties trade had increased for a considerable period, until the time when electro-plating came into use. Another reason which affected the trade was the change in taste which had taken place. But, whatever the cause, the Government had more than once expressed a desire of getting rid of these duties, which undoubtedly operated to the prejudice of trade between India and this country. He might say that the Government desired to abolish the duties as soon as possible; but it was not an easy matter when the amount to be taken away was considered. There was also the great difficulty of the drawback, and he was afraid, although supported by stronger reasons than had been advanced by his hon. Friend (Mr. Anderson), it would not be easy to say they would not allow it. They had always, when abolishing duties, allowed drawbacks to some extent on stocks held on hand. They could scarcely say to a man who had a quantity of plate on which he had paid 1*s*. 3*d*. per oz. was fairly treated if they said to him he had a profit out of the 3*d*. of rebate, and that he must place that against the 1*s*. 3*d*. when the duty was abolished. He would reply, and justly, that whatever advantage he might have derived from the rebate was an incident in his past trade, and had been taken into account in the competition regulating the profits of the trade, and could not now be reckoned against loss on abolition of duties. The question must stand over, for the present at least. He would, however, recommend his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester not to treat the question as one to be disregarded or to be dealt with in the way suggested by the hon. Member for Glasgow, and to see if he could not come to some understanding with the big dealers in gold and silver plate as to the terms on which their claims for drawback could reasonably be met. With reference to the Hall-marking of Indian plate, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had spoken of the law as it stood up to a recent date. The breaking up of plate falling behind the standard was happily not now necessary. That barbarous rule had been abolished, and the Government were not unwilling to consider whether something more could be done for India. It was said that a great deal of Indian work was so delicate and fragile that the application of the Hall-mark was likely to interfere with the design of such work. That was a matter worthy of consideration, because they might decline to enforce the application of the Hall-mark without taking away the liability to pay Customs duty. Should a proposal of that kind be made by the hon. Member for Manchester, he did not think the Government would have any difficulty in acceding to it. The suggestion to have a separate Hall-marking for plate of an inferior standard was a matter which had been considered by a Select Committee, and they decided against it. In conclusion, he must again assure his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester that the temper of the Government with respect to his proposals was as friendly as ever, and they would not be deterred from carrying out the policy of which they had more than once approved; but if they could see a way to the removal of the practical difficulty of the money charge involved in an allowance for drawback and also the loss of revenue, they would be as ready in the future as in the past to consider the abolition of these duties.

Mr. MUNTZ desired to say a very few words, because the subject was one of great interest to his constituents. There had been some very strange speeches—one from the right hon. Gentleman who represented the City of London, which reminded him very much of the gentleman who suddenly discovered he had been speaking prose all his life; and there had been a speech from the Secretary to the Treasury, which meant everything and nothing—a sort of speech to which he had been used for many years; and when he considered that it was five years since the Committee sat, and when he remembered that they worked hard and reported unanimously in favour of the change now proposed, he could not help regretting that nothing had been done. If a Committee was to sit and Report unanimously and nothing was to be done upon that Report, he could not see any use in the appointment of a Committee. There had been speeches about protection and about honest dealing, which he liked as much as onyone; but he did not find that when a duty of 25 to 30 per cent was suddenly taken off, even with the Crown duties, on other articles of commerce, there was any idea of compensation or drawback being allowed. It was always the trade like that represented by the City Alderman which was to be indemnified for what they would or might have lost. Really, the matter was becoming very serious. It was easy for the Secretary to the Treasury to pass it over, saying when he had money he would do something; but meantime the trade was going. He had heard with pity the reason assigned for the increase of American manufactures—the heavy duties put upon the import of such goods. They had a duty and they would keep it too; but it was not merely in America that we were superseded, it was in Australia, in New Zealand, in India, and everywhere where our goods used to be exported to or from this country. The next reason why in the last 25 years there had been such a great increase in American manufacture was that by degrees they had learned to manufacture everything. Under their system of Protection, they were now taking our best workmen away from our silver trade to the United States to supply our Colonies with goods we used to make ourselves. He did not think many hon. Members were aware of the enormous amount of the tax. It amounted to 1*s.* 6*d.* on 4*s.* 2*d.* Why, scarcely a tax in the United States or France equalled that. Taking the Indian point of view, we had bullied India like a stepmother into withdrawing her duty on cotton goods. We said—"Take the 5 per cent off cotton goods and we shall see what you shall see." And what had we seen? We taxed them 1,000 per cent on salt, and we still continued the 40 per cent on silver imports. He was very much obliged for the kind speeches and goodwill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he wanted more; he wanted to stop the decline of a trade, and to put an end to the anomaly that with Free Trade we had the heaviest internal trade tax in the world. He had no wish to abolish Hall-marking. The recommendation of the Committee was a sensible one—to abolish compulsory Hall-marking, leaving the marking "for those who liked to adopt it." He sincerely hoped that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer had the means of doing so, he would make use of his funds in the direction advocated.

Mr. SALT said, he had, as probably others had done, considered this matter in the view of his own convenience. He had personally no interest in maintaining the tax upon plate. Then with regard to the Hall-marking, which was not quite so easy a matter, he would be quite content with the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), that the public would be very well treated if they had the option to purchase plate with or without the Hall-mark. In such case, however, a very severe penalty should be inflicted upon anyone who fabricated the Hall-mark. India had been most prominently mentioned in the discussion. That was a country in which, no doubt, this country had more interest than any other, and India objected to the present system, both on the ground that it hindered the importation of plate manufatured in India, and also on the ground of the inconvenience occasioned by the Hall-marking of plate of the very fine workmanship produced in that country. He had the very warmest sympathy for India, more especially so because he thought that all the parts of the Empire ought, as far as possible, to be treated as one. Finally, there was the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be considered. He had three difficulties to contend with. There was the question of the Hall-mark, the question whether he could afford to part with the tax, and also the question of the drawback. With regard to the portion of the trade which advocated this change, he believed it to be by no means suing *in formâ pauperis*, and, therefore, there were no grounds for the change on that score. After all, this was a matter which, in his opinion, was not to be settled by a discussion in the House at large, but by the calm and quiet consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the officials of his Department; and if the right hon. Gentleman could arrive at any decision which would be to the advantage of the public in this country and in India, he would have his warmest sympathy. He trusted that this question would, either next year or the year after, be completely and satisfactorily dealt with.

CUSTOMS—DUTIES ON FOREIGN IMPORTS.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. MAC IVER said, he believed he was in Order, at that stage of the proceedings, in raising the matter which was embodied in the Resolution which stood in his name. The Resolution was—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, Customs Duties should be replaced upon those Foreign importations which, contributing nothing to our National Revenue, come into unfair competition with our National industries; also, that Spanish and French Wines and other Foreign alcoholic drinks should be made to contribute more largely, and that the moneys thus obtained should go in reduction of the taxation which is proposed by the Budget Resolutions."

It seemed to him that the question that they had been discussing was part of a larger one, a question which deserved larger consideration than it was likely to get in the present state of the House. [There were not more than a dozen Members present.] Let him, before he passed to the specific subject, express his sympathy with what had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the hon. Member who had just spoken as to our duty towards India with regard to the silver trade. He wished, in general terms, to express his concurrence in their objections to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government in the Budget, and he would proceed to speak, as briefly as he could, on the particular proposals he had expressed in his Resolution. It seemed to him that those questions in the present stage were questions for the country, rather than for the House of Commons; and he thought they had some reason to complain that those who directed the fortunes of the Conservative Party did not keep their eyes open as to the necessity of treating these trading questions in the way he thought they ought to do. They followed too much the error which applied to the Front Benches on both sides of the House, and thought too much of Party politics, and too little of the great questions with which the bulk of our population were concerned. As regarded the franchise, he remembered well a speech of the late Lord Beaconsfield, when he was defending himself, and how that great man said that, for himself, he could always trust the common sense of the people of this country. Like him, he (Mr. Mac Iver) felt that the common sense of the people might be trusted fully when the franchise was extended; and they would find the common sense of the people calling out for more attention to questions where their trade, their wages, and even their welfare and happiness were concerned. It seemed to him that, in the question of manufacturing industries, there was nothing of greater or more direct interest than the unfair competition of foreign manufacturers, and there was no part of Her Majesty's Dominions which had a greater complaint to make in the matter than the little Island across the Channel (Ireland); for when it suited us to be Protectionists, we destroyed her trade; and we destroyed her manufactures when it suited us to be Free Traders. He would have no case at all in support of his Resolution, if he could not show that the foreign importations which contributed nothing to our National Revenue was very large. It was said constantly that our importations were so trifling that it was useless to tax them. That, however, was not the case. The figures were very succintly set forth in a statement prepared by Mr. Sherlock, of Liverpool, whom he knew well. Taking only seven articles, which everyone would admit were manufactures, and which came in competition with our home industries, they got at once figures which completely disproved the case set up against him. The articles he proposed to take were silks, woollens, cottons, gloves, manufactures of tanned leather, clocks and watches, and manufactures in iron and steel. Looking back for the last 10 years, and simply adding up the figures of the Board of Trade Returns, what was the value of the importation of these seven articles? They might be insignificant, but he found that they amounted to more than £355,000,000 sterling. Those who maintained that it was useless to tax such articles had only to figure it out, and they would find that a duty of 10 per cent upon these seven manufactured articles alone would have produced in the 10 years £35,937,887 sterling, or something very closely approaching half the entire Revenue which it was proposed by Her Majesty's Government to raise by the present Budget. He went further, and said that there was not one of those articles which was ever purchased by the working classes of this country. They were the luxuries of the rich; they were not the necessaries of the poor. They were things which might well be taxed, and which, if taxed, would produce a large revenue, and which in turn would enable the Government to remit a large amount of taxation, and do a great deal to render unnecessary many of the proposals in the Budget, which generally he intended to oppose. It might be that the case which he sought to present to the House would receive very little attention or sympathy from politicians in the House of Commons; but he could assure hon. Members that he had had within the last year or two addressed working-class audiences in Bradford, Sheffield, Birmingham, Manchester, Ashton, Liverpool, Birkenhead, and elsewhere, and he had addressed audiences, not specially Conservative audiences, on this question, and wherever he had spoken he had found entire sympathy from the working men, who were perfectly able to appreciate the reality of foreign competition, which was taking their employment from them and reducing their opportunity for earning wages. Take, for instance, the present position of our trade with France. They heard a great deal of the advantages of cultivating the trade with France; but it was not everyone who had carefully looked into the statistics of that trade, and there were comparatively few who knew what the trade really was. Without wishing to weary them, he wished to point out this—that the importations from France of farm and garden produce alone, amounted in value to something like £15,600,000 sterling annually. That was to say, those things alone, without any question of foreign-manufactured goods, were worth more than the whole of everything which this country was able to send to France. He was, therefore, surprised that hon. Members representing agricultural constituencies did not join him in asking that Customs duties should be imposed on the products of foreign countries. France would not take our manufactured goods; but we took from France every year manufactured goods to the value of upwards of £25,000,000 sterling, and the whole of these goods came into competition with the industries of Great Britain and Ireland. Take those articles of ladies' dress, which if they did not come from France, would come from Ireland. It seemed to him to be a monstrous injustice that we should continue to receive these things from France and other foreign countries, and that they should contribute nothing to the relief of our National Revenue. Those who manufactured similar articles in this country contributed to the National Revenue. It was only the foreign manufacturers which did not; and if our home manufacturers were able to make a profit—he was afraid that of late profit upon home manufactures had been very small—they were required to pay Income Tax upon that profit. One Member of Her Majesty's Government, and more than one hon. Gentleman he saw sitting opposite to him, invested their money in manufactories in Germany and elsewhere on the Continent of Europe, and it did not follow at all that they paid Income Tax on any of the profits that they received from the imports they introduced from those countries. His authority for the statement, if it were true, was Mr.

Giffen, who enjoyed a dual capacity—a gentleman who, at the same time, was at the head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, who was a Radical in politics and was one of the staff of *The Times* newspaper—who argued that there were large sums of British money invested abroad. The return from Income Tax on those foreign investments ought to correspond with the value of the shipments, if those shipments represented, as Mr. Giffen declared they did, the profits on our foreign investments. That gentleman argued against a case which some friends of his (Mr. Mac Iver) were endeavouring to show—the case of excessive importation of foreign-manufactured goods to this country. He told them they were wrong about the balance of trade being against this country—that this balance against us was really profit—and that any other idea was an old and exploded fallacy. Well, that was true in a way, but it was only true half-way. What was also true, was that, for the last few years, when this country had been depressed, we had a balance of trade not only against us, but much more against us than before. ["No, no!"] Mr. Giffen argued that such an excessive balance of trade against us was caused chiefly by foreign countries paying us for our shipments to them. It was very difficult to confute that statement, until they came to this—by considering the question of Income Tax generally; because if it was true, as Mr. Giffen said, that there were large sums of money invested abroad, the returns for Income Tax for those moneys ought, in some measure, to correspond with the value of the profits represented by shipment of goods to this country. Nothing of the kind, however, took place, because there was a large missing balance, and, therefore, he thought it was perfectly clear that the investments abroad, or many of them, altogether escaped the payment of Income Tax. Then, again, with respect to our commercial relations with Spain, he thought the Government were rather unwilling, at this time, that those relations should be spoken about. It was very difficult to get anything out of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and he sometimes doubted whether it was because he was unwilling, or because he did not know. This much, however, we had been able to glean—that when the Government entered into negotiations with Spain, they properly asked to be put on the same footing with Spain. They were obliged to say, however—"We cannot give anything, because we have nothing to give;" and Spain declined to give us anything because we had nothing to give. Lord Beaconsfield pointed out how hopeless was the position of this country in sending to bargain with other countries, because we had no duties in hand, and nothing to give. The position he understood Lord Beaconsfield to take up was this—that it it was not for him to, or the Party which he led, to move in the question unless the country asked them to do so, but that we had a right to do what he (Mr. Mac Iver) asked the House to do that night—replace duties on the goods of foreign countries who would not meet us in a fair spirit, and then we should have something to give in return when we wanted anything to be done.

TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he fully supported the views of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Mac Iver). He had been expecting both this and last Session that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have gone further than he had yet done, and that he would have made a bold and liberal effort to wipe off those miserable and petty duties which pressed so heavily on the working classes throughout the United Kingdom—namely, the duties on tea, coffee, cocoa, dried fruits, and similar articles. The total sum yielded by those imposts was only £4,500,000 a-year. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) understood it cost nearly £500,000 to collect them, and the remaining £4,000,000 might be replaced by an additional 2*d.* on that popular tax—the Income Tax; and when he said popular tax, it was proved in 1874 that the tax was popular with the electors of the country, because when the present Prime Minister offered, in that year, to abolish the Income Tax if returned to Office, the reply of the electors was to send him back in a minority, and put those in Office who would continue the tax. An Income Tax, properly adjusted, was one of the fairest of taxes, because the pauper and the working man escaped it altogether; but he thought the impost might be made lighter on precarious than on permanent incomes, and he hoped that the day was not far off when some Government would be courageous enough to place it on a fairer basis. There was a description of property which ought to be one of the first subjects of taxation, but which was now, in his opinion, most unfairly exempted. He meant ground rents of houses, which accumulated, not by any exertion or outlay of capital on the part of the owner, but by the industry and thrift of the working classes, who built houses which were, perhaps, 50 years afterwards confiscated by a succeeding owner of the ground rents. It was calculated the ground rents of this country amounted to about £20,000,000 a-year. A tax of 10 per cent on that sum would produce £2,000,000 of Revenue, or about half the amount required to take off the petty taxes now pressing on the working classes to which he had referred. Indirect taxation was very unequal in its incidence on the poor and the rich. For example, common London gin, of which 19-20ths were, unfortunately, consumed by the poor and working classes, was worth only from 20*s.* to 24*s.* per dozen, duty paid; and on that duty was 15*s.* per dozen; while champagne, that was worth from £3 to £5 per dozen, was only charged 2*s.* duty per dozen. Again, Madeira, old-crusted port, and sherry paid only 5*s.* duty per dozen; whereas whisky, which was worth 30*s.* per dozen, paid 18*s.* duty per dozen. The poor man's tobacco was also taxed far more heavily than the rich man's finest cigars. He reckoned that the working man paid 10 per cent of his income in taxation, while the man with £10,000 a-year did not pay 5 per cent. The tendency of all the laws of England showed that they were made by the rich simply to tax the poor; and so long as that state of things existed it was a disgrace to England. He could see no reason why Clubs should not be taxed, as they were made use of by the rich for the purpose of luxury, or in some instances as a means of evading the law. They sold *ad libitum* duty-paid articles without a licence; while the unfortunate trader was compelled to pay a licence tax for everything that he sold. The result was, that they had considerably increased; and he therefore asked why should not Clubs be taxed? As an instance of the abuse of Clubs, he would mention the case of one in Dundee—the Artizans' Club—which did not consist of more than 100 members, where it was proved in Court that, on Sunday, the 13th of April, there were sold in the Club-house no fewer than 290 glasses of whiskey, 1,200 bottles of porter, and 18 gallons of draught beer. He should have thought it impossible that, in a Club of 100 members, so much liquor could be consumed in one day. He did not bring this instance forward as a point against Scotchmen; but he mentioned it simply to show how Clubs, which had not to take out licences, and which were petted by the Government, abused their privileges. ["No, no!"] At any rate, it was clear that a tax upon such institutions would help considerably to swell the balance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget. Another matter to which he wished to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the great reduction of expense which would be brought about by the amalgamation of the Customs and Inland Revenue into one, and so reducing the expense of collection.

Dr. CAMERON said, he wished to bring under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer a rather curious class of his constituents who desired to be taxed; and he thought it would be the first instance that evening in which they had men themselves coming boldly forward and pleading to be taxed. It appeared that, according to the Scottish law, dwelling-houses might be let on verbal leases, and that such verbal leases were binding. It was desirable to have some record of these agreements, and it was the usual custom of the landlord or house-factor to write and ask whether the tenant meant to continue in occupation. That communication and the reply of the tenant in the affirmative, were held as proof of the verbal agreement. It had, however, been held that these written memoranda of verbal agreements were equivalent to leases, and consequently subject to a tax of 10*s.* per cent. The tax was the same for yearly letting as for a lease of 30 years; and the consequence was that this heavy tax discouraged the keeping of written memoranda of agreements of house-letting. The house-factors of Scotland, therefore, came down to the House in his (Dr. Cameron's) person, and begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to impose a small tax upon these written agreements. They suggested that he should sanction a 1*d* missive stamp as legalizing an agreement for the letting of a house under £10 a-year rent, and they pointed out that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make money by the transaction. In Glasgow, at the present moment, the right hon. Gentleman did not receive £15 of duty, because 95 per cent of the agreements were simply verbal, and consequently paid no tax whatever. They stated that if a 1*d*. missive stamp was imposed it would be universally used, and would yield £132, or a clear gain in Glasgow alone of £117. The amount was not much; but, in those days of small surpluses, it might be of some advantage. The house-factors of Edinburgh endorsed the view of the Glasgow house-factors, and they put forward the statement, for example, that of 4,274 houses let at rents under £10, there were only 20 cases where stamps were employed. Had 1*d*. stamps been employed, instead of the £2 now accruing to the Revenue, the amount would be £17. The same story was told throughout Scotland, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to oblige them by imposing this tax.

LOCAL TAXATION—RESOLUTION OF MARCH 28.—OBSERVATION.

Mr. PELL said, that he had had a Motion on the Paper—

> "That this House regrets to learn that no provision has been made in the Financial proposals of Her Majesty's Government to give effect to the Resolution of the House of Friday, March 28 (on the subject of Local Taxation);"

but he thought that this was hardly a fitting opportunity to bring it forward. He would therefore propose to reserve his remarks until an occasion arose on which he could take the sense of the House upon it.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. RYLANDS said, that he had early in the Session put a Question as to the carrying out of the Resolution which had been passed last year advocating the reduction of the National Expenditure. The reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to that Question had been that, in conjunction with some gentlemen of the Treasury, he had been engaged in a very careful examination of different branches of expenditure, and that, in consequence of this investigation, he believed he was on the way to secure a considerable economy, without interfering with efficiency. For his (Mr. Rylands's) own part, however, from the Estimates laid on the Table, he was bound to say that down to the present time he saw no very great evidence of any remarkable economy on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The present Government had made large promises to secure economy in administration, and to relieve the country of much of the burden of taxation; but, so far from doing that, in some cases the burdens were increased. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that throughout the country, and especially in the manufacturing centres, there was great dissatisfaction as to the expenditure incurred and justified by Her Majesty's Government. He thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in making his very decided separation between what he called taxation and income not in the nature of taxation, was somewhat misleading the House and the country. Take, for example, the postage and telegraph stamps. There were several millions of profit left; and he thought that the moment they got a profit, then they were bound to consider that that profit was a portion of the Revenue of the country that was imposed on the taxpayer. He was not so unreasonable as to suppose that reductions in expenditure could take place without some delay; but he believed that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of adopting so ambitious a scheme in regard to the reduction of the National Debt, which gave no general satisfaction to the taxpayers of the country, had given a certain portion of the money which would then have been at his disposal to the relief of the taxpayer and to the loosening of the springs of industry, that would have been a far more popular and far more advantageous thing to the country. He did not say that it was not prudent to discharge national obligations; but what he complained of was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, at a time when the trade of the country was suffering from foreign competition, raised money which would benefit people who in future years might be able to bear burdens better than the taxpayers who were now living. At the present time, also, the people were paying for local advantages which ought to have been provided by their predecessors, and establishing permanent institutions which would benefit future generations. These local burdens amounted to many millions. He could understand the argument in favour of a large payment to the National Debt if the Government had made a considerable reduction in the expenditure of the country; but he was bound to say he had seen no evidence of that economy which he had reason to hope would have been displayed by Ministers. What he had looked forward to, and what he desired, was the Government proposing the appointment of Committees of that House to inquire into the condition of the great spending Departments. He had too much confidence in the Chancellor of the Exchequer to unduly press his views in that respect upon him during the present Session; but he hoped that when they came to examine the expenditure of the country during next Session, in accordance with the expectation held out by the right hon. Gentleman, the Committees would consist of Members of that House, and not of Gentlemen who were permanent servants of the Crown. The Heads of the great Departments of the State deserved the highest possible honour and respect. They were, however, Gentlemen who, by the very nature of their position and by the conditions of the society in which they moved, were always awake to their own interests. When the people were asleep, they were awake. He hoped the Government would tell the House what course they proposed to take to reduce the ever-growing expenditure; and he should be very glad indeed if the right hon. Gentleman could give the House and the country some definite assurance with regard to its reduction. Next Session he hoped, at least, that the Government would appoint Select Committees carefully to investigate the main branches of the National Expenditure.

PRIVATE BREWING LICENCES.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. HICKS said, he wished to refer to a subject which affected a large number of the labourers in the Eastern Counties—namely, licences to private persons for permission to brew. Since the alteration of the Malt Tax in 1880—an alteration made avowedly for the purpose of benefiting the agricultural interest—the labourers had been charged 6*s*. for these licences to brew. But the average quantity of malt brewed by these men did not, he believed, exceed three bushels; in many cases he did not suppose it exceeded two; and the charge of 6*s*. for a licence was therefore some few pence more than the duty under the old Act, which, for two bushels of malt, would have been about 5*s*. 8*d*. The average assessment of agricultural houses in the country did not exceed £3, and this licence for being permitted to brew was accordingly equal to an Income Tax of 2*s*. in the pound upon the houses occupied by these labourers. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to see his way to reduce the cost of the licence, although he was perfectly well aware of the impossibility of doing away with it altogether. Without licence or registration, no doubt there would be a good deal of evasion of the law and fraudulent brewing; but he could see no reason why the 6*s*. licence should not be reduced to 1*s*., or, at any rate, to considerably less than the figure at which it stood at present. This suggestion he earnestly commended to the serious attention of the right hon. Gentleman in the hope that, at some future time, he would afford the desired relief.

Mr. CLARE READ said, he hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not acquiesce in the suggestion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Hicks), he would, at least, say whether it was not in his power to order that this tax of 6*s*. upon brewing might not be collected, say, in two half-yearly instalments of 3*s*. each, instead of in one lump sum for the twelvemonth; or whether a man might not be permitted to take out a licence for six months instead of for twelve. On the Budget night he ventured to place before the right hon. Gentleman an idea of the extreme hardships inflicted on the agricultural labourers who had to pay 6*s*. before they could brew a drop of beer. Although the total amount might appear to some to be comparatively small, still, at the same time, it came to be a very considerable amount to the labourer to find, when they came to consider that, in addition to the tax on brewing, he had also to find his materials wherewith to brew, and which would amount to 12*s.* or 13*s.* He might instance a parallel case in which the right hon. Gentleman, as he had himself admitted, had attained considerable success, and that was with regard to the 14 days' game licence for £1. No doubt it was an extremely useful privilege for a lawyer to be able to have the great pleasure of shooting a grouse or a partridge during the early days of August and September during the Long Vacation. It was also equally pleasant for a boy come home for the Christmas holidays to have a shot at a cock pheasant. But he submitted that the relaxation for which he asked was of much greater practical benefit; and he certainly thought that, considering the advantage it would be to the labouring man, the suggestion was one which ought to commend itself to the serious consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. During the Budget debate, the right hon. Gentleman said there were some people who would prefer paying the 6*s.* in one sum; and, of course, he (Mr. Clare Read) was not prepared to assert that everyone would take half-yearly licences. If people wanted to pay the whole of the money at once, by all means let them do so; but he fully believed the right hon. Gentleman would not find a cottager in the United Kingdom that would not prefer half-yearly payments. In fact, he was almost certain it would be found that many cottagers would be glad and only too willing to pay the half-yearly instalment of the tax, who could not pay that for the 12 months. The transfer of the tax from malt to beer had been most profitable to the Revenue, for whereas the duty upon the malt had been 5*s.* 1½*d.* per barrel upon the beer, now the duty was upon the manufactured article it paid 6*s.* 3*d.*

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that he was much obliged to hon. Members who had given him such valuable suggestions for a fancy Budget. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) had made an interesting speech in favour of protective duties, and had enumerated seven articles which might be so taxed as to produce a revenue of £3,500,000. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was, however, afraid that that was not the time to re-introduce the policy of Protection into this country. He, therefore, could not accept the hon. Member's suggestions. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) had spoken of additional revenue to be derived from what he was pleased to term that popular tax, the Income Tax. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had never heard it called a popular tax before; but the hon. Member had judiciously explained that it was popular with those who had not to pay it. The hon. Gentleman had proposed to raise £2,000,000 a-year by taxing ground rents; but he did not seem to be aware that, although ground rents were not subject to local rates, they were already subject to the Income Tax; so that they would have to be subject to a special rate of Income Tax, if more was to be got from them in this way. The hon. Member thought that the duty on gin ought to be reduced, and that the tax on certain wines, such as Champagne and Madeira, might be increased. But it would be difficult to make much out of that proposal, as the duties on spirits amounted to £18,000,000 or £20,000,000, while those on wines brought less than £2,000,000. It was not easy, therefore, to see how any sensible relief could be afforded in that way to spirits; for the increase of revenue from wine would be far from meeting the decrease from spirits. With respect to the taxation of clubs, he did not think that much could be made out of them. He would admit that there were in the country many spurious clubs; but the police had, during the past year, brought prosecutions against several of them with considerable success. While, therefore, he was anxious to do all he could to deal sharply with sham clubs, he should be very reluctant to discourage real working men's clubs by taxing them, and it was undesirable to do so. For his part, he was not prepared to say that the working men's genuine club, of which there were many, should be subject to taxation any more than the clubs of those who were in a better position in life. His hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had made a suggestion which, he imagined, could not but be palatable to him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), inasmuch as he proposed a new tax on people who were ready to pay. But when he detailed his plan, it turned out to be only a proposal to tax agreements for letting houses in Scotland 1*d*., instead of the much higher rate to which they were now liable, but which was sometimes evaded. He was not prepared to do this. He desired to treat the remarks of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) with great respect. The hon. Member had been for a long time past a consistent advocate of the reduction of Public Expenditure, and the Motion he had made last year had not been unproductive. The question of economy in connection with the permanent officials of Departments had not escaped his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) attention, as he had shown in his Budget speech, and good results had already been achieved, and better were hoped for in the future. The hon. Member for Burnley had said he could not see, on the face of the Estimates, where economies had been effected. But, in dealing with the expenditure of a large number of Public Departments, whose expenditure ramified in many directions, and was under the direction of many persons, they could not, without great patience and a considerable interval of time, largely reduce establishments. The process must be gradual, and the result of the most careful deliberation. At the same time, with the assistance of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury and of the permanent Heads of the Departments, he had initiated and carried out an exhaustive examination of a portion of the Estimates submitted to the House. When the Votes were taken, his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) would be able to show what improvements had been effected, and also what prospective economies it had been decided to carry out. In the speech he had referred to, he had stated the general effect of what the Government was doing and what they proposed to do; and he could only say he should not shrink, so long as he continued in his present Office, from going on in the course he had taken during the past year of pressing on and enforcing economies in this, as in other matters, gradually where opportunity presented itself, and where it could be done without detriment to the Public Service. He did not wish to overrate the amount they had done; but, comparing the present with the Estimates for 1873-4, he had already shown that, excluding the Post Office, the grants-in-aid of the local taxpayer, and education, great economies had been effected. But the real offender was the House of Commons. For one proposal to reduce expenditure, there were 20 or 30 to increase it. This tendency was not limited to the Army and Navy; there was hardly any Department with respect to which the Treasury had not to meet proposals for additional charges. For instance, he had been asked that day to approve a great additional charge for the Inland Revenue Department, which he did not think necessary; and he would, therefore, ask his hon. Friend and those who thought with him to join in assisting the Government in resisting the pressure for increased expenditure in that House, which was far stronger and far more difficult to meet than any pressure on the part of public servants. With regard to what fell from the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) on the subject of brewing licences, he must admit that it was by no means an easy question; it was one, moreover, which concerned not only the small brewers to whom he had referred, but those who contributed much larger sums to the Revenue. He believed he had answered all the questions which had been put to him, and he trusted he had satisfied hon. Members. He hoped the House would now resolve itself into Committee.

PARLIAMENT—AMENDMENTS ON MOTION FOR GOING INTO COMMITTEE—RULINGS OF MR. SPEAKER.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. HEALY: I wish, Sir, to submit to you, as a point of Order, whether, on the Motion for leaving the Chair, I cannot call attention to your ruling and conduct in the Chair on a recent occasion? There has been some question whether any Motions raised on going into Committee of Ways and Means must not be relative to the Budget; but I have looked into the authorities on that subject, and I find that Sir Thomas Erskine May, in his *Parliamentary Practice*, ninth edition, lays it down that the ancient Constitutional doctrine of redress of grievances before Supply is now represented by the practice of permitting every kind of Amendment to be moved on the Question that the Speaker do leave the Chair. I therefore wish to ask you, Sir, if I am not entitled to submit to the consideration of the House certain rulings of yours on a former occasion?

MR. GLADSTONE——

MR. HEALY: I submit this as a point of Order.

MR. GLADSTONE: I rose to speak to that point of Order. The hon. Member has raised, very fairly and distinctly, the particular point which he wishes to submit to the decision of the Chair. He desires to know whether he is right in thinking that the question he proposes to raise respecting certain rulings from the Chair cannot be properly debated before going into Committee of Ways and Means, although it does not relate distinctly to the matter of Ways and Means. I also wish to submit to you, Sir, as the hon. Member has kindly stated the purpose with which he raises this question, certain other considerations that appear to me to bear upon the point of Order. The hon. Member, as I understand, desires to question certain rulings of yours. He desires to question your conduct in the Chair in the discharge of your duties as Speaker of this House. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the hon. Member is right in saying that the mere want of relation between the subject he wishes to introduce and Ways and Means is no impediment, it appears to me that there are other impediments. They are these. In the first place, I observe that no Notice has been given of the hon. Member's intention to question your conduct in the Chair in the discharge of your duties. He gave a Notice this evening—though I did not hear the precise terms of it; but I believe I am correct in saying that a verbal Notice in the strict sense is, in this House, no Notice at all, and that a Notice must be put upon the Paper in a distinct and definite form.

MR. HEALY: That is where Notice is required.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not attempting to lay down any general *dictum* as to where Notice is necessary and where it is not. I am only observing that in this case there is no Notice before the House of the hon. Member's intention. Secondly, I observe that as the Motion before the House is "That the Speaker leave the Chair," and as the hon. Member does not intend to make a Motion, but merely to call attention to the Speaker's conduct, that is a course which I think the House will not permit. I apprehend that if anyone were to attempt to call into question my own conduct or that of any other Member of this House days or weeks ago, he would not be permitted except under these two conditions—first, that he must give Notice; and, secondly, that he must submit a distinct Motion to the House. My belief is that that is a protection which would be extended to every Member of this House. If that be so, I do not enter into the question whether the Speaker ought to have greater protection than any other Member, or how much that protection ought to be; but I put it to you, Sir, for your consideration, that the protection afforded to the chief officer of the House in regard to matters connected with the discharge of his duties ought not to be less than that afforded to any other Member; and that the House should not allow his conduct to be called in question without the two safeguards of Notice and of a definite Motion. It is with some regret that I have to call on you to give a decision in a matter in which you are supposed to be yourself concerned; but I am sure that a sense of public duty will prevent you from allowing any indisposition on that score to interfere with your free and impartial judgment.

MR. HEALY: Before the Speaker gives his decision I would like to refer him to a precedent that will, I think, be found to govern the present case. On August 4, 1881, a question was raised by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in regard to Mr. O'Kelly's suspension; and the question was raised when, the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair having been negatived, no Division could be taken on the hon. Member's Motion. On that occasion the Prime Minister said—

> "Though you may be bound to accept the ruling at the moment, there is nothing to prevent your impeaching that ruling at a future time. If I am cast by what I deem to be an unjust verdict, I must submit to it for the time, though afterwards I may condemn it."—(3 *Hansard*, [264] 869-70.)

The right hon. Gentleman also said—

> "I admit fully that every Member of the House is entitled to impugn and pronounce censure upon the conduct of the Speaker on grave and sufficient grounds."—(*Ibid.* 866.)

It is not from any want of courtesy to the Speaker that no Notice of this matter has been given on the present occasion. I had intended making the Motion on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply on Tuesday, and giving Notice in due course; but if I had adopted that course, I would, I knew, be counted out. I have, therefore, resolved to bring the matter forward on the Motion to take effective Supply. If I gave Notice, I might lose many excellent opportunities of bringing it forward. Three weeks ago I gave verbal Notice of my intention to call attention to this matter, and I have again given Notice to-day. I therefore disclaim any idea of being discourteous to the Speaker by not giving him Notice. Whatever the ruling of the Speaker may be I will accept it, altogether apart from the question that it is the Speaker's own conduct that I wish to bring under the consideration of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: In replying to the points of Order which have been raised by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and by the Prime Minister, I have to say that I hope in deciding upon them I shall dismiss all personal considerations. I have to thank the hon. Member for Monaghan for the courteous manner in which he has referred to these personal considerations. I am bound to consider the matter as a question of Order and precedent. I can assure the House that I have had no Notice whatever of the point to be raised by the hon. Member for Monaghan, and until this evening I had no idea that any Motion was going to be made on the subject of my conduct. Immediately after the Easter Recess the hon. Member for Monaghan stated that he should at some future time take an opportunity of calling the attention of the House to my conduct in giving a certain ruling in the course of an event that occurred on the preceding Friday. From that day to the present nothing has occurred that could make me suppose that any Notice was going to be given of my conduct in the Chair. No Notice having been given, it appears to me that I am bound to hold that the rule which I should lay down in the case of any other Member of this House I cannot depart from in my own case. It would be establishing a very difficult and dangerous precedent if the action of a Member of this House were to be called in question without any Notice to that Member, and without the House generally being aware of the course about to be taken, and without the House being in a position to come to a decision on the matter. The House at large was not at all aware that the hon. Member for Monaghan was going to question any ruling of mine; and I should wish respectfully to submit that any question affecting my conduct in the Chair, or any ruling given by me, should come before the House in such a way that the whole House should be able to decide upon it either for or against myself. Under these circumstances, although it is certainly against my own personal feeling that the matter should not now come on, I am bound by precedents, and cannot depart from them for any advantage to myself. I must, therefore, rule that the proper course for the hon. Member for Monaghan to adopt is to give Notice, and put his Motion in a specific form before the House, so that the House at large may be able to pronounce an opinion upon it.

Mr. HEALY: I accept your ruling, Sir; but I desire to ask one question. Is that ruling based on the fact that no Notice has been given, or on the fact that the Motion has been brought forward when there could be no Division upon it?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: This is such a very grave question, that I hope, Sir, you will be able to give a definite decision upon it. I should have thought, in accordance with the views expressed by the Prime Minister, that a review of the conduct of the Speaker could not properly be proceeded with without allowing the House to pronounce an opinion on the matter. Any other course would be one which would entirely destroy the authority of the Chair.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think, Sir, there can be no question whatever that, for the convenience of the House, and in support of the authority of the high personage who presides over its debates, it is most essential that any Motion calling in question the conduct of the Speaker should be raised in such a manner that the House should have full knowledge that it was coming on, and also that the House should be able to pronounce an opinion upon it, Nothing can be more important than that the delicate relations between the House and the Speaker should be maintained in all their integrity. We have the greatest confidence in our Speaker; but it is, of course, possible for anyone to go wrong, and it is right that there should be an opportunity of questioning his conduct. But for the maintenance of the proper proceedings of this House it is necessary that full and ample Notice should be given; and that there should be a proper opportunity of discussing and deciding upon any Motion impugning the conduct of the Speaker.

Mr. HEALY: I wish, as a point of Order, to call your attention, Sir, to a precedent which occurred in the case of your Predecessor in the Chair—namely, that of August 4th, 1881; and I ask that no decision should be come to on this point that has arisen until you have had an opportunity of seeing the Motion before you, and also of considering the point raised on the last occasion, when the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), after the other Motions on the Paper had been decided, proceeded to call attention to the suspension of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly). I may also mention that the hon. Member for the City of Cork stated that he would not have an opportunity of dividing the House, and that the speech of the Prime Minister was directed to taking objection to the hon. Member bringing the subject forward on such an occasion. I should like to read two or three passages from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister upon that occasion. He said—

> "I should have thought it was a well-known principle of our system in this House—and I am astonished that a man with one-tenth part of the discernment of the hon. Member should not have perceived it, and had the hon. Member been guided by a right sense of his duty to the House he would have perceived it—that the judgment of the House stands between himself and the Chair, and protects the Chair from the charges that he has brought against it."—(3 *Hansard*, [264] 867.)

There are other passages which I cannot find at the moment; but the whole argument of the Prime Minister during the debate was founded on the fact that the judgment of the House could not be taken on the occasion; and therefore I submit, as a point of Order, that until you, Mr. Speaker, have had an opportunity of examining the Records of August 4, 1881, when Mr. Speaker Brand was in the Chair, it would be inconvenient to decide this matter at the moment.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not wish to anticipate the decision of the Chair; but I am not quite certain that I have understood the contention of the hon. Gentleman. I have the impression that these references may have been in a case where the question was immediate.

Mr. HEALY: No, no!

Mr. GLADSTONE: Oh, then it was retrospective?

Mr. HEALY: Yes.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Then, if that is so, I admit that it is possible I may be wrong.

[Mr. Healy handed to the Prime Minister the volume of *Hansard* from which he had been reading.]

Mr. SPEAKER: On a matter so gravely affecting the interests of the House, I am clearly of opinion that not only, as has been stated, is it necessary that due Notice should be given of a Motion of this kind; but that the House ought to be in a position to give a final verdict upon the question proposed to be challenged; and that a challenge of the Speaker's ruling should not consist of mere fault-finding, but should be submitted to the judgment of the House.

Mr. BIGGAR: Mr. Speaker—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman rise for the purpose of raising a point of Order?

Mr. BIGGAR: Yes, Sir; I rise to a point of Order, and the point of Order is this—whether or not, in the circumstances, the Government cannot set up Supply in order to give an opportunity for discussing the matter, and a decision being arrived at——[*Cries of* "No!"]

Mr. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that on Tuesday next I shall put down a Motion on this subject, and I shall see whether the Government will keep a House for the purpose of considering the question.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS.—COMMITTEE.

Ways and Means—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

		£	s.	d.
Tea . . .	the lb.	0	0	6."

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he believed the time had now arrived for the Committee to consider the proposals which were laid before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Financial Statement. He thought it was somewhat unfortunate that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have adopted a course which practically precluded the Committee from considering the important points of interest raised in that speech—namely, the conversion of certain Stock and alteration in our gold currency. It was, he believed, quite unintentional on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he took a course which precluded such a discussion; but, at the same time, it was obvious that the course that had been taken was an inconvenient one when the Bills which the Government proposed to put forward on this subject were not prepared, and when, therefore, the Government could not be put in full possession of the views of that House on those two important matters. There were one or two points in connection with the Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which he thought worthy the attention of the Committee. Perhaps he might first be permitted to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the lucidity of his statement, and the clearness with which he had marshalled his figures. But the result, or the estimated result, of the expenditure in the present year was, in his (Lord George Hamilton's) humble judgment, very unsatisfactory. There was an estimated surplus, according to the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of £241,000. Now, he had ventured to call the attention of the House twice earlier in the Session to the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was transferring from the Estimates of this year certain payments which ought to be met out of the income of this year; and the result was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to omit the payment of £250,000, which ought to have been paid to India towards defraying the charge which some four years ago the Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, agreed should be annually paid, which charge was £500,000. If this sum of £250,000 had been paid, as it ought to have been, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have found himself with an absolute deficiency amounting to £9,000; because, as the right hon. Gentleman was aware, if they deducted from the surplus of £241,000 the £250,000 that ought to have been paid there would have been, instead of a surplus, a deficiency.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: The money has been paid.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, there was still a sum due to India. The arrangement was that every year's Estimate should be charged with £500,000; but this year's Estimate was only charged with £250,000; but if the whole sum arranged by the Prime Minister had been charged this year, as he had said, there would have been an absolute deficiency amounting to £9,000. It was the first time during the 16 years that he had been in Parliament that he had ever known the Chancellor of the Exchequer having a deficiency in time of peace; and although, undoubtedly, during the time the late Government were in Office there were deficiencies at the end of the year, those deficiencies had always arisen from circumstances which were unforeseen at the commencement of the year, and in every single instance, at the commencement of the year, there was a considerable margin between income and expenditure. Would any hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House get up and say that their foreign relations were so satisfactory and so free from danger and menace in every part of the world that they were not likely to be called upon to make exceptional expenditure before the end of the financial year? If they were called upon to make exceptional expenditure during the year, where were the Ways and Means? The most remarkable feature of this year's

Budget was that although the Government came into Office pledged to enonomy and to alter the extravagant procedure of their Predecessors, yet after four years of Office and of peace Estimates they could only, by a hocus pocus, produce what he maintained was a false Budget. What was the cause of their great difficulty in balancing income and expenditure now? It was certainly not due to the Government being in possession of a less income than their Predecessors. The figures were a little startling. He had taken the trouble to estimate what was the sum received during the last four years of the Administration of the late Government and the sum received during the last four years of the present Government; and he had found that the income of the present Government had been £25,000,000 in excess of the income of the late Government; and, therefore, each year, on the average, Her Majesty's present Government had been in receipt of an income of more than £6,000,000 in excess of that which their Predecessors had secured. Then, he said, how came it to pass, in these four years of the tenure of Office of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, when they had been in receipt of such a largely increased income, that they had been barely able to meet their expenditure? The reason was very simple; it was owing to the very steady and continuous growth of their expenditure. How much greater that expenditure now was than it was three or four years ago would, he thought, startle anyone who looked at the figures. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made two alterations in the accounts which, however they might improve the account, made comparisons between the present and preceding year somewhat difficult. But the extra receipts for the Army and Navy were struck out on each side of the account, and this year, therefore, was struck out the extra receipts in relation to India. If they wanted to compare the expenditure of the Government with the expenditure of their Predecessors, they must include both these items, which during the present year had been excluded; and by including those items, and comparing them with the last Estimate the late Government left on the Table of the House, hon. Members would be able to see exactly how great was the increase of expenditure. The Estimate of expenditure this year was £85,291,825. To that had to be added extra receipts for the Navy, £270,235, and for the Army, £595,635, amounting in the aggregate to £866,167. Adding that sum to the £85,291,825, they had a total of £86,677,992. To that must be further added the receipts for Indian charges, which he took at the figures of last year—namely, £1,045,000, and that brought up the total estimated expenditure for this year to £87,152,992. What was the Estimate of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister four years ago? Why, in 1880-81 he estimated the Expenditure at £82,075,922, so that in four years the expenditure of an economical Liberal Government had increased by £5,087,000, or an annual increase of £1,275,000. The expenditure was increasing, to borrow an expression of the Prime Minister, by "leaps and bounds;" but the income was more or less stationary. What was the cause of this great increase of expenditure? There was a popular delusion cherished by certain Gentlemen, especially those below the Gangway, that this increase was due to the paying off by the present Government of debts incurred by their Predecessors. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; hon. Gentlemen opposite were still under that delusion. If hon. Members would be kind enough to look at the charges put on the Consolidated Fund in relation to the service of the Debt in the year 1880-81 and in the present year they would find that the Consolidated Fund charges in 1880-81 were £31,346,978, while for the present year they were £31,103,673. Thus there were actually £243,000 less charged on the Consolidated Fund for the present year than there was four years ago; and it was a curious fact that the only extra charge that the Government had had to incur in the present year was a charge in relation to a payment to India on behalf of the Afghan War, which amounted to £250,000, and which almost exactly balanced the £243,000 just referred to as the amount less than that paid four years ago in relation to the service of the debt. Therefore, they must look elsewhere. This increase of expenditure was due to the Supply Services costing far more than they did four years ago. The Army now cost £1,000,000 more than it cost four years ago; the Navy, £500,000 more; the Civil Service,

£3,600,000; making a total of £5,100,000. That was the increase of expenditure which, during the last four years, had taken place under an economical Liberal Government. Now, he thought that the Prime Minister had a financial conscience. He had always been consistent in reference to finance; and he (Lord George Hamilton) thought the right hon. Gentleman would recollect that, amongst other attacks which the Opposition had thought unjust that he had made on the late Government, he had particularly attacked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) for his management of the Civil Service Estimates. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had been unwise enough to make use of the expression in relation to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon of a "chicken-hearted Chancellor of the Exchequer."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Not in reference to the expenditure.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: If it was not in reference to the expenditure, what was it in relation to? The right hon. Gentleman had found fault with their Estimates; and he (Lord George Hamilton) had shown that the right hon. Gentleman's own Estimates had increased £5,100,000 in four years—an increase that was absolutely unprecedented, and far greater than anything that had occurred during the tenure of Office of his Predecessors. The right hon. Gentleman must feel that the strictures he had cast on the financial management of his Predecessors were unjust. He (Lord George Hamilton) was quite ready to give all credit to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary to the Treasury for their exertions during the past year; because the attention of the House had been called to the enormous increase in the Civil Service Estimates, and, in consequence, a Resolution had been almost unanimously passed—indeed, he thought without a Division—that economies in regard to this branch of the Service were necessary. He thought it had been, therefore, to the credit of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury that they had this year presented Civil Service Estimates which he believed he was correct in stating were less than those of last year. There was the automatic increase in relation to education and local subsidies; and therefore he admitted that the result of the exertions of these Gentlemen had been most creditable to them, as, in spite of their increase, the total expenditure was less than last year. There was one part of the Civil Service Expenditure which he thought deserved the careful attention of the House—namely, the Post Office expenditure, which had enormously increased. The Post Office was pushing its operations into all sorts of new spheres. As far as he could make out, it was rather difficult to be correct in investigating the exact results of the accounts. Although the expenditure on the Post Office was far larger now than it was two or three years ago, and though the capital sums expended in that Department were annually increasing, yet the net income from the Post Office was less than it was some years ago.

Mr. FAWCETT was here understood to intimate some dissent.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, the net income was £200,000 less than it was four years ago. They were all ready to admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General discharged his duties very satisfactorily; but the point to which he was especially calling the attention of the Committee was whether it was expedient or not that the State should so develop its operations, and should, through the Post Office, undertake a number of fresh duties, because it seemed to him a question that could be considered from two points of view. In the first place, it undoubtedly involved greater expenditure; and, in the second place, it led to a large increase in the number of Government *employés*. Considering that there was a Franchise Bill before the House, and that the tendency was to increase the franchise, he doubted whether it was expedient to largely increase the number of persons depending for their daily bread on the Government. Unquestionably, there always was, and always would be, a disposition on the part of Ministers to favour the claims of certain gentlemen. Pressure was brought to bear upon the Government by Members of their Party, which it was difficult for them to resist. As he had stated, the surplus was only £240,000, and there seemed to him to be two charges which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was almost certain to have to meet during the present year. There was the charge in reference to the serious alteration proposed in the coinage. That, of course, he was not at liberty to discuss at the present moment; but he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the large receipts which he estimated the Mint would receive this year—namely, £120,000, had any connection with the proposed alteration in the gold coinage?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): No.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Estimate was exceptionally large; and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been a little premature in taking credit for a certain amount from the proceeds in the alteration that he proposed, before the sanction of the House had been given to his claim. If, then, they dismissed any charge that might be imposed on the Revenue in reference to the alteration of the coinage, they must remember that they might still be called upon to meet a large charge in consequence of the menacing state of affairs in Egypt and elsewhere. If they were called upon to meet an increased charge in regard to these matters, where, he asked, were the Ways and Means to be found? The Prime Minister had made an attack upon the late Government from the hustings because they had a deficiency, which deficiency had been caused, in almost every instance that had occurred, by circumstances arising after the beginning of the financial year which they could not foresee. In 1879-80, for instance, there was an estimated surplus of £1,900,000, which was insufficient to meet the war expenditure which it had been subsequently found necessary to incur. It was tolerably clear, he thought, to every Member of the House that after the discussion that had taken place on Monday and Tuesday last, it was almost certain that they would, in some shape or other, have to incur an additional expenditure during the present year; because, without referring to the late debate, or debates, it would be undoubtedly necessary to do something to rescue General Gordon from Khartoum. If it was found necessary to put a stop to the insurrection going on around General Gordon, how was the expense to be met? Egypt was practically insolvent. Therefore, he wished to raise his voice very respectfully to warn the House that these Estimates, though they seemed satisfactory, were yet most unquestionably quite insufficient, when they took into consideration all the exceptional conditions and emergencies that were almost certain to occur before the financial year closed.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, that he did not propose to follow the noble Lord who had just sat down through the whole of his remarks; but while he agreed with him that it was undesirable for Her Majesty's Government to follow the example set by the other side of the House in regard to their financial arrangements, and to end the year with a deficit, he must say that so long as they had a surplus of something like £240,000 he thought it would be very inconvenient to impose taxes for an emergency which they must all hope would never arise. He had no doubt that, if emergencies did arise, the Government would then impose additional taxation, in order that they might have a surplus at the end of the year. There was no doubt that the surplus was small, as the noble Lord had pointed out, and that the expenditure was large; but, to a great extent, the increase was nominal. Fortunately the question lay in a nutshell; because, while the increase of expenditure was between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000 more than it was four years ago, if they looked into the details they found that £1,000,000 was not expenditure in any real sense, but was spent in the repayment of the Debt.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No; there is less paid for the decrease of the Debt.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK begged the noble Lord's pardon, and thought he was quite right in the statement he had made. Then there was an additional amount in the grant in aid of local expenditure of £1,000,000. The Post Office stood for nearly £2,000,000. He, for his part, did not wish to see the Government undertaking mercantile affairs; but still, wisely or unwisely, additional operations had been decided on, and they must not look at the increased expenditure as being an increase in the ordinary sense. The £1,000,000 paid, as an increased amount for grants in aid of local expenditure, was simply a payment made in following out a policy which he knew was advocated by the noble Lord himself and his Friends; but whether such expenditure was wise or unwise, the payment could not be looked upon as an increase of expenditure. Then, lastly, there was the increased amount paid for education, which was nearly £1,000,000, and that was not objected to by hon. Members on the other side of the House, and certainly not by hon. Members on the Ministerial side. In this way, therefore, they accounted for nearly the whole of the additional expenditure; and when they bore in mind the exceptional state of things in Ireland, the continually increasing population of the country, and the demands which were constantly made upon the Government for new services, he thought they could hardly wonder at this increase of expenditure having taken place. At the same time, there could be no doubt that it did throw on the Government the duty of endeavouring to do something to keep down the expenditure; and he thoroughly believed that they were alive to the fact, and that they were trying as much as they could to keep it down. He was sorry that they were precluded from discussing several most interesting points on the present occasion, such as the proposed alterations in the coinage, and the question of the interest on the National Debt. He was afraid that if he went into these the Chairman would be most likely to call him to Order. He thought that when they came to discuss the former question it would be easy to show that many of the fears with reference to it were chimerical. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the progress he was making in the reduction of the National Debt.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the hon. Baronet had endeavoured to explain away some of the extra expenditure by the Education Votes; but he omitted to make any reference to what had been referred to by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) — namely, the increase, amounting to £1,500,000, which had taken place in the Naval and Military Expenditure. He was not one of those to find fault with a just expenditure upon these Services, nor would the country grudge it, if any valuable results had been achieved thereby; but when they found deplorable consequences always following their excursions in Egypt and elsewhere, it was not to be expected that the country would rest satisfied. They had been told that the strength of the Fleet, as compared with the Fleets of other Powers, was decreasing, instead of increasing; and therefore he thought they were justified in complaining of the increased expenditure. The broad fact to which the noble Lord had referred was that the Government claimed to be a Government of economy—a Government which came in, above all things, with a policy of retrenchment. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister denied that statement; but he would mention that, as an hon. Friend of his boasted he had done, for some years he had carried about with him a copy of the orations of the right hon. Gentleman delivered North of the Tweed; and he could only say that the right hon. Gentleman's recollection of them was less accurate than his own, if he thought that large portions of those orations were not directed to the subject of expenditure. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Will the hon. Gentleman read?] By an unfortunate accident he had not a copy of the orations with him. He did not know what edition of them the right hon. Gentleman had in his hand; but, still, the copy which he possessed did, undoubtedly, contain many references to economy, and promises on the part of the Liberal Party that if they were returned to Office they would at once reduce expenditure and introduce a new *régime.* ["No, no!"] This was a part of the question which he could hardly treat seriously, because he was so confident that references to the subject of economy were to be found on almost every page of the right hon. Gentleman's orations. If the right hon. Gentleman would excuse him, he would at a future Morning Sitting, provided the Government did not consume the whole of the time, give the House what he was sure they would consider a very great treat —namely, a large number of quotations from the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman in favour of economy and retrenchment. This interesting interlude had drawn him aside, however, from the point stated with so much force by the noble Lord the Member for

Middlesex—namely, that the expenditure of the country had increased by £5,000,000 during the time the present Government had been in Office. He would ask what could Liberal supporters of the Government think of their professions in the face of that fact? The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London had made a passing allusion to the difficulties in Ireland as accounting for a portion of the increase of expenditure; but that was a most unfortunate allusion, for the Government themselves had created, and were responsible for, the difficulties in Ireland. He would not enter into that subject now; but if they took the increased expenditure in connection with Ireland, it would be found that no benefit had resulted. The increased Naval and Military Expenditure had been without the slightest benefit to the country. The hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) had drawn the attention of the Vice President of Council on Education to the fact that certain mottoes, amongst others "Peace with Honour," had been exposed in a national school. This was justly considered a Party motto, and the hon. Member for Stoke was indignant that it should be exhibited in a public school. But things had very much changed since that phrase was first used; for instead of having, as then, peace with honour, they now had war with dishonour, and that, too, with an increased charge of £1,500,000 in the Army and Navy Estimates. In the face of those facts, he thought the strictures of the noble Lord on the policy of the Government were justified; and that if the Government were to recover any small shred of character for economy they must set to work at once greatly to reduce their expenditure.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the criticisms of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex had related to two questions. In the first place, he said that the Government would have had a deficit this year had it not been that the charge for the Afghan War was to be £250,000, instead of the average charge of £500,000. Had he postponed the payment of the charge the criticism of the noble Lord would have had some force. All that had been done, however, was to anticipate and pay last year what was due this year; and as to next year's £500,000, to pay half of it this year. That, he contended, was a good, and not a reprehensible policy. Moreover, it was based upon the noble Lord's own advice, contained in one of his speeches, which he quoted in the debate on the Vote; and, having taken that advice, he thought it very hard that the Government should be attacked by the noble Lord for adopting his own plan. The other statement made by the noble Lord was that the Estimate of expenditure which the Government placed this year before Parliament, after making a number of adjustments, was £5,000,000 or so more than the Estimate of four years ago. So far as the Naval and Military Expenditure was concerned, the increase had been fully justified; and he need not refer to the debates on the subject, which showed conclusively that it did not lie with Members of the late Government to blame it. But the noble Lord said the Civil Service Expenditure would be £3,500,000 more than it was estimated at four years ago. But the increase came under three heads—namely, the Post Office Service, the Education Vote, and the expenditure in connection with local subventions, which amounted altogether to more than the sum named. He could not, therefore, agree with the statement of the noble Lord; because, omitting these three heads, the Civil Service Expenditure was less than it had been four years ago, although, he admitted, only by a small sum. Consequently, they were justified in taking the Estimate for this year as fairly representing the expenditure of the year. As to the Army and Navy charge, last year he gave the House, with great care, the details of the increase of expenditure; and there was, of course, an additional cause of expense this year, because they were keeping a larger Army in Egypt, and because the contribution from Egypt, although it fairly met the direct charges, did not meet the additional indirect charges. Speaking from memory, he thought that the addition to the original Estimates of last year amounted to something like £500,000. He had already explained, in his two Financial Statements, the causes of the increase, part of which was automatic. But they had done their best to economize in various directions, and had thus, to some extent, made up that portion of the increase. But, on the other hand, from year to year the deferred pay of the Army was increasing, and they had not yet reached the maximum of the old pensions, for which ultimately it would be a partial substitute; but when it was reached, there would be an annual decrease, instead of an increase as at present. But there was another and more important cause of increased expenditure. When the present Government came into Office they found that not more than half the number of ironclads which had been deemed necessary were being built; and they also had to incur a large expenditure in connection with guns of a new type, which, although their Predecessors considered them necessary, had not been contributed to by them to the extent of one farthing. As he had given the figures accurately last year he need not repeat them, but would conclude by expressing the hope that he had fully answered the statements of the noble Lord.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I think there are some advantages and some disadvantages in the manner in which we conduct our debates with regard to the economy of one Government as compared with the economy of another. It is extremely well that the people of the country should have brought before them in these discussions across the Table the fact that there are two sides to the shield. When the Conservative Party are in Office we are attacked as a most extravagant Government; and anything we can say, by way of explanation or mitigation of the charge, is almost always received by the country at large with scepticism, and a belief that we are merely making excuses. On the other hand, when the Liberal Party are in Office any increase of expenditure that may take place is very fully accounted for, and is proved to be a matter which the Ministry ought rather to be proud of than otherwise. The truth is that, to a very great extent, these controversies arise out of the nature of the case; and the Party which, when in Office, finds it necessary to increase expenditure, finds it convenient to criticize such expenditure when they happen to be in Opposition. There are, I say, advantages in these discussions, because they open the eyes of the public upon questions of considerable importance; but, at the same time, I think there are some disadvantages attending them, because while they tend rather to dwell upon the comparative merits and demerits of one Administration or another, too little attention is paid to the real facts and merits of the case. It seems to me, therefore, that it would be desirable to have, in addition to discussions of this kind, something more in the nature of a formal inquiry. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) brought this matter forward in a very proper spirit last Session, and we certainly understood that there was to be something in the nature of a Royal Commission. I think it would be very much to the advantage of the public, and very conducive to economy and proper financial management, that there should be an independent and impartial inquiry into the progress of our expenditure within a certain sufficient period of time, so that we might see how far the advances have been unavoidable, how far they are laudable, and how far they are open to objection. If it were possible to have a Committee who should go into this matter impartially, without the view of obtaining a particular result, and without reference to Party questions, I believe that great advantages would be derived from such an appointment. With regard to the particular questions raised, my noble Friend has made a remark which, I think, is justifiable, and to which I have heard no sufficient answer —namely, that we are provided, according to the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a very narrow surplus, and under circumstances which certainly do not altogether justify us in expecting that we shall be able to keep within our estimated expenditure. I do not know that we have any right to complain of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in not asking us to come forward to submit to additional taxation; only I think we ought to bear in mind that we were rather severely taken to task ourselves when, at the beginning of one year, we did not produce a definite Estimate of the expense which we thought might arise from a war which was then imminent, if not begun, in South Africa. And although I had provided a margin of something like £2,000,000 over the actual expenditure on the war, I was called to account by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime

Minister for not having given a more definite statement. I suppose, however, that if we ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us a definite statement of the expenditure likely to result from the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government, of which it seems that the battles that have been fought are to be regarded only as a mere incident, we should be taken to task, and told we had no right to ask impertinent questions of the sort, and that when the money was wanted Parliament would be asked for it. Without complaining of that, I say that there is some difference between the spirit in which we were treated when we were in Office and that which the Government expects us to extend to them now. Even in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although I admit it was generally very free from references of a Party character, there was an allusion to a very favourite topic amongst Liberal critics on expenditure and finance. We have been told again, as we have been told often before, that the present Government have been paying the debts of their Predecessors. Now, I want to know in what sense those terms are used? In what way have the present Government paid the debts of their Predecessors? Undoubtedly, a certain amount of expenditure was incurred in the last two or three years of the Conservative Administration, which was not immediately provided for, but was allowed to stand over until the whole matter from which it sprang had been concluded; and with regard to the residue of which we made certain arrangements which would lead to the whole expenditure being cancelled within a certain number of years. That was the state of things when we left Office; and it appears that a considerable portion of that expenditure has since been defrayed by carrying out that arrangement. But because that has been done the right hon. Gentleman has no right to say that he has been paying off our debts. He has not added a single tax, and he has not reduced his expenditure for the purpose of paying off that debt. Had he done that, something might have been said; but the right hon. Gentleman has done neither one thing nor the other, and all he has proved is that the arrangement that we made at the conclusion of our term of Office was a perfectly good and sound one. The point on which we have always insisted is this—that when expenditure had to be incurred for services of an important and exceptional character, as in war, the whole burden of the charge should not be thrown upon the one particular year in which that service was undertaken, but charged upon a certain number of years. That was the proposal which we made, and that is the proposal which has been carried out. But the right hon. Gentleman talks as if he and his Government were doing something very exceptional in thus paying off the debts of their Predecessors, as if they had left the matter in a state of absolute confusion, and no provision had been made for the payment of those debts. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think this a very amusing view of the case; but it appears to me that the country is very much misled by the expression that the present Government are paying the debts of their Predecessors. We deny it, except in the sense that every Government may be said to be paying the debts of its Predecessors in all charges upon the nation. The question is, whether it was or was not right to revive a certain proportion of the charges incurred during the earlier term by a re-arrangement of the period, instead of paying all at once. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that he himself has given a precedent for that in what he did in regard to the fortifications and other matters of that kind. When he was in Office he chose—that was all right, of course, the Government being a Liberal Government; but it was the same thing—to arrange for a sum of money for fortifications, which was spread over six or seven years, and we had to go on paying the debts of our Predecessors in respect to fortifications. No objection was taken to that. My noble Friend has commented on the arrangement with respect to the payment of the Indian money, a large proportion of which was paid last year, in order to diminish the amount to be paid this year. It was not necessary that it should be paid then—it might have been dealt with in some other manner; but it was paid then, because that was the most convenient arrangement that could be made. I do not deny that it may be a right thing that you should take an opportunity of making a payment so that it may come in conveniently with the general course of your finance; but it, of course, disturbs the arrangements into which you enter. But, to a great extent, that was the principle we acted upon in the two or three years during which we were said to have accumulated these deficiencies. Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind what was the nature and cause of the deficiency in the two or three years which he has referred to, and with respect to which he has so often taunted us? It arose from the manner in which the large expenditure originally made for the purpose of a Vote of Credit, when there was some expectation of a European War, was provided for. If this had been provided for by laying down certain Annuities to be paid for in a certain number of years probably we should have heard very little of the manner in which we provided for it; and, at all events, it would only have appeared in one year when there would have been a deficit. That would have been a matter arising once for all, and there would have been a deficit that year; but the accounts would have been regulated by the creation of Annuities, and by provision to pay off the money borrowed. But we were so anxious, as far as possible, to apply the surplus of the years that were favourable to reducing this debt before making any settlement of this kind, that we kept it alive from year to year, and always reckoned the deficiency arising out of the necessity for making good the deficiency of previous years. In that way we were able to make the final arrangements. That was why it appeared year after year that there were deficits, when, in point of fact, there were not deficits on the year, but from the unpaid portion of the expenditure incurred in the first instance with respect to the £6,000,000. There were also some special causes which we need not go into now; but I think it is well that some of these things should be remembered in illustration of the measure meted out to us, and the measure which the Government claim to mete out to themselves. Before sitting down, I should like to say, in the first place, that we are discussing, to a certain extent, the Budget of the Government; but we are precluded from entering into the main points and features of interest in his financial statement—namely, the National Debt proposal and the matter of the coinage. I think that is a great pity; but I hope it will not be very long before we have those measures produced and brought before us. It does not seem to me very intelligible why there has been so much delay. These are not matters that have sprung on the Government suddenly. One can understand that if a sudden revelation had been made to them a month or two before the Budget was presented that it was necessary to make provision for coinage, or for dealing with the National Debt, they might not be able, on the spur of the moment, to produce measures in time; but what they have done they have had under notice for 12 months. They might have considered these matters for the last two or three years; and I think we have a right to complain that with regard to such important matters connected with the Budget, which otherwise has no particular features to notice, we should be shut out from their consideration. It is not necessary to express a hope that these measures will be brought forward at such a time that the House will have a full opportunity of considering them, because I am sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take care that that is done; but I think it is deserving of observation that they have been delayed so long. The other remark is only in the nature of a preposition to what I said at the commencement, that I hope we shall not lose sight of the suggestion made last year on the Motion of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and shall have something in the nature of an impartial inquiry into the facts and causes of the increase of expenditure.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to follow the right hon. Gentleman, because of the reference he has made to what he thinks the unfair manner in which financial matters have been treated on this side, and by myself in particular. It is not a satisfactory post-midnight arrangement to enter fully into the wide field of discussion raised by the financial operations of the present or of the late Governments. But the right hon. Gentleman has taken the opportunity of defending certain parts of his financial system. I will not attempt to take away from him any advantage he may derive from these explanations; but they do not satisfy me that I have ever brought unfair charges in this House or elsewhere against the finance of the late Government. I adhere to them; and if I find a suitable opportunity, and it seems to be required by the public interest, I shall not hesitate to repeat them. It is much better to dispose of that in this way than to make partial and incomplete comments. No one would desire to enter upon the subject in that way if he could help it. I shall confine myself to a single point. The right hon. Gentleman observes that I was inclined to smile. I admit the charge that I smiled when he made remarks upon the injustice of our alleging that we had been called upon to pay the debts of our Predecessors. The position was so irresistibly comic that I could not avoid giving that indication which every comic exhibition ought to produce so long as human nature remains what it is. He admits that he incurred a very large expenditure; he admits that he did not pay it. He had incurred it; he passed an Act of Parliament to provide prospectively for payment in the course of five or six years; then he disappeared from Office, having paid, I think, one quota. [Mr. COURTNEY: No; none.] I thought he had paid one. Then he handed the whole of it over to us. He said—"I did not leave it loose." No, Sir, he left it very tight indeed. There was an Act of Parliament passed; we were obliged to meet and to satisfy charges which he had incurred. That is the process we were compelled to go through. He thinks that if you incur any amount of debt, and pass an Act of Parliament at the mere cost of paper and printing, that it shall be paid off in a series of successive years, that that is really making provision for the payment. It is astonishing that the right hon. Gentleman should have entertained such a delusion. One cannot argue with a person who puts the matter in that shape, and evidently with the most perfect good faith; the effect of it is most intensely comic. Let me put a hypothetical case. Suppose we had occasion, in connection with a Conference, to ask the House for a credit of £6,000,000, and suppose that, in the course of the next six or 12 months, the lamentable event of our downfall were to arrive; suppose that in the meantime we had provided that it should be paid off in the next three years at £2,000,000 a-year, I think the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends when they came to find themselves burdened with this £2,000,000 a-year would say that they were paying the debts of their Predecessors. We should have passed our Act of Parliament, which the right hon. Gentleman mistakes for the solid provision of the money. Upon this point I am reminded of a character in a modern novelist who, having accepted a bill for a debt, exclaimed—"Thank God, that's settled!" That is the kind of operation which the right hon. Gentleman applies to the finance of the country. With respect to fortifications, the right hon. Gentleman should have borne in mind that at the time when that charge was incurred very heavy charges were laid upon the country to meet the expenditure of the year. Undoubtedly, in some circumstances, it might become necessary to hand over some portion of the charge to future years, however anxious we may be that each year should pay its way. But we complain that the late Government, whenever they had a heavy expenditure to meet, thrust it over to future years.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I distinctly deny that.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is easy to deny, and I admit that it is not very difficult to make the assertion. My assertion was drawn forth by an observation of the right hon. Gentleman's Colleague (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and it was not a gratuitous remark. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was under an entire mistake as to the language I used during the late Election. The hon. Gentleman said that the Election mainly turned upon great promises of retrenchment made by me.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I said it was one of the most prominent items in the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: I join issue with the hon. Gentleman on that point, and advise him to read through the whole of the Mid Lothian speeches from one end to the other. That, I think, will be abundant punishment for several political offences. I am quite certain that when the hon. Gentleman comes to the end of those speeches he will find that he is mistaken. He will find a great deal of animadversion upon the finance of the late Government; but he will not find any sanguine opinion on my part that retrenchment would take place. For the best part of my life I have fought battles of economy, and I have no longer the pith and material required for that kind of work. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has spoken of the non-production of two important measures to which my right hon. Friend referred in connection with his Budget Statement. My right hon. Friend is even more eager than the right hon. Gentleman opposite could be to push forward, with all possible celerity, the measure for the conversion of the Three per Cents. The delay is purely a drafting delay, caused by accidental circumstances, in the Department. I hope, if there is a general desire on the part of the House to press the measure forward, that the right hon. Gentleman will be disposed to proceed with it expeditiously.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I said it must be examined.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no mistrust of the right hon. Gentleman. I believe he may look at it fairly. With regard to the remark of the right hon. Gentleman, that we are proud of our increasing expenditure, I may say that we are in no way proud of it. We regret it very much. But, undoubtedly, that increasing expenditure which is made a subject of reproach to-night is made the subject of attack on other nights from the same quarter, from the same Bench, and by the same Party. It is all done by a change in the caste of the Party. On nights when economy is to be recommended there comes down the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer; on nights when an extension of Estimates is to be recommended there comes down the late First Lord of the Admiralty and the late Secretary of State for War; and by these changes in the caste the same Party obtain the credit of showing how the greatness of the country requires a progressive extension of the Establishments, and also how guilty the Liberal Government are for their gross expenditure. I have to express my entire concurrence in what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman with respect to the great propriety and utility of a searching inquiry into the expenditure of the country by a powerful Committee of the House of Commons. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has proceeded on this principle; and what he has been doing was never regarded but as a preparatory process. We have never questioned the utility of such an inquiry. It is entirely conformable with precedence. It is a function which lies deep in the nature of the House of Commons; and I am extremely glad to have learnt that the course proposed has the high sanction of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. SALT said, he thought these questions of finance should be discussed quite apart from any element of Party feeling, and that criticisms on financial proposals were valuable from whatever part of the House they proceeded. With regard to the Budget, it was a Budget of great simplicity, except in regard to the two questions which were deferred. He had no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give the House ample opportunity of considering those measures, because they would involve not only questions of principle, but a good many points of detail and of great difficulty and importance, and concerning which he had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would receive the assistance of all Parties. He was perfectly certain that however those propositions might be considered from one point of view or another they would receive the fairest consideration on all sides. They were proposals of very great importance; and if they could not be accepted in consequence of certain principles they involved, he was sure the thanks of the House and of the country would be due to the right hon. Gentleman for dealing with matters of such great interest and importance. With regard to the simpler part of the Budget he had little to say; but he wished to put one or two points before the Committee—but not in any hostile spirit. He was very much afraid they would not see any diminution of expenditure, whatever Government might be in Office. If they took, say, a past decennial or a shorter period they would find that there had been a steady increase in expenditure whatever Government was in power; and he was satisfied, from the necessities of the country, from the increase of population, from the increased desires and wants of the country, and from other causes, that they must look for an increase of expenditure in the future. In one particular respect he hoped that that expenditure would not be avoided—indeed, he hoped that every care would be taken for expenditure in that direction, combined with proper control by Parliament—and that was the expenditure upon the Navy. Looking at all the circumstances, he felt that there never had been a moment in the history of this country when the House would have received the approval of the country more readily than now for a large and generous expenditure on the Navy. The general expenditure had increased, and permanently increased. If the present expenditure was required, as it seemed to be required, by the necessities of the country, he hoped there would not be any less control and vigilance and economy in the different Departments of the State. They must spend what was requisite in this great country; but let them take care that for every pound spent they got a pound's worth; let them take care that every pound, nay every shilling, of their expenditure was well and properly spent. He made these observations, because he was afraid that when expenditure increased there was a tendency to be lavish. People were apt to say—"We are spending £500,000 or £1,000,000 in a very good cause." That, of course, sounded very nice and very pleasant. But then someone else wanted another £100,000 for a good cause, and it was difficult to refuse it. And so the expenditure went on increasing, and increasing without any check or control. It was a good thing to spend £10,000, or £100,000, or £1,000,000 in a good cause; but care must be taken that, however good be the cause—if it be education, for instance—a rigid control be kept upon every item expended.

Colonel NOLAN desired, in the few observations he had to make, to keep himself to the practical question before the Committee, which he believed to be that a duty of 6*d.* should be imposed upon every pound of tea. Granting he was right in that supposition, although, up to the present, not a word of the debate had related to the question, he proposed to reduce the duty by 3*d.* per lb.; in other words, that there should only be a duty of 3*d.* per lb. upon tea instead of 6*d.* In doing this, he was only half acting up to his principles, because he considered that the Tea Duty should be entirely abolished. As, however, he had no desire to disorganize the year's Budget, he would not ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take off all the duty at once. He was diffident to interfere in a great question of finance; but a move must be made by someone. He remembered that 12 years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), whose name had always been associated with a free breakfast-table, proposed a reduction of the Tea Duty. The right hon. Gentleman had done nothing of late years to obtain this much-needed remission; indeed, no man of position and standing in the House had bestirred himself in the direction of freeing tea from duty. It was, therefore, necessary that if the question was to be taken up at all it must be taken up by some ordinary Member like himself (Colonel Nolan). He had come to the conclusion that it was better to make a move than to wait for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take off the duty. He had no doubt some Members would say that the question had been introduced too suddenly, and that, therefore, they could not vote for the reduction; he knew that others would say they did not care to spoil the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but, still, he (Colonel Nolan) always found that to make a move against a tax was very desirable. People outside would, in the end, say it was a step in the right direction, and would ask why it was not more largely supported? He was opposed, as much as possible, to poll taxes, and of such taxes that on tea was the greatest. There was a poll tax on alcohol, and on tobacco, and on tea. He would not take into consideration coffee, because he looked upon coffee as holding a very subsidiary position to tea. Perhaps he was hardly correct in saying that the taxes upon tobacco and alcohol were poll taxes, because everybody did not smoke or take alcohol. It was right, however, to assume that tea was drunk by everyone. The female population were particularly partial to it; indeed, its use was largely spreading. Milk, as a drink, was perhaps better than tea; but milk was very dear in towns, and even in the country it was not always to be got. Water was not always a wholesome drink; indeed, it ought not to be drunk unless it was boiled, and hot water was not drinkable unless it was mixed with tea. Gentlemen from his own country asserted that there was another form in which water could be taken; but whiskey-and-water, which cheered and sometimes inebriated, was not so healthy a drink as tea. Tea was really the healthiest beverage taken in this country, and it was a drink the use of which ought to be encouraged in every possible way. Could anything be more absurd than what the House of Commons was now doing? They spent about 10 per cent of their time in discussing Sunday Closing, yet they taxed the only real rival of alcohol. On the one hand, they taxed tea; and, on the other hand, they tried to shut up public-houses by force. He did not profess to be much acquainted with Chinese politics; but it was evident that a great change had taken place in China within the last week or 10 days. Now, if their Representatives out there could inform the people that the tax on tea had been reduced it might be a reason for the Chinese receiving some of our goods. He did not hesitate to say that the great mass of the population of this country considered that the time had arrived for a remission of the Tea Duty. He had long waited; he had wished that some influential Member of the House would move in this matter. He had often spoken upon the subject; but he had never ventured to make a Motion respecting it. He knew he should be defeated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer always did get a majority for his Budget; but no harm would be done by making a demonstration. He, therefore, begged to move that the duty upon tea be 3*d.* instead of 6*d.* upon each pound.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was very glad to second the proposal which had just been made by the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan). It seemed to be a perfectly reasonable and proper proposal; indeed, he regretted that the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not see his way to propose a larger reduction. The words of the hon. and gallant Gentleman were words of sense; and though the House of Commons might not now be disposed to listen favourably to his proposal, the day was not far distant when the House of Commons would have to listen to a proposal not to reduce the Tea Duty, but to abolish it entirely. It was no answer to the present proposal for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say he had not got the money. He could get the money very easily by doubling the duties upon foreign wines and spirits. If he did that he would not only get all the money which would be required, but he would get just three times as much. At that late hour of the evening (12.45) he would not weary the Committee with many figures. He would only point out that, in round figures, the present duties upon imported rum, brandy, and wine amounted to £5,750,000, while the duty upon tea collected last year was a little over £4,000,000. They had only, therefore, to double the duties upon imported wines and spirits, and they would have three times as much money as would be required if this proposal were adopted. He had much pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

		£.	s.	d.
Tea . . .	the lb.	0	0	3."

—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) had said it was no answer to say that there was not the money with which to carry out this proposal; but he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was sorry to say that was the answer which the Chancellor of the Exchequer must give to a proposal of this kind. It was estimated that the present Tea Duty would produce this year about £4,400,000. If it were reduced by one-half there would be a deficit of somewhere about £2,000,000. The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan) who made this Motion, and the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, had suggested that the money required should be obtained by increasing the duty on spirits and wines. [An hon. Member: On foreign wines.] On foreign wines, indeed! Why, to say nothing of other objections to raising the Wine Duties, no conceivable augmentation of them would produce a fourth of this sum. Again, they might double and treble the duty upon imported spirits, and they would not necessarily get any more Revenue. Spirits and wines were not commodities on which they could rely for a large increase of Revenue; therefore, if their finance was to be based on some such proposal as had been made by the hon. Gentleman who had just preceded him, he was bound to tell the House that they would be landed in a very serious deficit. He did not know whether the Motion was seriously proposed; but if it was, such a considerable change in the system of fiscal legislation could not be entertained, and therefore he must oppose it.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he had great pleasure in supporting the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan). He was of opinion that some endeavour ought to be made to alter the system of direct taxation which now prevailed in the country. He maintained that three-fourths of the duty on tea was paid by the poor and working classes, and yet no effort was made by their financiers to abolish, or even to reduce, it. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) had introduced the question of spirits. If he understood the hon. Gentleman aright, he did not allude to home-made spirits; what he desired to tax more heavily were foreign wines and spirits, wines particularly. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said the Revenue would not necessarily be increased if the duty on wines was increased. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the House that if the duty on champagne, for instance, were increased from 3*s.* to 10*s.* a-dozen, less champagne would be consumed by the rich and wealthy classes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I said it would not make up the deficit of £2,000,000.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he was fully persuaded that if the duty on wines were increased an increased Revenue would result. The present duty on champagne, madeira, port, and other landlord wines, was a standing disgrace to England. It was quite plain to everybody that the poor were taxed heavily to save the pockets of the rich; heavy duties were put upon tea, coffee, and other articles, which the poor man chiefly used, while the luxuries which the rich could only have were allowed to pass with the very minimum of duty. He was glad his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway had determined to endeavour to put a stop to the unfair and unjust system of indirect taxation in this country, on tea, at all events.

MR. MAC IVER said, he spoke only of foreign spirits and foreign wines. Last year the Customs Duties on foreign spirits and wines amounted, in round figures, to something like £6,000,000, while the Excise Duties on home-made spirits amounted to nearly £15,000,000. He wished to say in all good humour that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was decidedly incorrect when he said he had not got the money, because if he were to double the Customs Duties on wines and spirits of foreign production, he would receive more than three times the amount of money he would require were the Tea Duty reduced as now proposed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mac Iver) did not understand him. When any article was heavily taxed already, and they added to the tax, they did not necessarily get more Revenue. Did the hon. Member think that because they got £5,000,000 from foreign wines and spirits now, they would get twice as much if the duty were doubled? They would get nothing of the kind.

MR. MAC IVER said, the money that was required to do what the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan) proposed was something over £2,000,000. If they doubled a duty which now yielded £6,000,000, surely the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit that they would get at least another £2,000,000 in duty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would not admit anything of the kind. The duty on foreign spirits was now something above 10*s.*; and he was bound to say that if they raised it to 20*s.*, he would not undertake that they would get any considerable increase of Revenue.

MR. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN said, the suggestion of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) amounted to nothing more or less than Protection in disguise.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, according to the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if the duty on tea were reduced to 3*d.* per lb., only half the estimated amount would be received from this source. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman acted as all advocates did; he ignored what could be said on the other side. Besides, the right hon. Gentleman was rather evasive in his mode of arguing, because he drew special attention to the fact that 10*s.* was the duty on foreign spirits, and told the Committee that if they doubled that duty they would not double the amount of Revenue. The right hon. Gentleman entirely ignored the fact that, although the duty on foreign spirits was high, the duty on foreign wines was light; and he took no notice, moreover, of the argument of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. O'Sullivan), that the duty on champagne, which was used exclusively by the rich, was very low, and that an enormous profit was made by the people who retailed that wine. Now, if they trebled the duty on champagne, in all probability the price to the consumer would not be increased; certainly the amount consumed would not be decreased. Therefore, from champagne alone the sum required would be received. In their mode of acting he saw little difference between Liberals and Conservatives; the only difference was in the name. Hon. Gentleman on the Ministerial side of the House made great capital of their desire to benefit the working classes; but, at the same time, they were as anxious as the Tories to lay heavy taxes on the poor, and to let the rich off lightly. There was one Gentleman in the House—namely, the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson)—of whose assistance and benefit on such a question as the present they would be glad. Surely the hon. Baronet would like to see the consumers of wine pay their fair share of the burdens of the State, in order that the burdens of the poorer classes in the country might be decreased. Attention had been drawn to a very important part of this question—namely, as to whether it was not desirable to increase the trade with China and India, where tea was produced, in preference to encouraging trade with Continental countries. In his opinion, it would be more beneficial to England to increase the trade with China and India than to make those private Treaties with Continental Powers, giving them advantages far greater than any advantage which this country received in return.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he was not able to gather from the answer to a Question which the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) gave earlier in the evening whether the hope was altogether abandoned of the commercial negotiations with Spain bearing some fruit during the present year. He supposed that the only mode in which a satisfactory arrangement with Spain could be brought about was by some alteration in the duties on wine; and he had hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, by this time, have given them some reason to feel that there was a possibility of a satisfactory change in their commercial relations with Spain. He thought there was a great deal of force in what some hon. Members had said as to the taxation of wine like champagne. There was no doubt that they could put themselves on a better footing with Spain were they to increase the duty on French wines. The Spaniards, unquestionably, made a grievance of the present state of affairs.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he was not in a position to give any futher information as to the commercial negotiations with Spain. Did the hon. Member seriously contend that French wines ought to be more heavily taxed than they were now in order that Spanish wines might be let in?

Mr. TOMLINSON understood that the Spanish grievance was that the test line for duty on foreign wines was so drawn as to include all French light wines and exclude Spanish wines. He did not advocate taxing the wine of one nation more than that of another nation.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN considered that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the Tea Question had been scarcely proper. It went upon the assumption that by increasing the duty upon wine they would gain nothing, while by reducing the duty on tea they would lose half the amount now received. He granted the Chancellor of the Exchequer's contention, that to double the duty on a given article would not double the Revenue from that article; but he believed they would gain something by increasing the duty on wines, and that they would not lose as much as was supposed by reducing the duty on tea. He should be inclined to strike a balance, and to say it was fair to calculate that by the two operations suggested there would be a loss of something like £1,000,000. That £1,000,000 might be very easily saved in the Military and Naval Services of the country, where money was simply squandered.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he was in favour of removing all taxes like that on tea; but he considered that the proposals made by hon. Gentlemen opposite had not been fully thought out. The alternative proposed was that there should be a very much larger duty than the present imposed on foreign wines and spirits.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: No, not spirits.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that whether there was harmony in relation to any other question on the Tory and Irish Benches, it was evident the harmony was not complete upon this question. What would be the result of the adoption of the alternative proposal which had been made? Why, that an enormous protection would be given to the production of spirits and wines in this country. Whenever Parliament, in its wisdom, should see fit to reduce the expenditure on the Army and Navy, that would be the time to press on the Chancellor of the Exchequer the removal of this burdensome tax. The late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) had pleaded often and forcibly in favour of the removal of the duty on tea; and he (Mr. Illingworth) hoped the time was not far distant when their financiers would see their way to remit the tax. He understood that on one class of tea, which was chiefly consumed by the humbler classes in the country, the duty amounted to as much as from 80 to 100 per cent. While sympathizing with the object of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan), he could not support the proposal in its present form.

COLONEL NOLAN desired to correct a statement which the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had made, no doubt, unwittingly. The original proposition as made by him (Colonel Nolan) was simply to reduce the Tea Duty. He did not at all associate it with any increased tax, either upon wines or spirits. He preferred to leave to the financial ability and ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer the duty of making both ends meet, either by economy in expenditure, or possibly by substituting some other tax at a later period of the year. Those who voted for the proposed reduction were not in the slightest way bound to any increase of taxation, either upon wines or spirits. An increase of the duties on imported wines and spirits was suggested by certain hon. Gentlemen who made budgets of their own; but he (Colonel Nolan) had simply proposed to reduce the Tea Duty to 3*d*., leaving the rest of the subject to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. HEALY said, it was perfectly in keeping with the British manufacturer that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) should have referred to the proposal to put an extra duty on wines and spirits as a protective tariff in favour of the home manufacturers. The hon. Gentleman knew very well that, as a matter of fact, it was not the English manufacturers who would be benefited by the increase of the duty on foreign spirits and wines, but Irish manufacturers. If the hon. Member for Bradford knew it was the case that the only staple trade of his country, or a staple trade of his country, was being ground down to powder by taxation, he would very soon see how the commercial prosperity of a country was affected when its only large trade was taxed heavily; if it was linen, or something of that kind—alpacca, he believed, was a commodity made in Bradford—which was heavily taxed, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Illingworth) would soon see the necessity of the case which had been made out. In Ireland the only staple trade was very heavily taxed, in order to swell the British Revenue. The Irish people very properly complained of the hardship experienced by the imposition of a very high tax upon Irish spirits, while only a very light tax was imposed upon foreign articles of an alcoholic description. Taxes upon tea and tobacco bore heavily upon the poor people. Why were taxes not put upon guns that were used for fowling purposes? The House had decided that pigeon-shooting was improper. Why did they not put down pigeon-shooting by imposing a tax upon the birds shot at? Why did they not put a tax on race-horses, and upon a hundred other things, in which the pleasures of the rich were, to a large extent, involved? No; it was to be the poor man's drink that was to be taxed. He believed that if there was more tea drunk there would be less whiskey used. Certainly, if ever a working-man became Chancellor of the Exchequer—and it was quite possible when the Representation of the People Bill passed—he would look round at the pickings of the rich, and see how he could tax them, in order to relieve the poor man.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had fallen into an error. The hon. Gentleman had said that if they placed an additional duty on foreign wines, it would prove a protection to the makers of wine in this country. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) was not aware that there were any wine manufacturers in England.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 19; Noes 70: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 94.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Customs and Inland Revenue."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that "expedient to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue" seemed a little indefinite. It might mean anything. They had had no explanation from the Treasury Bench as to what was meant by it, although he doubted whether they would all understand any explanation that might be offered at that hour of the night (1.15). With no ex-Finance Minister in the House, with very few Members who had ever belonged to previous Administrations—if, indeed, there was one present—and in the absence, also, of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. J. G. Hubbard), who took a great interest in matters of this kind, it was scarcely a proper time to proceed with a matter of this description; and, therefore, he begged to move that the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, this was a formal Resolution, which it was necessary to pass in order to set up the Bill. The only other proposal of any importance in the Bill which did not require to be set up by Resolution of the House was the reduction of the rate of duty on certain carriages.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) [COSTS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, in the first instance, of any Costs incurred in defraying the Expenses of the Director of Public Prosecutions (including the remuneration of his representatives) which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session, for the better prevention of Corrupt and Illegal Practices at Municipal and other Elections.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 16*th May,* 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) * (101).

Committee—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (68).

Committee—Report—Local Government Board (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) * (69).

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (The Labourers Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * (54); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * (55); Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment * (60); Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment * (78), and *passed.*

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN ASSOCIATION AND FRANCE—RUMOURED TREATY.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF FIFE: I beg to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice. The Question is, Whether it is true, as reported from Brussels this morning, that a Treaty has been signed between France and the International African Association, eventually ceding the territory of the Association to France; and, if not, what is the object of the Treaty?

EARL GRANVILLE: I do not think the statement of the noble Earl is quite correct. I am placed in rather a difficulty in speaking on the subject, because all the information I have respecting it is of a confidential character. But I hope soon to get it in a form in which I can give an answer to the noble Earl.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—IRREGULAR DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD BALFOUR said, he desired to call the attention of the House to a matter which he mentioned to their Lordships some days ago, with regard to the delay in the delivery of Papers. It was a very serious grievance. That morning he saw that an important Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education had been delivered to the newspapers before being distributed to their Lordships. He noticed that *The Times* had received a copy, and that there was a leading article upon it. He would not have complained of that; but having made inquiry at the Paper Office of the House, he found that copies of the same Report had been distributed to the Members of the other House, and yet, when he asked for a copy, he was told there was not one to be had. He thought that the two Houses should be placed on an equality in this respect.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he regretted that he could give no information upon the matter at present other than that he had already given.

LORD BALFOUR gave Notice that he would, on an early day, call attention to this matter, and move that inquiry be made into the practice by the Committee recently appointed upon the office of the Usher of the Black Rod.

THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE—WEATHER REPORTS—RETURN OF UNWARNED STORMS.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE, in rising to move for—

> "A Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast,"

said, that if this were a mere question of science, some surprise might be felt at a Motion regarding it coming from that quarter of the House. He moved, however, in the matter on much higher ground—the ground of humanity. The Government had undertaken to supply the whole world with meteorological information; and it was quite clear that, having undertaken the work, the accuracy of these reports became a matter of national importance, and involved the lives of many of our seafaring population. As these warnings were much depended upon by people connected with nautical affairs, storms, in respect of which no warnings were issued, were, in a certain sense, more dangerous than formerly. He did not intend, by his Motion, to cast blame upon anyone connected with the Meteorological Office, the head of which he knew to be a man of much knowledge, who was animated with a keen enthusiasm for his work; but this he did say, that if it could be shown that there were any considerable number of storms in respect of which no kind of warning was issued, then it was a matter for serious consideration whether some improvement should not be made in the management of meteorological affairs as regarded that Office. He would especially instance a great storm of which no warning had been given, and which occurred in October, 1882. It was a storm of first-rate magnitude, of the most dangerous character, and it visited with especial severity the part of the country where he lived, and from inquiries he had made he had found that it was perfectly impossible to have foretold that storm from Valencia, or any other of the meteorological stations around the coasts. He had an interview with Mr. Scott at the Meteorological Office soon after that storm, and Mr. Scott recommended him to consult a clergyman in his own diocese, who was as well acquainted with the subject as any man in England. This clergyman had written him two letters, in which he strongly recommended the establishment of a station towards the south-south-west, which his correspondent thought would be the means of saving many lives. The conclusion he (the Bishop of Carlisle) had formed, from statistics furnished to him by the gentleman in question, was this —that a certain number of storms, estimated at nine or ten annually, crept through the present line of defences, with regard to which it was impossible for the Meteorological Office to supply warnings—that was, a storm about every six weeks. It might be hoped that the establishment of new stations and the adoption of other improvements would reduce the number of unwarned storms. He apprehended that there would be no difficulty, barring the expense, in increasing our staff, and in having a constant system of telegraphing, so that there might be no danger of a storm creeping unexpectedly on to our coasts, merely because it was crafty enough to come in the night time. From the two letters to which he had already referred, it appeared that in the south-south-west direction we had at present no observing station, and consequently any storm which came in that direction was pretty sure to arrive upon our coast unwarned. The Americans, in his opinion, managed things much better than we did, for in that country there was a chief signal officer belonging to the Army who made annually an interesting and a valuable Report to the military authorities on the whole subject of meteorology; and it was well worthy of consideration whether we might not take a hint from the American way of managing these affairs. The fact was, we required more stations and a more complete system of telegraphing; and, consequently, a greater expenditure would be rendered necessary. The increased expense constituted a difficulty which might be got over, and he hoped it would not prevent this great nautical country from doing her duty with regard to the question of storms. The right rev. Prelate concluded by moving for the Return of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast."—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

Lord THURLOW said, the question was one of great importance, but he was not able that evening to give the right rev. Prelate a positive answer on the part of the Treasury as to what they would do in the matter; but he could assure him there was every desire on the part of the Treasury to take steps to compile such a Return, if it could possibly be done, and of meeting the necessities of the case if funds could be found for the purpose. It was not long since the Meteorological Office came under the control of the Treasury, as it used to be under the Board of Trade. If the right rev. Prelate would postpone his Motion for a few days, he hoped to be able to inform him definitely whether it was in the power of the Treasury to grant the Return for which he had moved.

The Earl of CARNARVON said, he would suggest to the right rev. Prelate, that in order to make the Return more complete he should consider the desirability of enlarging the scope of his Motion so as to include storms of which warnings had been given, in order that they might be able to ascertain the percentage of failures.

The Bishop of CARLISLE said, he should be happy to consider the suggestion thrown out by the noble Earl, and would consent to postpone the Motion. He must, however, remark that it did not refer to prognostications which came from America, which were not, properly speaking, scientific, but to storms which had actually reached our coasts, but of which no warning had been issued from the Meteorological Office.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL—PIGEON-SHOOTING.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of WEMYSS, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether, having regard to the cruelties stated to be practised, with a view to fraud, at pigeon-shooting matches, the Home Office will endeavour to ascertain how far these statements are true; and, whether, if found to be so, steps will be taken for the prevention of the said cruelties? said, that he was one of those who voted against the Bill which would have practically put an end to pigeon-shooting. He had no interest whatever in that kind of sport, and had only shot one pigeon in his life, and that was in Germany some 40 years ago. No more cruelty, he was bound to say, was practised in pigeon-shooting than in many other things which were as likely to continue so long as the world lasted; and it was his firm belief that in every butcher's yard and in every poulterer's shop more cruelty took place than was perpetrated by the practice referred to. The special grounds why he introduced this question were these. A Bill upon the subject, which had been rejected by their Lordships recently, had been advanced by the Home Office upon general grounds; but at the close of the debate the other evening, the most rev. Primate (the Archbishop of Canterbury), who spoke last, specified the acts of cruelty which were not only cruel in themselves, but which were perpetrated for the purpose of fraud. Such cruelty, if practised, all must deprecate; and he felt sure that not one of their Lordships who had voted against the general tenour of the Bill but would, as heartily as the most rev. Primate, and as he (the Earl of Wemyss) would, deprecate and express their detestation of cruelties of the kind which had been described; but he ventured to say that the cruelty mentioned was by no means general, and the most rev. Primate did not contend that it was, because he said that it was committed for the purpose of fraud. This being so, and the cruelties complained of being special cruelties, and for a special purpose, it did not form a sufficient cause for legislation for the general suppression of pigeon-shooting, although it might be a subject for special legislation in regard to the particular kind of cruelty which, under exceptional circumstances, was inflicted. The Bill to which he had referred partook too much of the character of a great deal of the legislation of the present day. An abuse was seen, and, instead of calling in the police, or dealing with the abuse by means of the present laws, everybody was put under the legislative harrow and the ban of a fresh Act of Parliament. Take, for instance, the recent Irish land legislation. The question was started as one of abuse of power by the bad landlord; but, instead of the bad landlords being dealt with, good and bad were all placed under the same legislative harrow, and both had equally been robbed of a fourth of their income. Then, again, the legislation for drunkenness partook of the same character. Because a certain number of men were unable to control themselves, and abused their privileges by getting into a state of intoxication, there were sweeping propositions for placing sober men also under restrictions. He was thankful to say that their Lordships, in rejecting the Pigeon-Shooting Bill, had rejected a Bill dealing with the general question; though, in saying that, he would add that he was certain everyone who voted against the measure deprecated special acts of cruelty, and would willingly do all in their power to put them down. The noble Earl concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that had the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Wemyss) stated that the Secretary of State for the Home Department had adequate means at his disposal for inquiring into a matter of this kind, he (the Earl of Dalhousie) should have stated that he had no means by which he could possibly enter upon it. As, however, it would not be polite for him to contradict the noble Earl, he would change his answer and state that the Secretary of State for the Home Department had no intention whatever of instituting such an inquiry as that suggested. The House, he was sure, had listened to the speech of the noble Earl, which might have been appropriately made on the second reading of the rejected Bill, with a great deal of admiration and enjoyment.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, that, inasmuch as he had moved the rejection of the Bill, he came under the censure of those who had introduced it. The feeling that had been excited in the minds of some people in reference to this subject was testified by one among the several communications which he had received since the rejection of the Bill.

It enclosed a newspaper extract, and a statement in which the writer said—"By your cruelties, you will come under the wrath and vengeance of God." He mentioned this, merely to show the way in which people looked at these things; how they were misled; and how they persuaded themselves that, to kill anything, must necessarily be cruelty. He would tell their Lordships that in an article which had appeared in an Irish newspaper on the subject, the writer, after commenting upon his (the Earl of Redesdale's) speech, went on to state that all pigeons were mutilated before they were put into the traps, and that they made vain attempts to fly with their broken wings. Their Lordships knew perfectly well that this was not the truth. He wished that what was and what was not cruelty could be exactly defined. The question was, what was sport and what was cruelty? And he denied that shooting a bird for sport was cruelty in itself. Judging from the "crying evils," as stated by those persons, he thought that the real object of this agitation was to put down all kinds of sport.

Earl GRANVILLE: We have all of us heard of the lines describing the feat of Alexander the Great, and how he went forth, "and thrice he slew the slain." I will not say that of my noble Friend (the Earl of Wemyss); but his proposal reminds me of the old Joe Miller story of the soldier who was asked after the battle what he had done. He replied—"I cut off the enemy's legs." On being asked why he had not cut off the enemy's head, he replied—"That was done already." I cannot help thinking that we are only adding insult to injury in reference to this poor Bill, for we are now attempting to cut off its legs, although it was so very effectively decapitated the other night. I cannot help thinking, also, that it is very unusual, after a considerable majority has voted against a Bill, for noble Lords to take the opportunity some days later of apologizing for the votes they had given.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE, in supporting the proposal for an inquiry, said, the Bill to which reference was made was a specimen of what was called grandmotherly legislation. Certain statements had been made as to special cases of cruelty, and what the opponents desired was that proof should be given of the charges which had been made.

The Earl of GALLOWAY remarked that, as his position in regard to the Bill had been misrepresented by the leading journal, he desired to say that he wished to make no apology for what he had done. He wished that it should be known that he had not only spoken against the Bill, but had acted as one of the Tellers of the majority. He entirely agreed with what had been said by his noble Friend on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss), and did he not think it came very well from the Government, who supported the Bill, to make light of his request, and to put it off as they had done. There had been a great deal of talk of the cruelties attendant on pigeon-shooting, and he thought the Government should make some inquiry to see whether the charges were well-founded.

Earl FORTESCUE said, that proof should be given of the insufficiency of the existing law to meet the cases of cruelty stated, before fresh legislation was asked for. The pigeon was a domestic bird; and if the eyes were put out, or the wings mutilated, as stated, the persons offending could unquestionably be severely punished under the existing law.

The Earl of WEMYSS said, he had asked the Government to take the matter into consideration on account of what had passed during the debate of the other night; but he understood them to refuse to make any inquiry as to whether the statements were or were not true. As the Government seemed so desirous of washing their hands of the whole matter, he would ask his noble Friend the Chairman of Committees to look into the present state of the law and ascertain whether it was sufficient to deal with the atrocities which were said to be committed in connection with pigeon-shooting; and, in the event of that not being the case, whether he would bring in a short Bill dealing with the subject?

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, that there could be no possible doubt about the existing law being sufficient to deal with the matter, so far as it related to punishment, if the offenders were found out. The difficulty was in finding them out and getting the necessary evidence. The great contention was this—that many cases of cruelty occurred—that this particular practice of pigeon-shooting was attended with cruelties which were carefully concealed, and with regard to which evidence was not easily forthcoming. He understood the opinion of those who advocated the Bill lately before the House to be that, therefore, the only way to prevent these cruelties was to strike at the practice of pigeon-shooting itself.

LORD BALFOUR said, he should be very glad if the matter were taken in hand, and dealt with in some more efficient way than he could be supposed to deal with it owing to his want of legal knowledge. He thought, therefore, that if the noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) and his noble Friend (the Earl of Redesdale) would do so, it would be of great advantage. As the reporters had not happened to report his remarks on this particular point on the previous occasion, he wished to repeat that he had been informed by the Secretary to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals that his officers were frequently warned off the grounds for fear they should obtain evidence of cruelties.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he thought the matter was of such importance that he would take it into his very careful consideration, in order to see whether something could not be done to prevent the cruelties connected with the practice of pigeon-shooting, together with the suggestion of the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack, in order to see if the existing law was sufficient for detecting cruelty if practised. If it was not, he would undertake to introduce a short Bill dealing with the matter. After what the noble Lord who had just spoken (Lord Balfour) had stated, perhaps something might be done to prevent cruelty, when it was expected to be practised, by providing means for the presence of those who desired to detect it. Special powers might be given to the police for dealing with cases in which there was ground for supposing that cruelty would be practised.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—THE FRESH TELEGRAM.—QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I wish, before the House adjourns, to ask the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville), Whether any information has been received at the Foreign Office in regard to General Gordon?

EARL GRANVILLE: We have no news from General Gordon; but we have received this afternoon some information which I do not think is dated, but which is to this effect:—A party of refugees arrived yesterday at Assouan from Berber and Korosko. They reported that the route between these places was quite clear, and stated that they had had no trouble, and that they had heard that Gordon had made successful sorties and was well.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: When was that news received?

EARL GRANVILLE: To-day.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 16th May, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [May 15] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) (Unions of Cashel and others)* [205]; Customs and Inland Revenue* [206]; Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment [208]; Metropolitan Police* [209].

First Reading — Medical Act Amendment* [207].

Second Reading—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) [55].

Report of Select Committee—Copyhold Enfranchisement* [No. 177].

Committee—Representation of the People [119]—R.P. [Second Night]; Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) [124]—R.P.

Withdrawn—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall)* [13].

QUESTIONS.

TREASURY SOLICITORS' ACT, 1876—INTESTATES' ESTATES.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will inform the House, in respect to intestates estates reverting to the Crown, what was the total amount of money unclaimed arising from the estates of persons dying without known next of kin at the time of the passing of "The Treasury Solicitors' Act, 1876;" and, what is the amount which has accrued since the passing of that Act?

Mr. COURTNEY: On the 1st of January, 1877, the accumulations on the Crown's Nominee Account were £167,700. A little time ago, as I told the hon. Member quite recently, they were £250,000. Since then, I believe, they have been considerably reduced. The greater part of this amount arises from estates of persons of whom it is known that they have no next of kin, being illegitimate.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — RE-APPOINTMENT OF THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What are the names of those Assistant Commissioners recommended by the Commissioners, and selected by the Lord-Lieutenant in the month of March for reappointment; and, whether some of the Assistant Commissioners of undoubted capacity were excluded because they were supposed to sympathise with the tenant farmers?

Mr. TREVELYAN: All the Sub-Commissioners whose term of office expired on the 31st of March last were reappointed for four months, with the exception of one gentleman, who retired.

Mr. HEALY inquired the name of the gentleman in question.

Mr. TREVELYAN: Mr. Horsfall.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES AND ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—REV. DR. MOLLOY.

Mr. CORRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Rev. Dr. Molloy, who has been appointed by His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant to inquire into the working of the Queen's Colleges and the Royal University, is a salaried officer of the Royal University, receiving £400 a-year for examining, among others, the students of the Queen's Colleges and the College in which he is himself a Professor; and whether he has to investigate judicially the results of examinations in which he takes part, and in which the students of his College compete with others; if he is aware that Dr. Molloy has, in published Letters, emphatically condemned the working of the Queen's Colleges, and that he has petitioned the Prime Minister to have the endowments of the Colleges withdrawn; if it is the case that Dr. Molloy, as Commissioner, will be empowered to examine and report upon the work of those Professors of the Queen's Colleges who, as Fellows or Examiners of the Royal University, are associated with him in the examinations, both of students of the Queen's Colleges and of the Catholic University College, in which he is himself a Professor; and, if it is the case that Dr. Molloy has already shown, in his published letters, that he has a personal interest in the decision and result of the present Commission, by warmly advocating the disendowment of the Queen's Colleges, and the transfer of at least a part of their funds to that University of which he is a salaried official, so as to make them available for the students of the Denominational College of which he is a Professor, and whose Professors already receive about £3,600 a-year from the funds of the Royal University?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is the case that the Rev. Dr. Molloy is a Fellow of the Royal University, and discharges duty and receives remuneration in connection with that University. With regard to the published letters referred to in the Question, I have received a communication from Dr. Molloy in which he mentions the circumstances to be that in discharge of his functions as Rector of the Catholic University he presented to the Catholic Bishops of Ireland last October a Report on the progress and developement of the Catholic University during the preceding 12 months, and in this Report he endeavoured to establish from public official records that the students who had presented themselves at the examinations of the Royal University from the Colleges of the Catholic University had been more successful in gaining Scholarships and Exhibitions than the students who had gone up for the same examinations from the Queen's Colleges. His Report was commented on in a Dublin newspaper by the President of the Queen's College, Belfast, and Dr. Molloy replied in a letter addressed to the same journal.

With regard to the rest of the Question, I have only to say that in the selection of the members of the Commission the Government felt it right that various phases of opinion should be represented, and that by gentlemen who would command the confidence of the public. The Government have endeavoured to the best of their ability to fulfil these conditions in the appointment of the Commissioners, and they are confident that the gentlemen appointed will discharge their duty impartially and with fidelity.

MOROCCO—SLAVERY.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Times* of the 12th instant, that the French Government has decreed that all natives under French protection in Morocco, or in any way employed under the flag of France, shall liberate all their slaves; whether it is true, as also stated in the same Paper, that Sir John Drummond Hay is prepared to recommend that protection be withdrawn from all Moors in British employ, unless they liberate their slaves and refrain from trafficking in slaves; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to co-operate with the French Government in thus discouraging slavery in Morocco?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; the statement in the first paragraph relating to the action of the French Government is correct, and it is also true that Sir John Drummond Hay has been directed to give notice to the same effect. Her Majesty's Government is ready to join with the French Government, or any other Foreign Government, in discouraging slavery in Morocco and elsewhere.

MINERAL PROPERTIES—FINES, &c. ON LEASES.

MR. ROLLS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government are prepared to recommend to Her Majesty to appoint a Commission for the purpose of considering in what way (with due regard to the rights of the landlords) tenants of mineral properties can be protected against confiscation of portion of their capital by the enforcement, without any valid consideration, of fines, in many cases excessive, on the transfer of their leases?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no cognizance myself of any such extensive evil as is referred to in the Question, or as would call for the appointment of a Royal Commission; but if the hon. Member will communicate to me the facts upon which he relies, I shall be very glad to consider them.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will give any facilities for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the propriety of framing rules for the limitation of the practice of putting questions to Ministers in the House, with a view to increase the time available for the transaction of public business, which Question would have been discussed on the 13th of May if the Government had not taken that day for the discussion on a Vote of Censure?

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. and gallant Friend knows how much I sympathize with him in regard to this matter; but I am afraid I must say that I regard his request for facilities with the utmost suspicion, for the reason that it really means giving up some portion of the time which would otherwise be devoted to Government Business. I am very sorry to say that I do not see my way to give him those facilities.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS — THE RAJAH OF TENOM—CREW OF THE "NISERO."

MR. STOREY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any news has yet been received from the *Pegasus*, which sailed on 1st May with provisions for the destitute crew of the *Nisero;* and, whether any, and what, progress has been made in the negotiations with the Dutch Government for the release of these men from captivity within its territory?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No news has yet been received from the *Pegasus*. I regret to say that the Dutch Government has refused the offer of mediation between them and the Acheenese, which, as I have stated was made by Her Majesty's Government. Her

Majesty's Government, however, have not yet abandoned the hope of inducing the Dutch Government to concur in measures for the pacification of the country. They are also considering the possibility of sending a mission to Kemala, the residence of the Sultan of Acheen, with a view to opening negotiations to secure the liberation of the captives through him. The Governor of the Straits Settlements is now in England, and in communication with the Foreign Office. Papers on the subject will be laid on the Table immediately.

MR. STOREY asked whether it was only four days' sail from the British Settlement to the point to which the *Pegasus* had gone; and, if so, whether it would not have been possible before now to obtain information by telegraph which would have relieved the natural unhappiness of the wives and children of the men in captivity?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he could not answer at once as to the exact number of days' sail; but every effort was being made to obtain early information. The captain of the *Pegasus* and the authorities of the Straits Settlements were quite aware of the painful interest which existed in this country on the subject, and he could assure his hon. Friend that every effort would be made to obtain information.

EGYPT—THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION — DISCHARGES FROM ENGLISH REGIMENTS.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the statement is correct that, within the last few weeks, in one regiment alone at Cairo, twenty men had been allowed to purchase their discharges, and twenty-eight time expired men had refused to renew their service; and, whether this has also occurred in other regiments serving in Egypt; and, if so, is there any reason that has occasioned this state of things?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that the Return for April had not yet been received with regard to the 3rd Battalion of the King's Royal Rifles, stationed at Suakin, to which, he presumed, the hon. and gallant Gentleman had referred; but with regard to the eight other battalions stationed in Egypt during the month of April there had been one discharge by purchase, one man extended his service, two men re-engaged, 11 men were sent home discharged, of whom two were invalids, and seven had entered the Reserve. There was no Return showing how many men were awaiting their passage home on the expiration of their service, and he had telegraphed an inquiry on the point. He would remark that, except in the Indian Service, where a considerable bounty was given, comparatively few men either extended their service or re-engaged. He thought it probable, therefore, that in Egypt the great majority of men would take their discharge, and return home when they were entitled to do so.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Has the noble Marquess taken any steps to prevent the men from purchasing their discharge?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No orders have been given on that subject.

BOARD OF TRADE — TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH LIGHT VESSELS—THE SUNK LIGHT VESSEL.

MR. D. GRANT asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any progress has been made in the arrangements by which telegraphic communication could be established between the shore and the Light Houses and Light Ships round the Coast, so as to enable aid to be sent with greater rapidity to ships in distress?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The Trinity House inform me that the electric cable for effecting communication between the Sunk Light Vessel and the shore is ready, and all arrangements on shore are made; but that mechanical difficulties have necessitated an entire change in the original plan for connecting the cable with the vessel. Moorings upon an altered plan are now reported nearly ready for testing, and if they prove adequate it may be hoped that communication will be established during this summer.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—P. N. FITZGERALD, A PRISONER.

MR. O'BRIEN asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, What is the charge preferred against Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald at Sligo?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Treason-felony and conspiracy to murder.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether treason-felony is not a felony, and conspiracy to murder a misdemeanour? Upon which charge is the Government going to prosecute?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): That is entirely for the Government hereafter.

MR. HEALY: The hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that a felony and a misdemeanour cannot be included in one indictment.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): The time for framing the indictment has not yet arrived.

MR. O'BRIEN: Is the hon. and learned Gentleman aware that Mr. Fitzgerald was arrested in London without a warrant? Is it the case that the Government is able to seize a man in London without a warrant for treason-felony, and afterwards disgrace him in the face of Ireland by prosecuting him on the charge of conspiracy to murder.

[No reply.]

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. M'COAN: I desire, Mr. Speaker, to say a word by way of personal explanation. In a Question which I asked yesterday, I imputed to the Prime Minister that he gave an assurance to the House that the functions of the Conference will be limited to the financial question. On referring to the actual words of the right hon. Gentleman, I find he said that the "invitations" to the Conference would be limited to that question. The distinction is an important one, and I can only say that I am sorry I attributed to the right hon. Gentleman words which he did not use.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to my hon. Friend for his courtesy in making the correction. As I said yesterday, however, I think it best not to go into the matter now. On an early day I shall hope to have an opportunity of stating more exactly the position of affairs when we come to discuss the Notice which has already been given.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 6th May.*]

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Extension of the Household and Lodger Franchise.

Clause 2 (Uniform household and lodger franchise).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, to leave out the word "and."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the Clause."

MR. GORST said, that perhaps the Committee would forgive him if he reminded them where they were. The Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was only a grammatical Amendment; but it was moved with the view of introducing a very important modification of the clause. The hon. Member for North Shropshire proposed to enlarge the scope of the Bill by extending the uniformity which the Government desired to introduce as regarded an occupation franchise to uniformity between boroughs and counties. As regarded the property franchise, the hon. Member was met by the Attorney General with a very curt and short speech, in which, to use a vulgar phrase, the hon. and learned Gentleman endeavoured to shut out the hon. Gentleman. But in the subsequent debate the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) spoke with great authority, not only as to the feeling of the working classes, but of the constituency of North-East Lancashire, of which he was a resident and voter. The hon. Member pointed out that a strong feeling of inequality and injustice existed on the part of many working men, and the Government were brought to see that the matter was one which must be discussed, and for that reason Progress was reported. Those who supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire could not be accused of any opposition to the principle of the Bill. In fact, the proposal was not in any way to militate against the principle of the Bill, but to extend that principle—to give, in fact, to the opinions of Her Majesty's Government a more extensive practical operation than they proposed to give to them themselves. The great principle of the Bill was to establish uniformity between counties and boroughs. The Government stopped short at the uniformity of the occupation franchise, while those who supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire proposed to go further, and to extend uniformity to the property franchise, and, in fact, to all franchises, so as to make all franchises identical with the boroughs and counties. The first argument the hon. and learned Attorney General used was that this was a disfranchising proposal. That was really a very foolish argument, because the nature of a disfranchising proposal would be to deprive somebody of rights which he now possessed; but, of course, in this as in all other alterations of the Franchise Laws, it would be provided that the rights of the existing voters were preserved and maintained. Therefore, if this Amendment were carried, not a single person possessing the right to vote for a freehold in the county would be deprived of that right. Nor would the Bill be disfranchising in the sense that it would exclude any number of people from having a franchise in the future. Neither would it be disfranchising in the sense that any class of people would be deprived of the exercise of the franchise, because, although a portion of the county voters having a qualification within the boroughs would, no doubt, be debarred from coming upon the county Register, yet, on the other hand, the borough Register would be increased by the persons possessing those votes. Therefore, he thought the Amendment did not demand any argument based on the proposition of disfranchisement. Now, supposing that this question had no history, and that now, for the first time, they were creating a franchise in the United Kingdom, and they had to determine that persons who possessed freehold property in boroughs should be entitled to vote, where would they determine that they should exercise that vote? Was there any doubt whatever that, having determined that a man was entitled to vote, they would at once give him a vote in the place in which he had his freehold? What earthly connection would such a person have, for instance, with the county of Lancaster? The City of Liverpool was not really a part of the county of Lancaster at all. It had separate institutions, a separate Court of Quarter Sessions, and it did not contribute to the county rate, but had separate rates of its own. Therefore, persons possessing freeholds in Liverpool had no interest in the county of Lancaster; and the proper thing to do was to give them a vote in the borough. When they looked to the history of the question it was all in favour of the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire, because the principle of giving freeholders in boroughs votes, not in the boroughs themselves, but in the counties which happened to be adjacent to those boroughs, was one which was always vehemently opposed by Sir Robert Peel. It grew into importance after the first Reform Bill; and he believed—perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would correct him if he made a wrong statement—that Sir Robert Peel always protested against giving votes in counties to persons possessed of freeholds in boroughs. The argument of Sir Robert Peel was also used by the Whigs of those days, who contended that the county franchise was exclusively a property franchise, and the borough franchise exclusively an occupation franchise; and it was upon the ground that it was desirable to place property in the boroughs and counties on the same footing that the franchise was given to the boroughs. Still, that argument would not hold good now. Although they were going to retain the 40*s.* freeholder in the counties, yet the electorate of the county would be just as much based upon an occupation franchise as the electorate in the borough. The 40*s.* freeholders would become an insignificant minority of the county electors, because the principal ground of qualification for the franchise in the counties, just the same as in the boroughs, would be the occupation of dwellings. Therefore, the whole argument by which the scheme was formerly supported had fallen away, and it was necessary for Her Majesty's Government to discover some fresh argument, as the old argument would not do. What was the reason for dealing with the question at this moment? It was that, somehow or other, if they did not they would create or perpetuate an anomaly, as had been well pointed out by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd); and it would be absolutely essential to make some alteration in the franchise in the course of a very few years. There was great talk always in that House about justice, and one thing the working classes of the country liked was equality. They liked to see one man treated in the same way as another. If, however, the Bill were left in its present shape they would have this anomaly, and it could not be avoided—that a man who occupied a dwelling house in a borough, and had besides a little piece of freehold land, would have two votes—one for the borough and one for the county; whereas a man in precisely similar circumstances, who happened to live just across the boundary, who had precisely the same kind of dwelling house and a similar piece of freehold land, would have only one vote—namely, a vote for the county. These people would naturally say—"Why have I only a single vote—a vote for the county—while my neighbour, who lives just across the boundary, has two votes, one for the borough and one for the county?" That anomaly must in some way be removed, if it was intended to make the franchise uniform. They were not at present considering the question by what means that uniformity was to be obtained. The hon. Member for North Shropshire proposed to obtain it by giving the freeholder a vote for his freehold in the boroughs. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) proposed to reduce the anomaly by giving a person a vote for every occupation he had, whether in a borough or county, and giving a second vote for the property he possessed either in the borough or county. Both of those plans had this advantage over the Government Bill—that they were both just; that was to say, that they both treated the resident within the borough and the resident within the county in precisely the same manner. There might be objections on other grounds; but either of these plans, if adopted, would put a stop to the anomaly, which was the great reason for the amendment of the Bill. He did not suppose that the hon. and learned Attorney General, when he addressed a few observations to the Committee on the last occasion, intended seriously to submit to Parliament, in the few words with which he endeavoured to close the discussion, altogether that there were no other arguments to be advanced. Of course, it was right that he should state the arguments used by the hon. and learned Gentleman. One argument was that about the franchise which he had already referred to, but which was only one of those catch phrases which people sometimes made use of, but did not seriously intend to put forward. There were, however, two serious arguments made use of by the Attorney General. In the first place, the hon. and learned Gentleman said there was this objection—that by adopting the Amendment they would be giving votes in the boroughs to people who were not residents; whereas the borough franchise had always been accompanied by the condition of residence. That would be a very good argument if it were consistent with facts and probabilities. But the Government had, practically, established a residential qualification in every constituency by the passing of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal) Practices Act of last Session. By that Act it was provided that no candidate should pay the travelling expenses of any elector for going to the poll to vote. Therefore, there was practically a residential franchise in every constituency, so far as persons were concerned who resided within reasonable distance of a borough. There might be a few zealous or eccentric persons who might be disposed to take a journey down to Mid Lothian in order to vote against the Prime Minister. Perhaps there might be half-a-dozen persons who would bear the expenses of their own travelling down to Mid Lothian in order to record their votes against the right hon. Gentleman; but they were quite exceptional cases, and need not be noticed in legislation. Undoubtedly, the Act of last Session constituted residential electors; and the present Bill, practically, put upon the Register people who did not reside in the electoral districts. If they gave the franchise to all persons within the boroughs, those only would exercise the franchise who lived within such a distance of a borough that they could come into it at their own expense for the transaction of their own business, or for other purposes. The other serious argument of the hon. and learned Attorney General was that a proposal of this kind would give great encouragement to the manufacture of fagot votes. That was founded on facts and probabilities; but in this very Bill there was a clause which provided against the manufacture of fagot votes. The only way in which fagot votes could be created within a borough that he knew of—perhaps some hon. Members who had been connected with election matters could suggest that there were others—was the purchase of some extensive premises in the borough, and creating in regard to those premises a great number of freehold rent-charges. That was how the thing was done now; but this Bill contained a clause which would put a stop to that practice. Clause 10 was inserted from the Conservative Bill of 1859, in which that clause appeared for the first time. He could not say that he had any particular love for that Bill; but his hon. Friends on that side of the House would naturally support a clause which was taken from the Conservative Bill of 1859, and that clause would practically put a stop to the creation of fagot votes. It would no longer be possible within boroughs to create fagot votes; and he thought if there were power practically to enfranchise, by means of fagot votes, a number of people living in the outlying villages surrounding the boroughs it would be a serious objection. Those were the two reasons given by the hon. and learned Attorney General against the adoption of the present Amendment. But the Bill of last Session practically got rid of non-resident voters and established residential constituencies; and there could be no doubt that if the clause of the Bill taken from the Act of 1859 were adopted it would prevent the creation of fagot votes. Therefore, the reasons which had been given so far against this proposition fell to the ground. At present the case stood this—the hon. Member for North Shropshire proposed an Amendment which would rightly extend the general scope of the Bill, and carry out the principle of the Bill more completely and thoroughly than Her Majesty's Government in their original proposal were disposed to do. There was, undoubtedly, as the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) had shown, a great anomaly now existing which would give rise to much dissatisfaction. The Government had only been able to give two reasons against the proposal, both of which were inadequate and unsatisfactory. Unless some further arguments could be advanced, he thought the Committee and the Government themselves ought to agree that this Amendment should be inserted.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made an excellent speech in favour of uniformity of franchise, which was not the question now before the Committee, but which would be taken on the succeeding clauses. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would establish uniformity of franchise by the only way in which it could be established—namely, by the abolition of property qualification, then he would give the hon. and learned Member his hearty support, whether the Government liked it or not. There were other Amendments on the Paper which would practically carry out the same object. The hon. and learned Gentleman made light of the argument of the Attorney General — that the Amendment, if carried, would be disfranchising. It would be disfranchising in exactly the same way as the Act of 1867 disfranchised every occupying freeholder in the boroughs under £10 value. The Act of 1867 transferred all such persons from the lists of the counties to the lists of the boroughs; and the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), if it was adopted, would transfer at once 135,000 electors in England and Wales from the county to the borough Register. For his own part, rather than see the Amendment adopted—and he was surprised to see it advocated by a borough Member—he would prefer the abandonment of the Bill, and for this reason—that the introduction of a freehold franchise in the boroughs would not only transfer 135,000 voters to the boroughs, but would give indefinite power for the manufacture of borough votes. That was not all. Parliament could not sanction such a system without carrying it out also in regard to the municipal vote. It would not be possible to apply it to the Parliamentary vote without applying it also to the municipal vote, and that would dislocate the whole of the municipal life of this country. His objection to such voters was that they would have no necessary connection with the sanitary or commercial interests of the boroughs. It would be impossible to maintain that a freeholder was liable to the sanitary and commercial incidents of the borough in which his property was situated. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was present, and he would be aware that in Scotland the soil of the boroughs was taken out of the counties; whereas in England it was part of the county. That was a great anomaly, which he should be glad to see abolished; but as it would probably be fatal to the policy of the Bill he would not dwell upon it. Speaking as a borough Member, he could not avoid expressing his astonishment that a borough Member should support the introduction of such anomalies as these into the borough franchise; and, as he had already said, he would rather see the Bill abandoned than see the Amendment adopted.

SIR RAINALD KNIGHTLEY said, the Amendment was a very important one. The borough qualification for a county vote was already an anomaly, as had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). As far as he understood the law, a house situate within the precincts of a borough was qualified to confer two votes—one upon the owner and one upon the occupier—one for the county and one for the borough. It had been often stated, although he believed the assertion to be entirely unfounded, that this was a privilege which had existed for centuries, and therefore ought not to be interfered with. He believed that it only came into operation after the passing of the first Reform Act of 1832. Previous to that time Knights of the Shire represented the property of the whole county, and their constituents were independent freehold proprietors. The burgesses for the boroughs were returned by freemen, scot and lot voters, burgage tenants, and various other electors, including pot wallopers. In fact, the county Members represented the property of the entire county; whereas the borough Members represented certain privileged classes. All this was done away with by the Act of 1832, when a uniform occupation franchise of £10 was given to the boroughs, and an occupation franchise of £20 to the counties. The change was made on the principle of justice—that each elector ought to vote where his property was situated. The Attorney General the other day, in the somewhat curt remarks he made, said he opposed the proposition of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) because the Liberal Party had opposed it in 1859. Because, forsooth, an injustice was committed in 1859, therefore it should be perpetuated in 1884. An argument such as that, brought forward by so able and dexterous an advocate as the Attorney General, left the inference that there was not so much in the way of objection to the Amendment as might be supposed. He did not think the hon. and learned Attorney General was a Member of the House in 1859. He (Sir Rainald Knightley) was; and he remembered, during the long discussions which took place, extending over many nights, that many important Constitutional questions were amply and fully discussed. During the whole of those discussions he never heard any real argument urged against the proposal of Mr. Disraeli, who was the Leader of the Government at the time. The best argument against it was that made use of by Lord John Russell, who said—"If you have uniformity of suffrage in the boroughs and counties, it will inevitably pave the way for equal electoral districts." That was a sound argument for an old Constitutionalist like Lord John Russell to advance; but it could not be urged by the present Government, who had introduced a measure the sole principle of which was uniformity of suffrage, and a much lower proposal than that which was made by Mr. Disraeli either in 1859 or in the Bill of 1867, those two measures being based on diametrically different principles. This was a much more important question than people imagined, and it affected a very numerous class. He held in his hand a Return moved for in 1858 of the number of the registered electors in England and Wales who were entitled to vote for Knights of the Shire in respect of property. Taking the number as they stood, he found that in South Leicestershire, before it was divided, out of a total county constituency of 20,460, 11,536, or more than one-half, voted for property situate within the limits of boroughs. In Middlesex, out of a total constituency of 14,957, 8,043, or considerably more than one-half, voted for property situate within the limits of boroughs. In North Warwickshire, out of a total constituency of 6,632, 2,756, or more than one-third, voted in a similar manner. No doubt, those electors whose qualification existed in the boroughs had considerable influence at all county elections. He did not wish to dwell upon that particular point now; but he wished to point out the very great benefit which would accrue to the borough constituencies if those electors were taken from the counties and included in the boroughs. Take, for instance, the town of Northampton. He found that in the town of Northampton, in 1859, there were 691 electors —he believed the number had largely increased since, and now amounted to nearly 900—who voted for freeholds situate within the limits of the borough. They were men of considerable substance, all of them living in their own freehold houses, and they formed a valuable body of electors. He should be very sorry to lose them as constituents; but what an advantage would it be to the borough of Northampton to have such an addition to its voters. He ventured to say that if these electors voted for the borough of Northampton, instead of for the county, neither the whole Member nor the half Member who now sat for it would have the slightest chance of being returned again. He would now take an entirely different class of constituents, for the electors of Northampton were not corrupt. He would take, for example, the borough of Taunton, which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General represented; or he would take the City of Chester, for which the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was unseated. He would take the City of Oxford, which did not re-elect the Home Secretary, because, he presumed, that on the second occasion the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not purchase a sufficient number of supporters. He might take others similarly situated; and what advantage there would be to infuse into those borough constituencies a large number of voters who would not be liable to be influenced by motives of corruption. The Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire would, of course, be beaten by the mechanical majority of the Government. Hon. Members opposite had scarcely displayed the courtesy of listening and replying to the arguments which his hon. Friend had used. In olden times Liberal Members had the courtesy to listen to and reply to the arguments of their opponents; but now a great mass of Liberal Members ostentatiously and almost insultingly left the House, and, knowing nothing about the debate themselves, trooped back like a flock of sheep at the bark of the watch-dog when the Division bell rang in order to record their votes.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise to defend hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House from the assault of the hon. Baronet, and to say that no Government majority in this House is less entitled to be termed a mechanical majority than that which supports the present Government. That majority, on several important questions, has distinctly, in vindication of its own independent judgment, broken itself up, and persistently kept the Government in a minority from the first meeting of Parliament until now. Therefore, the idea of a mechanical majority is rather a strained expression; and I must be allowed to express a different opinion. My hon. Friend, if he will allow me to call him so, has shown a feeling of extreme sensitiveness to-day with regard to anomalies. He is shocked at anomalies, and he is ready to get rid of a number of most respectable and most valuable constituents simply because, he says, their existence is an anomaly. But I thought that it was an old Conservative principle that we ought to be very tolerant of anomalies if they are useful in their operation. The hon. Baronet has admitted that this anomaly is useful in its operation, for it gives him a number of valuable men in his constituency; and it is, therefore, surprising that he, who has been so long an ornament of the Conservative Party, should be so anxious for its removal; but I may add that in getting rid of this anomaly he would establish another. The soil of the town of Northampton to which the hon. Gentleman has referred, as has been well said, is just as much a part of the county of Northampton as the soil outside the borough. That being so, the hon. Gentleman proposes to establish a state of things in which a freehold held in one part of a county outside the town shall give a vote for the county, while a freehold in another part of the county — namely, in the borough—shall not give a vote. He proposes this in order to get rid of an anomaly, and with the inconvenient consequence of depriving himself of a number of valuable constituents. The argument against this clause is a very short one. My hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) said that he would rather part with the Bill than admit this Amendment; but I confidently hope that he is not likely to have to choose between these alternatives. I do not believe that there will be any effective rally in favour of this Amendment. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) complains that the speech of the Attorney General was a very curt speech; but our object on this Bill, and especially in Committee, is, as far as we can, to make curt speeches, and the reproach of being curt is not one of which we shall complain. The hon. and learned Gentleman ridiculed the idea of its being a disfranchising Amendment; and he said that no person at present possessing the franchise would be disfranchised. But it was Lord Beaconsfield, when Mr. Disraeli, who introduced the phrase "disfranchising clause" as applied to a provision in the Act of 1867, which did not touch any individual possessing the franchise, but which prevented other persons belonging to that class from becoming enfranchised. Therefore, we hold that in this sense this is a disfranchising Amendment. There are between 130,000 and 140,000 persons living within those parts of counties which are within the boroughs who have votes for the counties. The whole of the successors of these persons would be disfranchised by this Amendment. The hon. and learned Member was understood to say, what I am sure he did not mean, that this method of voting by property qualification within the boroughs was an innovation introduced in 1832. My hon. Friend who has just sat down said nothing of the kind. He must know perfectly well that this is part of the ancient system of voting in this country. Where is the anomaly to be removed? Why should we say there are a certain portion of the counties which are to have property votes, and certain other portions which shall not have property votes? It appears to me that the anomaly sought to be introduced is a much worse anomaly than that which is sought to be redressed. In our view, this disfranchising innovation gives a great deal of scope to the re-introduction of faggot voting. It would enable a vote to be attained by means of a very small outlay of money. There are a number of persons in the population—domestic servants, sons in families, and likewise persons having property in a neighbourhood qualifying simply to get a vote—who would be a very unsound and inferior element to introduce into the constituencies. Our intention is very well known—namely, to resist all alterations of the basis of the franchise proposed in the Bill. That is what we believe to be the rule imposed upon us by our duty and by every consideration of prudence; but with regard to this proposition it seems to me that it has not been supported by any sound argument, nor does it commend itself to any quarter of the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER: As a general rule, it is a very easy matter for any hon. Member to make up his mind how to vote on any Amendments proposed in the Bill. It is certainly an easy matter to any Member who, like myself, is dead against the Bill, root and branch, and every line of it. It is an exceedingly easy matter to make up one's mind how to vote on any given Amendment; but I must say that in the present case I find a great deal to be said on both sides of the controversy which my hon. Friend the Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) has succeeded in raising. In the first place, I cordially join in deprecating what my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) has called the curt, and perhaps not very courteous manner in which the Amendment, like many others, was, in the first instance, dealt with. I do not suppose that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General meant otherwise than to be perfectly respectful to the Committee and to my hon. Friend who raised the question; but he certainly left the impression on the Committee that he failed to realize the great importance of the subject he attempted to deal with. Reference has been made to the fact that this provision which my hon. Friend seeks to persuade the Committee to adopt is, in its main effect, so to say, a reproduction of an abortive attempt to grapple with the Reform Question by the Conservative Party in 1859. One of the great dangers of so-called Conservative Reform Bills is that they are apt to crop up to the disadvantage of the Conservative cause at subsequent dates; and I must own that I am very glad no responsibility, in any shape or form, for the so-called Conservative Reform Bill of 1859, or any other Bill which comes within that category, rests upon myself. The main ground on which I understood that the Bill of 1859 was rejected by Parliament was that it was considered, in respect of the very proposal my hon. Friend has now made, seriously to infringe upon the privileges of the 40*s.* freeholder. I think it was very properly rejected on that ground, although I think there were other grounds existing in the minds of those who rejected it, and who had other objects in view. They selected, undoubtedly, a very good stick with which to beat the dog they desired to attack. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) spoke of this not being a disfranchising proposal. I confess that for once, at any rate, the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister appear to me to be perfectly unanswerable. Undoubtedly, if the proposal is aimed at eliminating from the Register a whole category of electors, it does not cease to be a disfranchising proposal because there may be some actual voters 90 years of age or upwards whose disfranchisement is not to be allowed, but who are to exercise the franchise for their lives. Those, however, who came after them would be debarred from exercising the same franchise. Therefore, I think the Committee will admit that the Amendment is a disfranchising proposal, although there may, nevertheless, be something to be said for it. The House and the Committee, including the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, have been considering the subject as if they had to say "Aye!" or "No!" upon the broad proposal, without any means whatever of reconciling what, at the outset, appeared to be totally opposite opinions. I think, however, there is a means of bringing together my hon. Friend the Member for North Shropshire and the Prime Minister, and those of us who for the moment agree with him in the view he takes of the subject. We are asked to decide whether the elector is to vote for the county or for the borough. Has it never occurred to the Committee that they might equitably split the difference by giving a vote for both? In connection with this branch of the subject, I would venture to call the attention of the Committee to an Amendment which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), and which ought to elicit respectful attention. That Amendment is to add at the end of Clause 2 this Proviso—

> "Provided always, that any elector who is entitled, in any borough or county, to vote as an owner or as an occupier, shall be entitled to be placed on the register of owners and on the register of occupiers, and to vote in both capacities."

Now, that raises a question which I venture to think has not been under the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not wish to forestall the discussion upon it; but I think it raises a very important issue, and one which I believe the Committee will do very well carefully to weigh before it arrives at a decision upon it. That is not, however, the point to which I venture to draw the attention of the Government. My hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) would allow the elector to vote twice for the same constituency, and I should myself go further, and say more than twice. What, however, I wish to put is this—why should not a freeholder be entitled to vote as an occupier in a borough, as he is entitled to a voice in borough affairs; and, at the same time, why should he not also, as a freeholder holding a property qualification in an integral portion of the county, record his vote both as a freeholder for the county and the borough? The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) went a little beyond the point we have now reached when he spoke of the ineligibility of the freeholder to vote for the borough, because he had no connection with the sanitary and commercial interests of the borough. I should have thought that the holder of property in a borough had a very important connection with its sanitary and commercial interests.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: Not as a matter of necessity.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I should say that property, however small, would be very materially affected in its value in a borough by the absence or observance of proper sanitary arrangements; and the hon. Member gave one of the strongest arguments in favour of the direct representation of owners of property when he referred to that very important subject which has been urged on us so much in recent times. The hon. Member went on to speak of the sins of the Act of 1867. Now, I certainly have no intention to constitute myself an apologist of that Act. But I do not think the Act of 1867 did disfranchise the class to which he refers. As the matter now stands, I could not certainly support my hon. Friend in his proposition as originally submitted to the Committee; but I hope he will consider the propriety of modifying it. And then I am not altogether without hope that the Government would be prepared favourably to consider it, so as to allow an elector to vote in respect of his property qualification, both for the county and the borough.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he might put the argument of the right hon. Gentleman in the simple American phrase "Vote early, and vote often." Now, he had no difficulty whatever in deciding how he should vote, because he had registered a vow—perhaps he ought to say he had made an affirmation—to vote against every single Amendment put forward, either on that or the other side of the House. Although the Prime Minister said that his majority was not mechanical, he (Mr. Labouchere) avowed himself to be a purely mechanical creature, as far as this Bill was concerned. But while he had no difficulty in avowing how he was going to vote, there were a good many Gentlemen on that side of the House who experienced a difficulty in deciding whether they ought to discuss the Amendments brought forward at all. Perhaps they had fallen into that difficulty owing to the statement which appeared in *The Standard* that morning—a newspaper which might almost be called the official organ of the Opposition.

MR. WARTON: Oh, dear no.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The official organ of the official Opposition.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Certainly not.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the right hon. Gentleman disclaimed that such was the case. He was afraid that it was only necessary to name any one thing in order to have half-a-dozen Gentlemen on the other side saying "Certainly not." At any rate, he (Mr. Labouchere) still recognized the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) as the Leader of the Opposition; and he wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman, whose courtesy and kindness he wished to bear testimony to, whether the statement in *The Standard* was correct or not, because it was a matter which must underlie the whole discussion of the Amendment of the Bill. The statement was, that certain Gentlemen, calling themselves Leaders—and he presumed they were the Leaders—of the Conservative Party in that House, and in "another place," had met together, and had entered into a species of conspiracy against the deliberate will of the nation, and had agreed to throw out this Bill if ever it went into "another place." ["Hear, hear!"] "Hear, hear!" said hon. Gentlemen opposite; but all he wished to point out was, that if this statement was correct, what was the use of their discussing the Amendments, and why should hon. Members be put to the trouble of discussing them? Why should they seek to amend the Bill when, whatever happened, it was to be thrown out in "another place?" He thought that was a species of menace to the House of Commons; and he thought that they on the Liberal side of the House ought to have a frank understanding from the right hon Gentleman whether the Leaders of the Opposition, whoever they might be, had agreed to throw out this Bill in "another place."

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he had ventured to remark on the second reading of the Bill that it had no chance of passing. That opinion had been confirmed by the statements made in the course of the discussions in Committee. Now, if that were the feeling entertained with respect to the Bill in some parts of that House, it was still more so the feeling in the country and in "another place." The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) asked what profit there was, under those circumstances, in discussing the measure, to which he (Mr. T. Collins) replied that he saw much profit in discussion, because it was necessary to guide public opinion, so that in a future Parliament a Bill might be introduced for dealing with the question of the representation of the people upon a wider and better basis. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite jeered that statement. But he, at any rate, would always complain of the Bill of 1867, inasmuch as it went too far with reference to enfranchisement, and because it went no distance at all with reference to the redistribution of seats. That point was not open to be discussed on that occasion, still he ventured to express his opinion upon it. He was no friend to the cause of electoral districts. He had seen the Ballot Bill passed by a Whig Government, and a Reform Bill by a Conservative Government; and he was quite prepared to take the present Bill and discuss it, with the view, if possible, of making it better, notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton. The question, however, immediately before them was as to whether they ought to transfer the borough freeholder from the county to the borough? Now, he objected to that transfer pure and simple, because they would thereby interfere with and reduce the power of the owners of property. Practically, as the Bill stood, although it was an anomaly, the Government were giving a dual vote—one for the county and one for the borough—yet he could not see any principle or justice in such a case that a man owning and occupying at a distance of two miles outside the borough of Leeds, for instance, should merely vote once—namely, for the county; whereas a man who was within the borough should vote for the three borough Members and for the county Member also. It might be said that this could be got rid of. But he was not for getting rid of it, because it was, as far as it went, a separate enfranchisement of property; it gave property, *quâ* property, a vote. He wanted to set the matter on a proper footing by means of an Amendment which he had placed on the Paper, and which proposed to add to the clause the words—

> "Provided always, that any elector who is entitled, in any borough or county, to vote as an owner or as an occupier, shall be entitled to be placed on the register of owners and on the register of occupiers, and to vote in both capacities."

If that Amendment were passed, persons who lived outside the borough would be on an exact level with those who lived within it; if they happened to own or occupy, whether within or without Leeds, they would have a double vote. The position was so just and clear that it was hardly worth while arguing it. It was said, however, that the arrangement would lead to the creation of a number of fagot voters; but, in his opinion, the days of fagot voting were over. The extension of the franchise now proposed would, if the Bill became law, create constituencies of, in some cases, 20,000 members; and who on earth would attempt, with constituencies of that kind, to buy fagot votes? As long as the constituencies were smaller, there was, he admitted, some temptation to do so. But he objected altogether to the term "fagot voter," because Justice Tindal, who, on a question which involved that of the legality of splitting votes, said—

> "They do not come within the Act, and on this ground it is a wise, just, and moral thing to encourage the multiplication of votes."

Moreover, he was a fagot voter himself in the county of Yorkshire. He hoped that in the next Parliament, if not in this, a Bill would be passed which would totally disfranchise all boroughs which had not at least 20,000 inhabitants. He should not object to apply that principle to boroughs with less than 40,000 inhabitants—certainly he hoped that no borough with less would be allowed to return more than one Member. When the Bill, if it ever did so, became law, the time would have arrived at which, rightly or wrongly, all small constituencies would have to cease. It would be scarcely respectful to a luminary of the law to describe the argument of the Attorney General as moonshine; but the hon. and learned Gentleman must know that, under such circumstances, no one would be tempted to spend £100, more or less, on the purchase of a vote. With regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), he should be unable to vote for it, because it was a disfranchising proposal. He was not afraid of the extension of the franchise, nor did he think it would work any injustice; but he could not support the clause in its present form, and for the reasons stated he hoped that the Prime Minister, as a repentant man, would consider the Proviso he should propose to add to it hereafter.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it had always struck him as being one of the greatest anomalies that a man who was resident in a borough, and also had a freehold in the borough, should have a vote for the county, unless they gave to the man living in the county, and who had a freehold in the borough, the right to vote for the borough. He could not conceive that the Prime Minister would for one moment deny that this proposal was just and fair, especially in view of what would happen with regard to expenditure in boroughs—namely, that the man who might be most interested in seeing that the expenditure was fair and reasonable was to have no voice in the matter. He thought the hon. Member for North Shropshire was wrong in his proposal; but he was of opinion that an Amendment should be introduced to allow a man living in a county, and having property in a borough, to vote in that borough as a freeholder, and in the same way as a man in a borough, having a freehold there, had a vote for the county.

MR. LEWIS said, he opposed the Amendment on one principle, and on one only—namely, that it would do more than anything else to open the door to equal electoral districts—the ultimate object of democratic legislation. It would be impossible for those who supported the proposal of the hon. Member for North Shropshire to allow their voices to be heard afterwards against that mode of destruction of their Constitutional system; and that was a matter which could not be weighed too seriously in considering what might be the next step taken by Gentlemen at present sitting below the Gangway opposite when they took their places above it. They could not put aside the fear that all the theoretical proposals of that body might soon come upon them; and he trusted that those who desired to retain some part of their Constitutional system would not be parties to destroying the few safeguards that remained. He had been glad to hear that the Prime Minister had recognized the possibility of an unsound and inferior element being introduced into a constituency; because that admission constituted a considerable check upon the "flesh and blood" argument, which was always associated with the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS pointed out the anomaly there would be in allowing a working man in a borough, living in his own house and owning another, to vote under the occupation franchise and for the house he possessed in the county; while the working man on the other side of the street, perhaps living in his own house, was only allowed to vote for the county. When it was pointed out, a few days ago, by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), it made a considerable impression upon the House; and the question was, how could that anomaly be removed? The proposal before the Committee was that the freeholder should vote either for the borough or county—whichever the freehold might be situated in—and the anomaly would, no doubt, be removed by its adoption; but he, for one, could not support the Amendment, because it appeared to him to be a thoroughly disfranchising measure. He thought there was a great deal of force in the observation of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), that it would pull down the great barrier between county and borough, and he certainly wanted to keep them distinct. Again, if the Amendment were accepted, he believed that the 40*s.* freeholder would be in great danger; and it must not be forgotten that if a man had an interest in the county he had a right to vote for the county. For these reasons, if the Amendment were carried to a Division, he should feel it his duty to vote against it.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he had thought that the Amendment would be agreeable to the Government. The Government appeared to be under the impression that if the Amendment were carried it would destroy the assimilation of the county and borough franchises, and that they would have to abandon the Bill. But he wished to explain to the Committee that his Amendment would not prevent their accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), or one in the direction desired by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West

Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross)—that was to say, a further Amendment which would give a double vote. If such an Amendment could be carried, well and good—he should not object to it; but his proposal was that there should be identity as between the county and borough franchises, which, as far as he was concerned, might be brought about in any way so long as the same rule applied to boroughs as to counties. And here he was at issue with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, who seemed to cling to the anomaly that there was something entirely different between the knights of the shire and the burgesses of the shire. Now, that distinction had long ago been swept away. Fifty years ago the county Member represented the freeholder only; but now he represented something quite different. The distinction was first struck at by the Chandos Clause; then by the £12 occupation franchise; and now it would be entirely destroyed by the lodger franchise. Again, some hon. Members had declared that this was a disfranchising Amendment. It was nothing of the sort. There were something like 160,000 freeholders in the boroughs who had votes for the counties. The freeholder in the borough would still be able to exercise his franchise; and, so far from its being a disfranchising measure—why the great argument against it was, that there would be such a large number of freeholders in the boroughs that the other electors would be swamped. Then it was said that the Amendment was a step towards electoral districts. But all constituencies were electoral districts; what they objected to were equal electoral districts, and the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had omitted to use the word "equal." Then it was said that the Amendment would lead to the manufacturing of new votes. But that was the very thing the Bill was intended to prevent, and it would be a failure altogether if it did not do so. Besides which, as anyone might now qualify for the county by buying a freehold in a borough, the objection, if it were an objection, remained in the Bill as it stood. The freeholder who would vote under his Amendment would be a man who had a material interest in the borough. The Prime Minister and the Government dared not disfranchise the freeholders in the boroughs; and, therefore, they tried to maim them—they tried to destroy the power of the freeholders in the constituencies by a side-wind—by swamping them. At present, half the county voters were freeholders; but under this Bill they would be but one-seventh of the whole number. It was, then, the Bill, and not the Amendment, which was a disfranchising measure, so far as the freeholders were concerned. Did the opponents of the Amendment think a man dangerous because he had a 40*s.* freehold? Was he the less trustworthy on that account? Why, everyone agreed that such men constituted a most valuable set of voters, so far as the counties were concerned; but when it was proposed to hand them over to the boroughs, hon. Gentlemen representing boroughs said they would rather not have them. He thought the broad principle should be raised in that House that every borough Member ought to represent all the interests in his constituency. The best of the borough interests were taken away and handed over to county Members, the borough Members only representing the residuum. He thought it a fair statement of a principle which ought to be embodied in a Bill of this kind that every man should have a vote for the place in which he had a material interest. The Prime Minister, he believed, had stated that a town was part of a county; but it was not so in the sense in which they were dealing with it. For all political, legal, and local purposes it was distinct and separate. On the ground both of justice and logic, he claimed that his Amendment should be accepted. He was sorry hon. Members opposite did not see the justice of the Amendment, which was really intended to prevent one class dominating elections.

Amendment *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the word "and," insert the words "a uniform."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS proposed, in page 1, line 9, to leave out "and lodger." They had had from his right hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) a very interesting account of the lodger franchise. The right hon. Gentleman showed how very difficult it was to work; that, practically, it had never worked at all, except in those particular places where the agent had taken special trouble to get the lodgers put on the list of voters. It must be quite evident to everybody that in counties it would be very much more difficult to have a pure Register of lodgers than in boroughs. Lodgers were people who came to-day and were gone to-morrow; and, therefore, in the lodger franchise there was a very great opening for fraud. In the speech he made in introducing the Bill the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister alluded to the Redistribution Bill it would be necessary to bring in, in order to carry out its provisions; and he gathered from what the right hon. Gentleman said that the Register would be self-acting. Now, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) could not conceive a self-acting Register of lodgers. Lodgers stood on a distinct footing. It was well known who the occupiers and who the owners were; there were official persons whose duty it was to take notice both of the one and the other. But there was no official who was bound to take notice of lodgers; and, therefore, unless some machinery could be discovered by which the lodger franchise would be properly worked, he was afraid the lodger Register would open the door to a great amount of fraud, and to an enormous amount of difficulty and expense in keeping the Register pure. He was fully persuaded that if the Register were left unaltered there would be the greatest difficulty and danger experienced in dealing with lodger franchises. His chief object, however, in moving this Amendment was to get from the Government some expression of opinion upon the subject.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, to leave out the words "and lodger."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'lodger' stand part of the Clause."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not quite understand whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to put this proposal to the test of a Division; because towards the close of his speech he said he had moved the Amendment chiefly for the purpose of eliciting the views of the Government upon the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had said that lodgers were persons who came to-day and were gone to-morrow. That was perfectly true of town lodgers, and it was also true of lodgers under £10 in counties. It was perfectly true that lodgers in towns were a flitting population, because they were mostly workmen who had very frequently to follow their work. The county lodger over £10, however, was by no means the unsubstantial person the right hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose. Lodgers over £10 formed a small class, no doubt; but they included amongst them some of the most Conservative persons in the country. For instance, the majority of curates were lodgers over £10, and the effect of the present proposal would be to disfranchise them. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was inclined to believe, from inquiries he had made, that the county £10 lodger was a man of substantial mind, a man who very properly ought to have the franchise. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt), who addressed the Committee the other day, said the lodger franchise was a failure. That was so in certain places; but in constituencies like Westminster and Chelsea, where the agents took a great deal of trouble in the preparation of the Register, lodgers constituted some of the very best voters. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the phrase "self-acting Register," which had been used in relation to the Redistribution Bill. It must not be understood, however, that it was intended to propose any change of the law as regarded the lodger franchise. The phrase "self-acting Register" had reference to another matter.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked if he understood the right hon. Gentleman to abandon the intention of dealing with the question of redistribution? [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Oh, no.] The House was certainly given to understand that the Government considered the passage through Parliament of a Redistribution Bill as an essential preliminary to the Bill now before them coming into active operation.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not propose to make any change in the announcement previously made.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was so far satisfactory that he did not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of a Division.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. BRODRICK said, that in the absence of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton), which he much regretted, it had fallen to him to move the Amendment which stood in the noble Lord's name. The subject of the Amendment was not altogether unfamiliar to the Committee. They had already had a discussion with regard to the extension of the franchise to Ireland; but that discussion had been raised on an entirely different issue to that which he now placed before the Committee. The discussion which had hitherto taken place had been on the subject of a refusal of a measure of Reform to Ireland on account of the condition of that country. The Amendment which he now put before the Committee required that in consequence of the state of Ireland they should deal with that country separately, and not in the same category as Great Britain. The Amendment was one which he thought would commend itself to the Committee very much more forcibly than the Motion which was made on a former occasion did. The Motion which some days ago the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) moved was one which the Prime Minister insinuated was not put to the vote, because the hon. Gentleman might not have received the entire support he would have wished for from the Opposition side of the House. On that pretext no adequate answer was attempted to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. The hon. Gentleman challenged two right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who had given divergent sounds on this subject, to explain themselves more fully, and to explain the reasons which had caused one of them, at least, to change his views on this question. That had not been done, and the Committee were to argue the question again; but, he was glad, with information in their hands which they had not formerly possessed. He believed that when he brought the latest information before the Committee it would be admitted that the question bore a very different complexion. They had hitherto been asked to include Ireland in the Bill on the ground of abstract justice, and the idea of any Party move in the matter had been indignantly repudiated on the Ministerial side of the House. Within the last few weeks he had had the opportunity of facing several popular audiences; and he could assure the Committee that they had all expressed indignation of the strongest possible character at the proposed extension of the franchise to Ireland. He did not wish, and he would not now detain the Committee by entering into any recriminations as to the motives which had induced the Government to adopt this course. Those had been touched upon on previous occasions, and would, no doubt, be pretty well set forth by the hon. Gentlemen who would follow him in the debate. But he would take the Government on their own ground. They professed their desire to bring about equality between England and Ireland; but he would show them they were making an inequality of so remarkable and so striking a description between the franchise of the two countries that it positively amounted to a gross injustice to the other parts of the United Kingdom; and he would point out to them also that in doing this, from whatever motive, they would concentrate in the House of Commons all the evil passions, all the patriotic follies, and all the delusive sentimentalities which were now wasted at public meetings held throughout Ireland. The Prime Minister had said that this measure was founded upon justice; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who was in favour of the proposed extension, said, in 1879, that the real way to treat Ireland was to assimilate her institutions to those of England; but the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) was more discreet than his Colleagues, because he had said that England and Ireland should be treated diversely. Now, the Committee had a right to know how the Government had carried out the programme which they laid down for themselves in respect to Ireland. Had they assimilated the institutions of Ireland to those of England? Had they attempted to do so in their legislation during the last four years? The whole legislation of the last four years had been directed to the establishment of the greatest possible inequalities between this country and Ireland; and yet, at this moment, when it suited their purpose, they came forward with the cry that equality, justice, and generosity must be dealt out to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. With regard to Irish land, the Government had done their best to establish a Code which was absolutely divergent to that in England; and which was so favourable to the tenant that no English tenant had ever thought of asking for it. With regard to Local Government, they had not failed to carry out the pledge which they gave in the Queen's Speech—namely, that they would introduce a measure on the subject, a measure which they said would educate the people for the possession of the franchise. Now, however, they proposed that the measure of Local Government should follow the extension of the franchise. Again, the Government had to face this question, which was, to his mind, the most important of all — namely, that the present administration of the Poor Law in Ireland was such as would bring the franchise into an absolutely anomalous position. In this country, the man who accepted relief was struck off the list of voters; but in that country, where there was not merely individual relief, but absolutely national relief, it was provided that the man who was relieved should be endowed with the faculty of voting. That was an inequality which he thought would appeal very much to the newly enfranchised labourers in this country. He asserted that the Government's equality, under these circumstances, was nothing better than humbug and sham, even if they could establish it. As a matter of fact, they were about to establish no equality whatever. A Return had been furnished to Members of the other House of Parliament. There was, however, great difficulty in obtaining in this House the necessary funds to cover the expenses of its preparation, because hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Ministerial side were very much afraid to let in any light on the question. They wanted the House to take a leap in the dark, and they stood out a whole evening against the Return being granted, on the alleged ground of its great cost. What was the nature of the Return? He thought it was of a nature which would startle the Committee. It revealed a state of things which the great majority of the House were not, he was sure, aware of. As a matter of fact, it had largely influenced Members on the Opposition side of the House, some of whom, in their generous sympathy with the Irish people, were doubtful whether they should not vote for the extension of the franchise to that country. What were the circumstances? At present there was in the counties of Ireland a total electorate of 200,000. That was to be increased by the Prime Minister's calculation to something like 700,000. In the Irish county constituencies this result, which was almost incredible, was arrived at. The total number of inhabited houses was 760,000, and of that number no less than 662,000 were under a £4 rateable value. He should, no doubt, be told that there was a large number of agricultural labourers in this country who occupied houses rated at less than £4, and that, therefore, equality was being established. But perhaps the Committee would tarry with him a moment longer, while he pointed out that from the Return in question it was an absolute fact that more than two-thirds of the 662,000 houses—that was, 435,000—were rated under £1 a-year. He defied any Member of the House to mention any class in this country who lived in houses rated at less than £1 a-year. Why, the very existence of such a class was in itself sufficient to betoken great social misfortune; it certainly was not calculated to inspire any special confidence in any verdict which they might give. And the Government were about to hand over the deciding force in every county constituency in Ireland to the inhabitants of these miserable dwellings. What were these dwellings, and what were the inhabitants? In the last Session of Parliament there were two or three measures introduced for the improvement of the condition of the Irish peasantry. They were told that the Irish labourers were in so miserable a plight that they had never demanded the franchise; that they were utterly ignorant; that they lived in hovels unfit for pigs; and that they were the subject of public charity. Such were the men to whom the Government now proposed to give the deciding force in every constituency in Ireland, and, by implication, in every Division in the House of Commons. Would the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury state whether the class proposed to be enfranchised were really capable citizens? He (Mr. Brodrick) had listened patiently to hear from the right hon. Gentleman, or from some other Member of the Government, a definition of a capable citizen. He could understand the position of the Government if there was to be manhood suffrage. It was well known that the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) was an advocate of manhood suffrage, though he had taken the greatest pains not to give vent to such opinions in the House. The right hon. Gentleman perfectly understood what it was to wink with one eye to the constituencies and with the other to the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman saw plainly that he had got the power of discounting any lapse of the Ministry in the House by the professions he made outside the House. He (Mr. Brodrick) considered that in justice to the English and Scotch constituencies the vote ought not to be given to anyone in Ireland, but to capable citizens. The hon. Member for Waterford said, the other night, that he was not prepared to deny the vote to any man of intelligence. What was the intelligence of these Irish serfs? Why, the average intelligence of half-a-dozen of them would not make up the intelligence of one of the miners of the North of England whom they were now asked to enfranchise. The other day the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) rose in his place and said they on the Opposition side of the House did not represent the entire Conservative Party; because if they were prepared to trust the people of Great Britain he saw no reason why they should not trust the people of Ireland also. How was it that during the last four years the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) had constantly shown his distrust of the Irish people? Why, he remembered that only two years ago, when it was proposed to adjourn for five or six days over Easter, the hon. and learned Gentleman got up and said the state of the Irish people was such that the House, before they allowed themselves to separate for five or six days, must have an absolute assurance from the Government of what they intended to do to preserve and vindicate law and order. Now he rose in a generous spirit, and said he did not know why they should not trust the Irish people. If they established this political equality they ought to establish some sort of social equality between these classes and the people of this country; but the Government refused to bring forward such measures as a scheme of emigration, and other schemes by which the population might become self-subsistent on their own soil. He had been much struck by a sentence delivered by one who was not much prejudiced on the side of Irish landlords—namely, Mr. Henry George, who said—

> "To educate men condemned to poverty is but to make them restive. To base on a state of most glaring social inequality political institutions by which men are theoretically equal is to stand a pyramid on its apex."

If they believed that these people were fit to exercise the franchise, they ought to do everything in their power, first of all, to put them in a social position in which they might, to some extent, be independent. He knew that many hon. Members thought that the more they broadened the foundations of any institution the stronger they made the superstructure; he knew that the Chief Secretary believed that, and was ready to enfranchise almost any man. That was very similar to saying they strengthened the superstructure of an Art Society by adding to it a number of men who had no knowledge, and desired to know nothing of colour or form. There were also many hon. Members who would support this measure because they thought they would thereby add one more to the pile of benefits already conferred on Ireland. What was the justification for such hopes as that? There were a number of constituencies which were very like that House. Every Division in that House might be turned by the Irish vote; and in those constituencies the vote might be turned by the Irish residuum; and he confessed that he thought the feeling of some hon. Members, in many instances, bore a close relation to the number of Irish in their constituencies. Those Members, he thought, should look forward to see what would be the effect upon that House, and what would be the effect on the country, if, for the sake of a mere fleeting triumph, they insisted upon taking a leap in the dark, compared with which every other leap that had been taken in that way was a mere trifle. There were certain inevitable results that must follow. The Prime Minister had spoken of his early retirement from politics, and he was going to leave others to settle these difficulties. He stated that there might be a destruction of the Ministry, and possibly a dissolution of Parliament; but did that imply that the state of Ireland was likely to be less happy than it had been? Were they only to consider whether they were going to make Ireland less happy? Had they not a right to consider whether it would be possible to carry on Public Business in this House? They had seen enough of what had occurred in the last two or three years—incessant naggings at the Ministry; strings of Questions asked—they had seen enough to know that there was nothing but a hollow pretence in the suggestion that the distance of the Irish constituencies from that House prevented hon. Members giving full expression to their opinions or their full attendance. A case which had to be bolstered up by such arguments as those must be weak indeed. There was also something in their minds beyond that, to which they had a right to claim the attention of the Prime Minister—namely, the utter disfranchisement of the whole minority, whether Protestant or Catholic, in Ireland. The existence of such a minority was admitted to be an important factor in Irish affairs by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War a few months ago. The Government proposed, by handing over the whole of the country to a low class, to disfranchise, first of all, those Whig Catholics who had given them the best support they had received in that House, and who had been the substratum of all the measures upon which the Prime Minister had hitherto relied for healing the wrongs of Ireland; and they would, undoubtedly, shake the Protestant ascendency in the North of Ireland, if it should not happen that the Irish labourers took a different view. He was not sure that the case was so clear for extending the franchise of labourers. He was not sure that that matter occupied the very first place in the mind of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), seeing his calmness with regard to it; neither did he feel sure that the agricultural labourer in Ireland, as elsewhere, would not turn out to be Conservative in his instincts; but that did not affect the point at issue. The question was, whether at any given election, at any given moment, when the question arose which had been agitated all over the country, the influence of these men could be gained by any argument than that of the hatred—the undying, absurd hatred—which they were taught to feel towards English institutions? And when the Prime Minister scoffed at their influence in that House, he would point out that if the hon. Member for the City of Cork, three days ago, had had 20 more Members behind him, and at his command, the Prime Minister would not now be sitting where he was. That such a crisis would arise he firmly believed. They might struggle and fight; but within 10 years, if this franchise was now given, they would be forced to concede Home Rule. All that the loyal men in that House and in the country could do would not be sufficient to prevent it, and the responsibility would rest upon the Parliament which accepted and the Ministry which had initiated the movement. They ought, he thought, to consider the very wise words which were spoken by Lord Sherbrooke—then Mr. Lowe—in 1867 in reference not merely to the Irish Question, but in reference to the question of extending the franchise generally to a class who had been predominant over every other class. Mr. Lowe then said—

> "When we consider a Reform Bill, and the giving of the franchise to a class which has it not; the transferring of electoral power; we should bear in mind that the end we ought to have in view is not the class which receive the franchise, nor the district which obtains the power of sending Members to Parliament, but that Parliament itself in which these Members are to sit."

That was a consideration altogether neglected by the Government; and they had also neglected the warning of Mr. John Stuart Mill delivered at the same time, that—

> "Predominant power should not be turned over to persons in the mental and moral condition of the working classes."

If that was true of the working classes in Mr. Mill's time, 17 years ago, was it not much more true of the Irish working classes at the present day, especially the lower classes? He knew he should have the whole Ministry against him, and that with the majority would vote all those who felt philanthropic towards the Irish people, and all those who had greater fear of Lord Salisbury than love for the Irish working man. But he believed there would be in the Lobby of the minority a large number of men who had no fear of expressing their opinions in the country and in that House; and that the minority would have with them every statesman who had attempted to deal with Reform, except the Prime Minister; and they would also have the sympathy of all those constituencies that had no Irish vote to prevent them from acting as they felt.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 10, to leave out the words "United Kingdom," and insert the words "Great Britain."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'United Kingdom' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. TREVELYAN: Some hon. Members, perhaps, have fondly believed that this question would be settled and disposed of during a single debate in Committee; but I gather from the last words of the hon. Member who has just sat down that on this occasion it will assume a more practical aspect, and that the hon. Member proposes to carry it to a Division, because he gives us a formidable list of the persons whom he will have with him in the Lobby either in person or in sympathy, from Lord Sherbrooke and Mr. Mill down to a long list of persons who in sympathy will be with him, though voting in the opposite Lobby. Under these circumstances, as we are going to a Division, and as we are told that we have no reason to give for the part which many of us will take in that Division, except our political and personal interests, I am bound, in the shortest words I can find to pack my argument into, to give hon. Members the reasons why we differ from the views of the hon. Member who has just spoken, and intend to take different action. In the first place, we can take no other action on this occasion. There are only two courses which could possibly be followed if we accepted the Amendment of the hon. Member. One of those courses would be to put off extending the franchise to the English and Scotch people, who have waited quite long enough, and we are not going to ask them to wait for an indefinite time longer. The other course would be—and I am far from thinking that that would be an impossible course—to extend the franchise to England and Scotland and to attempt to exclude Ireland. The Prime Minister spoke strongly on this question, and it is not becoming for Governments to protest too much; and therefore I cannot hesitate to renew his strongly expressed assurance that no power on earth could induce a Liberal Ministry to push forward, and, if necessary, accept in an amended shape, a Bill extending the franchise to England and Scotland and excluding Ireland. I can only say that in such a Ministry I personally could not hold Office for five minutes after such a decision had been come to. For what reason? I am not going into abstract principles; but on the strongest political, practical, national grounds it would be nothing less than madness to exclude Ireland from a Bill extending the franchise to England and Scotland. What is the history of agitations in all countries, and especially in Ireland? The history is this—a violent political agitation is got up on account of some legitimate universally recognized grievance; and even after that grievance has been remedied the agitation still continues in pursuit of other objects into which I will not now enter in a critical manner, but the justice of which is not universally recognized. I will give an example. In 1825—that was, perhaps, the hottest moment in the matter—there was a powerful and violent agitation in favour of Catholic Emancipation. Hon. Members opposite will scarcely say that that object was not a legitimate one, for it was one of the proudest boasts of the Party to which they belong that it had promoted Protestantism; but the result was that that agitation went beyond legitimate limits. It went in favour of a repeal of the Union; and I imagine that neither Gentlemen above the Gangway on the other side, nor on this side, would consider repeal of the Union an object that could be successfully asked from Parliament. Therefore, if you wish to plunge Ireland with absolute certainty into a formidable agitation for purposes which Parliament cannot grant, you will set that agitation on foot by putting upon Ireland this exclusion from the franchise as a definite mark of English distrust and want of confidence. On that broad ground, which I hold to be absolutely indisputable, we cannot seek to extend the franchise in the countries of

England and Scotland without at the same time extending it to the counties and boroughs of Ireland. The hon. Member says—"How can you seek to extend the franchise and trust the Irish people when you have shown by your Coercion Acts that you distrust them?" This has over and over again been given as an authoritative reason why we could not extend the franchise to Ireland. In 1867 Mr. Disraeli, who was then Prime Minister, promised an Irish Reform Bill, and in 1868 he passed that Bill. The most essential feature of that Bill, as I think Irish Members will agree, was the reduction of the borough franchise from £8 to £4. That was a very important reduction. It at once increased the Irish borough constituencies by one-half—from 30,000 to 45,000; and the change in the Irish borough constituencies was out of all proportion even to the numerical increase, for I do not think it is too much to say that at above £8 there was comparatively little infusion of those ideas which many hon. Members consider to be dangerous, and all regard as advanced. But, below £8, undoubtedly the borough constituencies are, to a considerable extent, permeated by those ideas. Under what circumstances was that important change brought about by Mr. Disraeli? Did the Government at that time, in the words of my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Brodrick), trust the Irish people by giving them the full enjoyment of their civil rights? There is no civil right so important as freedom from arbitrary arrest without trial before a public tribunal; and yet in February, 1866, a Bill suspending the Habeas Corpus Act had been brought in and passed, and it was renewed time after time on the express ground that treasonable conspiracy still existed all through the time when Mr. Disraeli was promising a Reform Bill, and all through the time when he was carrying that out; and it did not expire until the Reform Bill had been passed. Not only at that time, but since 1847 there were not only the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, but Peace Preservation Acts in force, which were, with certain exceptions, as severe as, or at any rate contains some of the most severe provisions which the present so-called Coercion Acts contain. I have a list of the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act, and I find that five of the provisions of that Act, which is now brought forward as an argument for not extending the franchise to Ireland, were in full force from 1847 to long after the Irish Reform Bill of Mr. Disraeli became law. And now just observe this. What are the charges brought against the present Government by hon. Gentlemen opposite? One charge upon which they most frequently insist is that for a certain time the present Government left Ireland without a Coercion Act. Another charge is that they have not properly used the Coercion Act they have now got. It would be difficult to exaggerate the strength of the language that was used all through last winter and autumn against the Irish Government because they did not stop public meetings throughout the entire length and breadth of Ireland, when they were being held by the National League. And now we are asked to agree to this proposition—that there always had been a Coercion Act in operation in Ireland. [Several IRISH MEMBERS: No, no!] The principal charge brought against the Government is that they left Ireland without a Coercion Act for a few months; and it is now contended that there should always be a Coercion Act in Ireland; that at this present moment, or at any rate as late as last autumn and winter, Lord Spencer and myself ought to have stopped every National League meeting; and yet we are asked not to extend the franchise to Ireland until there is no Coercion Act there, and until public speech is free. That string of propositions we are called upon to affirm; and the hon. Member rested his case very much on the very poor condition of life of a great number of these voters. He said they were unfit to be voters; that by admitting them we should be taking a dangerous leap in the dark; and that by admitting them we should disfranchise wholesale the loyal population of Ireland. I meet the hon. Member upon that point; and I say it is a misuse of words to assert that you disfranchise one set of people by enfranchising another. The doctrine held by Gentlemen on this side of the House is that the principle of this Bill must apply to Ireland as well as to England and Scotland. These men, it is quite true, are mostly men who hold at a very small valuation; but you have yet to prove that they will be bad citizens. You have not proved that yet, and you will have to prove it. The hon. Member, it seems to me, answered himself when in the course of his speech he said that the Irish agricultural labourers would very likely be Conservative. They may be Conservative, or they may be Liberal, or they may be advanced Liberal; but one doctrine will hold good for all, and that is that they will use their votes for the purpose of having their interests considered in the great clash and conflict which takes place in the House of Commons. I think it necessary to say here what, perhaps, you cannot expect Irish Representatives to say, though I have heard it said on all sides—namely, that at the present time the representation of Ireland is, as it were, a privileged representation; and I will venture to say that there have been many debates in this House which have shown that this House has come too much to look at the constituencies of Ireland as pure and unmixed constituencies of tenant farmers, and to think that there are among them hardly any poorer town artizans or rural labourers. When I say poorer, you must recollect that at this moment in the Irish towns there are excluded a very large number of men who are poor in no sense of the word. In a town like Cork there are only 4,700 electors; while in an English town of the same size there are 19,000. No one would believe that in a flourishing city like Cork the 14,000 or 15,000 people between these two figures are all poor, ignorant men who have no means of influencing the legislation of the country.

Mr. BRODRICK: My statistics were taken from the counties.

Mr. TREVELYAN: Then with regard to the counties, we do not ask or insist that these voters shall be better or wiser men than those who at present have votes, or that they shall be as good or as wise; but what we do insist upon is, that they shall be men who have a right to be represented, and to have a fair share in what Parliament can give, and a fair influence on the councils of the country. I do not in the least believe that the effect of extending the franchise would be to make a man dangerous. You cannot make a man dangerous by giving him a vote—so far as you do anything at all, you make him less dangerous, for you enable him to do something to attain his political ends, instead of leaving him to grumble and fret and, perhaps, resort to violence. In the course which they are pursuing with regard to this Bill, the Government believe that no harm whatever can come to law and order in Ireland; but that very great advantage will in the long run result from large classes being placed on the side of law —classes which at this moment, so far as citizenship is concerned, are outside the law. For these reasons, the Government will, on the occasion of the Division which the hon. Member promises, urge their supporters, one and all, to go into the opposite Lobby from him.

Mr. LEWIS said, he did not know whether the Government was to be congratulated on the answer which had just been given to the Amendment by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. He would venture to say that not only the Amendment, but the facts and logic of his hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick) deserved something more at the hands of Her Majesty's Government than had yet been given. He concurred with the observation with which the right hon. Gentleman commenced, that it was satisfactory to know that the debate was to be followed by a Division; but he thought that Division ought to be preceded by a clear, comprehensive, and exhaustive argument. No one, at least among the right hon. Gentleman's opponents, had a greater admiration of the public career of the right hon. Gentleman than had he (Mr. Lewis); but the right hon. Gentleman must permit him to say this —that it was evident throughout his speech that he was actuated more by feeling than by reason; and having committed himself and his Government to this most extraordinary step of an extension of the franchise carried so far as this measure proposed to carry it, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have thought it necessary to be enthusiastic and emotional rather than argumentative and reasonable. The right hon. Gentleman, going to an extreme which the House was but little accustomed to at his hands, had said that, in his judgment, it would be nothing less than madness to attempt to exclude vast masses of the Irish community, under existing circumstances, from the franchise. Now, he (Mr. Lewis) would venture to say, on the other hand, that in the opinion of the vast masses of intelligent people in England it would be nothing less than madness to include that country within this Bill. It was on that point, and in the broadest way, that he took issue with the right hon. Gentleman. He would venture to present his case shortly to the Committee, calling in aid the arguments and some of the facts which his hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick) had referred to. But, before he went into the main subject, he wished to refer to a certain argument which had been used in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. One of the right hon. Gentleman's chief arguments was, that by refusing certain concessions, or certain measures, which he considered to be just, there would be caused not only trouble with reference to the particular measure itself, but agitation would be excited upon matters with which the people of this country could by no possibility sympathize. But that was exactly the result which had followed the past course of the present Government. They had conceded the question of the Irish Church, the question of Irish Land, and other important matters as well; but instead of stopping agitation, this course had only increased it. In order that there should be no mistake about this, he would read a passage from a pamphlet recently issued by the Representatives of the National Party—by one of the Leaders of the Party—who did not hesitate to say—who even boasted of it—

"There can be no peace until the longing for Irish autonomy is satisfied. No minor reforms of any kind will suffice; and that equality of rights and privileges which the consciences of modern statesmen would demand, and which cannot long be withheld from Ireland, will, instead of settling the matter, be but a stronger lever in the hands of Ireland to attain what she desires and claims as her right."

In other words, Parliament was told by those to whom it was proposed to extend this franchise—

"Aye, you may give it to us; but it will not prevent us from agitating for those things which the Chief Secretary says the Government will not think of granting—on the contrary, it will be the cause and incentive of our proceeding further in order to obtain our demands."

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA: Will the hon. Gentleman say who he is quoting from? What is it from?

MR. LEWIS: Another argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was that Mr. Disraeli, in 1868, reduced the borough franchise when an Act for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was still in existence. But was it usual to compare great things with small in that way? What was the reduction of the franchise in 1868? It was simply the addition of 15,000 persons to the borough registers in Ireland. In other words—for he would give the full benefit of it to the Government—50 per cent were added to the borough voters in Ireland. But what was the addition which was now proposed to be made to the Irish electorate? Why, it would increase the number of voters in the county constituencies of Ireland to twice and a-half their present number—it would not make an addition to, but would absolutely overload and swamp the present constituencies, which would entirely disappear, at least in the form in which they existed at present. That was another argument used by the right hon. Gentleman, who finished up by saying that it was totally incorrect to urge that the measure would disfranchise a certain set of voters because it enfranchised another set. That might be a very proper criticism as a mere matter of language; but everybody knew what was meant by the suggestion that where there were a number of voters of a certain class, and that number was added to by the introduction of another class so indigent, so poor, surrounded by circumstances of such a deteriorating character that they could not have the advantages of ordinary members of society—everybody knew that such an addition, when made in such numbers as absolutely to leave the previously existing class of voters without any power whatsoever, amounted virtually to the practical disfranchisement of that previously existing class of voters, although it might not be legal disfranchisement. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, before concluding his speech, said that the onus placed upon the opponents of this measure was that they had to prove that the proposed new voters would be bad citizens. Here they came to one of those dividing lines in the franchise which was always cropping up. Was the franchise a right, or was it a trust and a privilege? Considering the structure of this Bill, whatever might be the views of many of its supporters, the House was entitled to treat the Government, or at all events its Head the Prime Minister, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, as not of that class who maintained that the franchise was an absolute right, because the Bill was certainly not framed on those lines. What had been put to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was that the Government proposed by this Bill to enfranchise 2,000,000 of "capable citizens." It had been remarked that the right. hon. Gentleman, notwithstanding the length of his explanations, had never given to the House an interpretation of what he understood by the words "capable citizen." He (Mr. Lewis) would endeavour to refer to the suggested capability under three separate heads. First, there was capability with regard to education; then there was capability with regard to independence of position; and then there was capability with regard to conduct and character. With regard to the capability drawn from education, he would ask hon. Gentlemen to compare England and Scotland with Ireland. When they talked of assimilating the franchise, there might be a mechanical or pretentious assimilation; but was there an assimilation that was actual? Could there be pointed out any case in England or Scotland, such as unfortunately existed in Ireland, of two or three counties in which over 40 per cent of the community over five years of age could neither read nor write? Was there any similarity whatsoever to be found between the condition of such Irish counties as Mayo and Galway, and one or two others, and the condition of any county or district in England? It was not necessary for him to go into the Returns at any great length; but those Returns proved that, unfortunately, no less than 25 per cent of the whole population of Ireland over the age of five years were able neither to read nor to write. In Galway the figures went up to 45 per cent; in Mayo to 44 per cent; in Donegal to 38 per cent; in Kerry to 35 per cent; and in Waterford to 36 per cent. Under these circumstances was he not justified in asking whether the class of persons proposed to be enfranchised in Ireland under this Bill were entitled to be called "capable citizens" in respect to education? The noble Lord whose name had been mentioned in the course of this discussion (Lord Sherbrooke) said, after the passing of the Act of 1867—"We must now set to work to educate our masters." But surely the best thing that could be done was to educate those persons who were to be their masters before they conferred on them the mastership. It was a most remarkable thing that, however bad the case was in England before the passing of the Reform Act of 1867, Ireland, which had so long been blessed with a system of national education—which, indeed, had had a system of national education long before it was established in England—Ireland had, owing to circumstances and causes and influences which he did not propose to describe now at any length, been in such a condition that the children of many Irish parents had been prevented from going to the national shools.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN: How long was she under the Penal Laws?

Mr. LEWIS said, the result, unfortunately, was that there were counties in Ireland where nearly half the population over the age of five years were absolutely destitute of the first elements of education. [Several hon. Members: No, no!] With regard to the next point in the capability for citizenship—the point of independence—the only way in which they could judge of the independence of a person's position—his ability to protect himself against oppression, or to guide himself in the exercise of his public rights—was to judge from the outward *indicia*. In England, if they wished to judge of the independence of an artizan, or working-man, or servant, they must see how he lived, and what were his circumstances. They must ascertain whether he was in a state of great social distress and ignominy, and whether he was living under circumstances and conditions, with regard to his family and his surroundings, which would show that public duties and rights would rest upon him satisfactorily and be satisfactorily performed, both with regard to himself and with regard to the public for whom those duties were performed. But what was the case in Ireland? It was perfectly astounding; and it was necessary that the people of England and Scotland and Wales should understand it throughout the length and breadth of this land, that what was proposed to be done by this Bill was to hand over the destinies of this great Empire to persons in Ireland, who by hundreds of thousands occupied tenements under the annual value of £1, and to make those persons the arbiters between the two contending Forces who sat on the two sides of the House—the arbiters of decisions vitally affecting the welfare of the whole country. He might elaborate the statistics with great advantage to the argument; but in order to show to what an extreme the case arrived in some counties, he would content himself by selecting only one or two cases from each Province in Ireland—cases which would show the real position of affairs. In Louth, in the Province of Leinster, the present number of county voters was 1,682; but the number of inhabited houses rated at £1 and less in that county, the occupiers of which would be enfranchised to a very great extent by this Bill, was 7,617. In other words, omitting altogether any other cases of the rating of inhabited houses, more than four times the present number of voters would be placed upon the register from a class rated at £1 a-year and less.

An hon. MEMBER: How many are there in Londonderry?

MR. LEWIS was unable to say; but that did not affect his argument. Taking next the Province of Munster, he found that the present number of registered electors in County Clare was 5,000; but the number of inhabited houses rated at £1 and under was no less than 15,879. In County Kerry, in the same Province, there were 5,068 registered voters, and there were upwards of 17,000 householders rated at £1 and under. In the Province of Ulster there were now 4,484 electors in the county of Donegal, and the number of inhabited houses rated at £1 and under was 28,000—in other words, six times the number of the present constituency of Donegal occupied tenements rated at £1 a-year or less. Finally, taking Connaught, he found there the most extreme cases—the most remarkable cases of Galway, Leitrim, and other counties. In Galway there were 4,165 voters now on the register; but the number of householders rated at £1 and less was upwards of 27,000; and in Leitrim, Mayo, and Roscommon, the figures were more or less of the same character. These, then, were the "capable citizens"—the majority of "capable citizens"—whom the right hon. Gentleman proposed by this Bill to enfranchise in Ireland. It was not sufficient to say that all these things had been heard of before, in relation to other Reform Bills. In the whole history of Reform agitation and legislation there had never been any figures in the least degree approaching to those which were furnished by the Return which had been made to the other House of Parliament. This was the state of things, then, with regard to the 64 county seats in Ireland; for the Committee would recollect that no less than 64 seats out of the entire representation of Ireland were county seats, and these 64 seats would be placed in the hands of persons who were in such a sociable condition as to occupy tenements which were rated in many cases at much less than £1 a-year. He did not wish to press these facts in any disagreeable or offensive spirit; but it was a matter of grave importance to remember, when considering the capability of a man as a citizen, and looking, as they all should do if it affected their own private transactions in their daily life, to see how such a man lived, and what were his surroundings, it was a matter of grave importance to remember that it was unfortunately the case that there was not a single county constituency in Ireland in which the existing electors would not be numerically overborne under this Bill by the occupiers of mud-cabins of two or more rooms each. He would appeal to the statistics without going through them; and he would say, fearless of contradiction, that there was not a county constituency in any part of Ireland out of all these which returned 64 Members to Parliament, in which, under this Bill, the occupiers of mud-cabins would not entirely overbear the present electors; and these facts were brought out, not by any analysis made by himself or by anyone else, but by the official Census. He would now ask the Committee to look at the third point in this capability for citizenship—the point which dealt with public order and loyalty—and on this branch of the subject he need only appeal to the Government, and ask what they had had to do during the time they had been in Office, in order to show that the vast masses of the Irish people had no sense of loyalty or love of order to which the Government could appeal? The Government could not appeal to them to vindicate the authority of the law or the sanctity of life and property. The authorities were altogether powerless to detect crime in many districts; and it was perfectly well known that in those districts the only person who was unsafe was the peace officer. The associate of murderers, the murderer himself, his co-conspirators, his family—they were all perfectly well known; but they were free from anything like interference; they were at liberty to walk about by night and by day without the smallest interference on the part of the rest of the inhabitants, who knew what crimes had been committed, and who were the criminals; and the only persons who were unsafe were—it might be—the family of the murdered man, and the peace officers who were endeavouring to detect the crime. What were Her Majesty's Government obliged to do to overcome this great and widespread conspiracy with which they had to deal? Previous Coercion Acts were faint, indeed, compared with the one which Her Majesty's present Advisers had had to pass, and under which they could remove trials on their own authority, try without juries, hold inquisitions to inquire into crime without any person being charged, and take all the necessary measures under which alone order had been restored, and safety given in some sense to life and property in Ireland. It was under such circumstances that such Acts of Parliament were obliged to be kept alive; and yet it was said that this was a time at which it was safe and just to extend Constitutional liberties. When the wisdom of such a course was questioned, the answer given was that the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended when Mr. Disraeli passed his diminutive Reform Bill as regards Ireland in 1867. It was, indeed, comparing great things with small to say that there was any relation between the two things. But the Committee had not been treated with any too great a development of the Government case in support of the inclusion of Ireland in this Franchise Bill. They had not been favoured that day with the presence of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War the Marquess of Hartington, nor with the presence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). If the noble Marquess and the right hon. Gentleman had been present, it might have been interesting to have quoted from their speeches, delivered within the last two or three years, and especially from those delivered by the Secretary of State for War, some most serious and solemn arguments with respect to the responsibility which would be incurred by any Government which proposed an extension of the franchise, or the adoption of the principle of local self-government in Ireland, until something like a loyal spirit was exhibited by great masses of the people, among whom at present it was unfortunately wanting. This measure had been supported, as previous measures of Reform had also been supported, by the allegation that it was necessary in order to do complete justice to Ireland; but, unless he was very much mistaken, Ireland in years past had had greater privileges in regard to the franchise than England. It was generally supposed that Ireland had always been behindhand in regard to the franchise; but he thought he was speaking the truth when he said that long before the £12 occupation franchise was given in England it was enjoyed in Ireland. So far from there having been any lagging behind in Ireland, the £12 franchise was given in that country many years ago; whereas in England it was only given in 1867 or 1868, and it was given expressly, if he recollected rightly, that the holdings were so divided and small in Ireland relatively to England that it was necessary to extend political power in the Irish counties to give them a reasonable representation. The present Bill was put forward as necessary to correct an injustice; but, as a matter of fact, Ireland, not only in regard to land and church, but also in regard to the franchise, had been treated by preceding Parliaments in a very beneficial and advantageous way. [Several Voices: No, no!] If the facts to which he had referred could be contradicted, no doubt the contradiction would come in proper form and on the best possible authority; but he was sure that no Member of the Government would contradict him when he declared that a £12 county franchise existed in Ireland long before it existed in this country. He thought it was necessary here to refer to a matter which had not hitherto been noticed in that debate. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in his opening speech on moving the introduction of the Bill, had said that the measure would add about 400,000 capable citizens to the franchise in Ireland.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Between 400,000 and 500,000.

Mr. LEWIS said, his belief was that that number would be far exceeded. The right hon. Gentleman did not, he believed, refer to one matter which was of great importance, and that was the application of the English rule of law as to what constituted a house. They knew that under the Registration Act, which was, unfortunately, passed in 1867, it had come to be held that a man who occupied one room—even an attic—in a house occupied a house; and it was only by the casual circumstance of the landlord living on the premises that the house character of that man's occupation was altered and destroyed, and became a lodging. No doubt, even that restriction would be taken off by hon. Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway opposite when their power was greater than it was at present; but, in the meanwhile, in the City of Dublin every small room in a house would be liable to be treated as a house if the landlord did not happen to live on the premises. He therefore maintained that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had very much under-estimated the extent of the addition to the representation which was likely to be made under this Bill. It remained to be considered what was likely to be the effect of the present Bill. It was perfectly clear that the small occupiers, the men living in little huts, would have the control of the Irish representation. What would be the effect upon the two classes into which, unfortunately, religiously—he would not say politically—Ireland was divided? And he was entitled to refer to this argument, because the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had distinctly stated in the House of Commons that so far from the Protestant or the loyal portion of the community being disfranchised as a result of this Bill, they were likely to obtain one-fourth of the representation. The right hon. Gentleman evidently thought it necessary to say this, in order to meet the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), that with the exception of two counties in the North of Ireland the Nationalists would make a clean sweep of the whole of the representation. He (Mr. Lewis) did not wish them, in their widespread sweeping, to omit either the county of Londonderry, represented by a Government official, or the City of Londonderry, which was misrepresented by him. He was quite willing to be an object of their destruction. Whatever they did in respect to himself would not disturb him. He was speaking now, as he was bound to speak, on behalf of his constituents, and on behalf of those who agreed with them, that this measure would, if carried, be a great national disaster. He asserted that the result of this Bill would not be that suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). He (Mr. Lewis) believed the effect of the Bill would be utter annihilation of the political power of the most orderly, the most loyal, the most educated, and the wealthy classes of Ireland; that, practically, one-fourth of the community, representing two-thirds of the property of the country and a vast majority of the educated classes, would be entirely swamped, and their electoral power destroyed, except as it might be represented by the two Members for the University of Dublin, and by one or two lucky and enterprizing gentlemen who might creep in for one constituency or another. How was it the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works seemed to think that he had proved his case—that the Protestants, who were one-fourth of the community of Ireland, and who were all to be found in the Province of Ulster, would be able to return one-fourth of the Irish Representatives? Unfortunately, the right hon. Gentleman was not acquainted with the figures, or else had not studied them sufficiently. There were only four counties in which the Protestants of all sorts exceeded the Roman Catholics, and in those four counties the Roman Catholics, with the aid of a few Liberals, returned nearly half the Members. What the state of affairs would be when they had an enfranchisement of the £1 householder he left hon. Gentlemen to judge. In point of fact, the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had, as he (Mr. Lewis) had already said, boasted that the result of the passing of this Bill would be to give the Nationalists—not the Liberals, not the Roman Catholics, but the Nationalists—a clean sweep of the representation from North to South with very few exceptions. What would be the consequence of such a state of things to Great Britain? It was not only a question what would become of the unfortunate Protestants of Ireland, or of their political influence and power, but it was a question what would become of this country? Was there anything more clear than this—that if this Bill passed, and if the hon. Gentlemen from Ireland who sat below the Gangway came back 80 or 90 strong, they would constitute the balancing, the intermediary power between the two great Parties of the State, and they would have the control of measures of State of the vastest importance connected, not only with the Empire, but with the separate interests of England and of Scotland? He should be told that if that should, unfortunately, happen to be the result of extending the franchise upon a just and equal principle, they must submit to it; but it was because he did not for one moment accede to the principle of the Bill as a just and equal principle that he opposed it. It was said the representation of Ireland was now scandalous. It had been scandalous for years. Over and over again it had been said in the House of Commons that, owing to the fact that the small boroughs returned so large a number of Members, the real feeling of the mass of the people was not properly represented in the House. If they wished to remedy the evil, the Government ought to have made a very different commencement. Knowing, as he did, the extreme difficulty, under any circumstances and all circumstances, of piloting a Redistribution Bill through the House, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister should have foreborne from placing himself in a position in which he would probably find himself at the mercy of 80 or 90 men, who would dictate to him or to a future House of Commons the very terms in which that Redistribution Bill should be passed. Upon the question of the representation of minorities in Ireland the House of Commons was certainly entitled to the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. Were the Protestants of Ireland to be told, were those who had unquestionably been the most loyal and orderly in their conduct, those who had been loyal adherents of the Crown and Government of England through evil report and good report, to be told that they were to be deprived of their fair share of representation? Surely in the case of Ireland, where there was the greatest necessity for redistribution, the country were entitled to know what were the views of Her Majesty's Government, and what were likely to be the views of the House of Commons upon the question of redistribution. It had been suggested, somewhat irregularly, what should be done with this Bill "elsewhere." All he could say was, that he did not believe that "elsewhere," if it was the place he understood it to be, would be worthy of support and maintenance, if it did not, in the face of all the circumstances and facts and figures relating to Ireland, raise its voice with three-fold force in opposition to the Bill until the three countries were placed in a position to understand what was the real intention of the Government with regard to the redistribution of political power, and especially with regard to the redistribution of that power in Ireland.

DR. LYONS said, he much regretted the line of action taken by the hon. Member who proposed the Amendment. In that House and elsewhere that hon. Gentleman had shown ability of a high order, and had discussed problems of great importance in a spirit worthy of all praise, and it was all the more to be regretted that he had not approached the discussion of the extension of the franchise to Ireland, with which country he was so closely connected, in a manner better calculated to win the sympathies of Irishmen in a momentous crisis like the present. He (Dr. Lyons) had given a great deal of consideration to the question of electoral reform, and he had been forced to the conclusion that it would have been simply impossible to exclude Ireland from any extension of the franchise which might have been decided upon by those who had the guidance of political affairs in the country. To have excluded Ireland from the benefits of the proposed extension of the franchise would have been one of the most unwise as well as one of the most dangerous steps which the Ministry could take. The amount of excitement and of well-founded agitation that would have followed the exclusion of Ireland would, he was persuaded, have been fruitful of great mischief and discontent which it would have taken many years to dissipate. He was quite aware that there were political dangers to individuals if this Bill passed; indeed, it had often been said that he himself stood in such political danger; but he believed all who took a just view of their duty to the country, and of what they owed to their constituents, and of what they owed to themselves, would be ready to say—"Let justice be done to the country, come what will." He believed that that was a policy which, in many instances, would be justified in a way perhaps not now anticipated. It was assumed, on the opposite side of the House, that the great mass of the people of Ireland were ruled by no law, and that their opinions were of the most violent and extreme character. It was also assumed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, though he believed on quite insufficient grounds, that the people who would be enfranchised by this Bill would necessarily adopt the extreme views which had prevailed in some Irish constituencies for a considerable time past. Much as he regretted those extreme views, there was no doubt in his mind that they could be traced to the political errors of the past, and that they were the natural outcome of great independence of character stung into political excitement that overbalanced reason, and too often confounded right with wrong in the too ardent contemplation of undoubted evils for which cooler heads sought wiser remedies. The extreme actions of certain individuals in Ireland could not be approved; but no one who profoundly studied the situation in Ireland would deny that those actions were strictly the outcome of the errors committed in the past, and for which no proper remedy was applied until the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister introduced certain measures in this and a former Parliament to meet the wants of the country. Those measures had not yet had time to produce their fullest material effects. He did not believe it was the opinion of the Irish Members who sat below the Gangway opposite that the new electors would necessarily adopt extreme views. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), in a remarkable speech which he delivered on the question, said it was supposed that the new franchise would be used as a battering-ram against a section of the community who had been in possession hitherto. That in itself showed that there was a considerable amount of doubt in the mind of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) as to what would be the operation of the new franchise. Furthermore, those who would be admitted to the franchise belonged to a class who hitherto had not shown themselves prone to indulge in violent agitation, and who had, in many significant ways, shown themselves to be influenced by views quite opposed to those of the extreme agrarian section. As a matter of fact, they had in recent years shown themselves very desirous of taking advantage of all the educational means afforded them; they had shown extraordinary zeal in seeking advancement, and in thousands of instances had succeeded in a most remarkable manner; and they had in very large numbers succeeded in procuring advancement in the upward walks of life. Many of the young men who went in for the Civil Service examinations belonged to the humbler classes in the country, and some of them had risen to very conspicuous positions. Many had been appointed to honourable and responsible positions in India and Australia and other parts of the Empire. He believed that this in itself furnished sufficient ground for supposing that the true interests of the country would not suffer by the admission of the humbler classes in Ireland to the franchise. But we had even more solid grounds to go upon, for if we considered the large numbers represented by the Irish Police and Constabulary, the Irish Militia, and the important contingent from Ireland to the ranks of the Regular Army, and if we reflected on the remarkable fidelity, steadiness to their Colours, and general conduct of these classes of men, we had at hand a very large and a very just measure of the temper, principles, and feelings of a very sensibly large proportion of the Irish people. This, he maintained, was a true index of the state of a large body of Irishmen. Probably not less than

250,000 individuals were concerned in the Educational, Civil, Constabulary, Militia, Army, and other contingents referred to, and it was not reasonable to suppose that the holders of the positions he referred to were in personal and violent opposition to the feelings of their immediate friends and relations. So that if a presumption were to be formed on the data actually available, it did not logically turn in the direction so wildly and baselessly assumed by those who asserted a general and violent hostility to the settled order of things now existing; while, at the same time, it could not be denied that there existed a deep-seated and widely-extended desire for moderate reforms. It was a matter for rejoicing that this Motion had been proposed, because it had caused hon. Gentlemen opposite to throw off the mask. They now saw, and they could judge with greater clearness if the Motion were pushed to a Division, whether the Conservative Party were as fully prepared as their opponents to deal with the question of the extension of the franchise. He very much doubted whether the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brodrick) would find himself supported by the Leaders of his Party upon this question, and he (Dr. Lyons) doubted if his action had their sanction and concurrence. The introduction of the Motion was of the greatest possible value to the people of Ireland, because it would serve as a test of the professions that Gentlemen opposite had made as to their readiness to deal with the question of the franchise as regarded Ireland. It was well political Parties in Ireland should know what value was to be attached to the professions which had been made by certain Members of the Conservative Party. If a Division be taken on the Amendment now before the Committee, it could no longer be said, however much it might be the intention of the Conservative Party to extend the franchise in England and Scotland, that it was their intention to extend the franchise in Ireland should the reins of Office fall into their hands. It was very significant that the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) was not in his place when an Amendment of this importance was to be discussed. The Front Opposition Bench had been remarkable for its careful silence on this subject; but he (Dr. Lyons) dared them to go to a Division. If they did, they would conclusively show to the people of Ireland what they were to expect from Conservatives should they be called upon to take Office.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was sure that even hon. Members sitting below the Gangway and representing Irish constituencies, and who, no doubt, were very anxious to make short work of this Amendment, would not find fault if he stated the grounds upon which he felt himself bound to support it He and those who agreed with him generally upon Irish politics believed that in the literal sense of the word their political existence was involved in this Bill should it be passed in its present form; and, therefore, he was confident the Committee would indulge him a few minutes. He did not think that the importance of the Amendment had been sufficiently recognized, because the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland addressed the Committee that afternoon was not only a very short speech, but, considering the subject, a very perfunctory speech. They must remember that what they were discussing was really nothing less than a new Reform Bill for Ireland. Up to the present time Ireland had been dealt with, by different Bills, separately from England and Scotland. There was a very great difference between the social conditions of England and Ireland; and therefore it was surprising that the subject should be dealt with in this off-hand manner. He listened with pleasure to the speech of the Chief Secretary; but of what was that speech composed? The right hon. Gentleman did not make the smallest examination of the present state of Ireland; and he did not take any notice at all of what he (Mr. Plunket) was sure the Committee had no idea of—the enormous change which would take place in the Irish constituencies if the Bill passed. The right hon. Gentleman contented himself by putting the whole case to the Committee in this way—"Only two courses are open to the Government; either not to introduce a Reform Bill at all for the Three Kingdoms until such time as everybody is agreed that Ireland is fit for a Reform Bill, or else to exclude Ireland from the Bill." Now, the

Amendment proposed that the English and Scotch constituencies should be dealt with by this Bill, and that the Irish case should be postponed. How did the right hon. Gentleman deal with that suggestion? He said that no power on earth would induce a Liberal Ministry to exclude Ireland from the provisions of a Reform Bill; and he went on to say that, in his own opinion, it would be perfect madness to exclude Ireland from the benefits of the Bill, and to deal with that country separately. Such an argument had no force except in so far as it showed and satisfied the Committee that there was, and had been for a considerable time, a practical consensus of opinion on the subject in the Liberal Party itself. Had there been such consensus of opinion? The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) told them, that day, it would be madness to leave Ireland out of the Bill; but it was a little more than a year ago that the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) said it would be madness to include Ireland in the Bill. The noble Marquess had been conspicuously absent during the debates on the Irish part of the Bill; but, speaking to his constituents some time ago, he said that—

> "In his opinion, it would be madness to extend local self-government to Ireland whilst the people were not prepared to give the assurance that they would not use it for the purpose of dismembering the Empire; and whilst he was quite in favour of this present Parliament dealing with the question of local government and the franchise for England and Scotland, in his opinion it would be most unwise to deal with Ireland also."

Therefore, he said that the whole argument of the Chief Secretary fell to the ground, and with it the idea that there had been any solid and long continued policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government of including Ireland in a measure for the extension of the franchise. The rest of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman was worthy of compassion. The right hon. Gentleman said it was the right of the Irish householder to vote as much as it was the right of the English householder. Now, he must say that, to his mind, an extraordinary amount of confusion prevailed on this point in all the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who had supported the Bill. The English householder did not claim to vote as of right. The English householder was given the vote in 1867, because it was considered at that time that, speaking generally, such qualification was a test of the fitness of the class to which he belonged to exercise the franchise—it was not considered as constituting a right. He would not detain the Committee by quoting authority on the subject; but if he needed authority, he would remind the House that, in 1867, the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) took the opportunity to say that, in his opinion, at that time the masses of the English people had not advanced in their social position to that point—and it might be some time before they did so—at which it would be advisable to take household suffrage as the guide and basis for the franchise. He said, therefore, that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman was a total misrepresentation of the history of the enfranchisement of the people of this country. But if household suffrage was to be the guide, he asked whether it was an accurate statement to say that by this Bill there would be established uniformity of franchise in the Three Kingdoms? He would like to remind the Committee of a Bill introduced into that House in 1878 by the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon), to deal with the Irish Borough Franchise. On the introduction of the measure the hon. and learned Member said—

> "The Bill proposes to entitle all persons occupying houses rated at £1 and upwards to the franchise, which really brought it to the point at which the franchise ceased in England; because, although the franchise was 26*s.* in England, the valuation of Ireland was one-third of the rental, and, consequently, the two franchises would practically be the same."—(3 *Hansard*, [239] 1961.)

He did not know whether hon. Members had studied the Returns presented in "another place," and which had been placed in the hands of Members of that House; but, if not, he implored them to do so before they committed themselves to this extension of the measure to Ireland. He would not go into the Return at length, but only to the extent necessary to illustrate the position. It contained four columns, one of which gave the number of inhabited houses in all the Irish counties which were rated at £12 and upwards; another, the number rated about £4 and under £12; another, the number rated about £1 and not exceeding £4; and the last, the number rated at £1 and under. There was nothing at all in England corresponding to the state of things disclosed in the Return; and the Committee would probably be astonished when he told them that there were in the Irish counties 435,179 inhabited houses rated at £1 and under, as against the total number of all the other inhabited houses—namely, 324,783. That was to say, the houses for which there was no correlative in the English system actually exceeded in number the whole of the rest. Now, he was sure the Committee could not have had any idea of this fact. However, it was not all that had to be considered. Unfortunately, giving his countrymen every possible credit for the ability and quickness of intellect which he admitted them to have—no matter how able and quick they might be, they were unfit for the franchise unless they were educated. Now, what stage had education reached in Ireland? The calculation had been made, which he believed to be sound, that those whom the Bill would enfranchise would be taken from a class of whom more than 40 per cent could not read or write; and he asked the Committee to consider the effect of extending the franchise in that wholesale manner. He was not at all contending that a certain number of Representatives of this class should not be introduced into that House; but he said the Bill, as it stood, would effect the disfranchisement of the better educated class who were able to form sounder political opinions and return proper Members to Parliament. ["No, no!"] It was disfranchisement to admit one class of people who outnumbered all the rest put together. When the Government talked of assimilating the franchise in Ireland to that in England, he said they were using meaningless language; and when they spoke of an abstract right to vote, they were sacrificing every consideration to one which he had shown in the case of Ireland ought to have no force at all. No one had yet risen in the House to explain the reason for this extension, except on some abstract principle; and no Minister had referred to, or attempted to grapple with, the figures he had quoted. The test they applied to England in regard to the franchise being extended with safety was not a true test at all in Ireland. The common-sense view of the matter which any man of intelligence would take was that which had been expressed by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in a speech to which he had already alluded, and in which the noble Marquess declared that it would be madness to give increased power to those who were disaffected towards the unity of the Empire. Those Irishmen who were opposed to the maintenance of the British connection must be expected to use the increased powers proposed to be given to them for the attainment of an object they might sincerely and honestly desire; but that object was one which Englishmen of all Parties declared they would resist to the utmost, because it involved the dismemberment of the Empire. They were told, indeed, that after all the Separatist movement was not so dangerous as some people thought, including, he supposed, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. It was said that some of the advocates of Home Rule desired only a local Legislature for distinctly Irish affairs, and did not wish to see that country entirely separated from England. The hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw) had stated that he was one of those who held that view; and there was little probability of his being returned again to the House, as they all knew, for the very reason that he had expressed that opinion. But the Prime Minister threw upon the Irish Members sitting on the other side of the House the onus of proving that they did not demand entire separation. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his followers went with the Prime Minister to this extent—they said that if Ireland were not included in the Bill they would make it a further argument for carrying on their agitation; but they did not say that if it were included they would cease from that agitation. The Government told the Irish Home Ruler that they would widen the basis of representation; and he replied to them that he was very much obliged, but that he accepted the franchise not with the idea of strengthening the Union between the two countries, but, on the contrary, of breaking it up. Then the Prime Minister had said that the Home Rule agitation need not necessarily be a formidable business, although it might be troublesome; in fact, he had minimized the whole scope of the movement. But they had been told by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) that the Parliament desired for Ireland was to be no pale shadow of a Parliament, responsible and subservient to others, but a Parliament in which the great modern Democracy of Ireland would be able to work out its destiny. By this measure they were sweeping away the harmless class alluded to by the Prime Minister, and they were giving an increased power into the hands of those who wished for the separation of the two countries. A noble Lord (Lord Carlingford) had told them that no one in Ireland cared about Home Rule, and that what they wanted was virtually separation. Another Member of the Cabinet—the Earl of Derby—in an able article in *The Nineteenth Century*, of October, 1881, wrote as follows:—

> "It is, as far as I know, peculiar to the Home Rule movement that while in effect and reality one for the subversion of the existing Constitution—while, if successful, it must necessarily lead to a virtual, if not formal, separation of the two Islands—yet that in pursuance of its ostensible object there is nothing illegal or seditious. Yet few things can be more certain than this—that if once a Representative Assembly meets in Dublin calling itself a Parliament, no restriction or limitation of its powers, however stringently imposed as a condition, will long endure. It will be declared by universal acclamation to be the only authority competent to make laws for Ireland. And inasmuch as under our Parliamentary system the governing power practically resides in the House of Commons, the creation of a separate House of Commons for Ireland implies a separate Executive, representing different ideas and a different policy. What is this but separation? We are, then, in this dilemma—that we sincerely desire to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas; but that the one dominant idea which has taken possession of the Irish mind is that we should not govern Ireland at all. If we resist we belie our loudest professions: if we give way we break up the Empire. If we try to compromise by granting a half independence —freedom of local but not of Imperial action —can we as reasonable men doubt that the power we have conceded will be used as a means of extorting larger power, that the one hand which we release will be employed to liberate the other?"

In his humble judgment that was reasoning intelligently; the noble Lord advanced arguments, the potency of which it was impossible to evade, and he concluded his article by declaring his intention of pursuing the subject at another time. But, unfortunately, he had not yet done so. The noble Lord had, with his usual caution—

"Left half told
"The story of Cambuscan bold;"

and he (Mr. Plunket) looked forward with a great deal of interest to the time when he should come to explain in "another place," and to reconcile the views he had thus put forward with the passing of a measure which would go so far to strengthen the hands of the disloyal party in Ireland, and have the instant effect of giving them an overwhelming and irresistible power in that House. He had no doubt that at first both Parties in Parliament, as they had solemnly pledged themselves to do, would resist their overtures; but he would like to know how long that was likely to continue in the heated contest of political Parties and in the keen conflicts of political ambition? They were now, for the first time in English history, to have a strong Party amongst them which frankly said to them—"We are bound by influences which you cannot realize; we are not amenable to the public opinion of England; we come here with the avowed purpose of making Parliamentary Government impossible until you give us what we ask—namely, separation from the Imperial Power." He must thank the Committee for the attention with which they had listened to him. He had said nothing at all about the rights and wrongs of the loyal minority in Ireland; he would not condescend to make an appeal for them in their struggle. He had endeavoured all through to reason this case with the House in their own interests; he knew that it was not so long since the Leaders of the Party opposite could not bring themselves to consent to such a proposal as this? Why did they do so now? Was it not that, however unconsciously perhaps, they had yielded to the tactical necessities of the situation? He said that, at all events, they were entitled to hear from those Leaders the grounds upon which they had changed their opinions upon a question of such overwhelming importance. He had spoken strongly, but not more strongly than the subject demanded; because his belief was that not only were they going to do an injustice to Ireland, but to this country a great wrong and a great injury. If his fears should be fulfilled, if his prophecies should be realized, if this measure which they were now asked to pass should lead up to and precipitate the establishment of a separate Irish Nationality, the responsibility of those who had forced it through, against, as he believed, the common sense of the country, would, indeed, be serious. The historian of the future, gazing upon the broken fragments—the "ruined pile" of this mighty Empire, who—

> "Would its former pride recall,
> And ponder how it passed away,"

would record that in days gone by that Empire was reared not more by the courage and endurance of its soldiers and sailors in many ages and in every clime, than by the sagacity and firmness, the common sense and patriotism, of its Representatives there in their ancient Parliaments. Let him not have also to tell that the Union of these Three Kingdoms, on which rested all its honour and all its power—an Union which could never be broken by the force of domestic traitor or of foreign foe—yielded at last under the pressure of the political ambitions and the Party exigencies of British statesmen.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I believe it is the desire of the House that I should rise in reply to the right hon. and learned Gentleman on this occasion; but if I do rise, it is more out of respect for him than because I think that the case requires it. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has closed his speech with a most fervent appeal to us to respect the greatness of the Empire, and with prophecies as to what the future historian may have to say upon that subject. But what weighs upon my mind is this—that when the future historian speaks of the greatness of this Empire, and traces the manner in which it has grown through successive generations, he will say that in that history there was one chapter of disgrace, and that that was the treatment of Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says he has been endeavouring to work upon us by an appeal to our own interests, and that he has not argued the question with reference to the interests of the loyal minority in Ireland. For myself, I will never consent to divide the people of Ireland into a loyal minority and a disloyal majority; but if I am to adopt the right hon. and learned Gentleman's phrase, I would say that no laws can be passed in this House under Irish influence adverse to the loyal minority in Ireland, except by the consent of the Representatives of England and Scotland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, whatever be his want of faith in the future of his country, whatever be his faculty of drawing dismal pictures to alarm us in the course upon which we enter, must surely see that there is some security in the composition of this House for the interests of the loyal minority in Ireland. He believes, apparently, that if there could be only a sufficient proportion of Irish Members following in the train of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), the 500 to 600 Members for England, Scotland, and Wales would be so intimidated by the action of these Irish Members, that they would cast aside all considerations of justice in legislation for Ireland. I differ entirely—I differ *toto coelo*, and I do not believe that he has shown that there is any danger whatever from legislation that is to pass through this House to the interests of any portion of the Irish people. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman indulges in prophecies which he has been able to raise to as high a point of eloquence, perhaps, as any of his Predecessors; but it is not the first time that we have heard them. From the first moment when concession and conciliation began—or when they were first attempted—all these predictions were shadowed forth. Is it a fact that the position of Great Britain at this moment is weaker in the face of Ireland than it was before the period of concession and conciliation began? ["Yes!"] The right hon. and learned Gentleman says "Yes!" It is, doubtless, his opinion. I entirely deny it. I say that England, 50 years ago, stood in the face of the civilized world as a culprit with regard to Ireland; I say that the civilized world has entirely changed its judgment; and whether or not opinion may be that we have in all parts been able to settle a satisfactory system, civilized mankind admits and knows that for a course of years there was an honest and an energetic attempt to move in this direction, and that conviction on the part of the civilized world is the only element that can be wanted in the strength of this country with regard to its relation with Ireland. I must say that I regard such predictions as the right hon. and learned Gentleman has indulged in as most humiliating to the people of this country; and I hope that the people of England, and the people of Scotland, have more self-respect, and have more knowledge of their own position and their strength, than for a moment to be disturbed by the revival of prophecies which for 50 years have never been wanting, when it was required or proposed to do some act of what the majority of this House believed to be justice to Ireland. There is, in our opinion, but one mode of making England weak in the face of Ireland—that is by applying to her principles of inequality and principles of injustice. I am not a flatterer of Gentlemen in that quarter of the House (pointing to the Home Rule Members). [*Laughter.*] When have I flattered them? There (pointing to Mr. Plunket) is the flatterer of those Gentlemen. The man who flatters them is the man who says that in a House of 550 Members for Great Britain, 70 or 80 for Ireland are going to give them the law. I have never held that language; I have told them just the reverse. I know they have considerable power; I hope they will use it well. I cannot say that I am entirely satisfied, or entirely convinced upon that subject. I have striven, and will strive again, to assert in their face the limits of that power; and I say, as long as we endeavour to do you justice, you cannot, if you were ever so disposed, touch, or mar, or prejudice, in any respect, the interests of this country. It is the scale of justice that will determine the issue of the conflict, if conflict there is to be; and there is nothing we can do, except the imprudence of placing in your hands evidence which will show that we are not acting on principles of justice towards you, that can render you for a moment formidable in our eyes, should the day unfortunately arise when you endeavour to lay hands on this great structure of the British Empire, which is, in truth, a noble inheritance received from our forefathers, which we have endeavoured to purge from some of the stains which, undoubtedly, history will record as having attached to it in those generations to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman seems to look back as a period of safety and glory. That is not our view. The right hon. and learned Gentleman is in a state of great alarm, because there are a great number of people who are living in £1 houses. Who are these persons? He declines to prove their unfitness for the franchise. He says they are not fit according to the test applied in England. There is no test in England, so far as I am aware, nor in Scotland. The householder votes in England as I hope he will in Ireland. The householder in Ireland is poorer than the householder in England; but is that a reason for refusing him the franchise? On the contrary, it is a reason why he wants it more. I will not enter into the fears into which the right hon. and learned Gentleman endeavours to draw us. I cast them aside. I will not say they are proofs of political cowardice — for I should be sorry to make use of hard words—but I say they are fears unworthy of a man of the stamp and scope of mind of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; and they are fears which I am perfectly certain will not avail to deter the House of Commons of the United Kingdom from granting to Ireland boons which it believes to be just, which it considers to be required, and in the justice and equity of which it knows both the safety and glory of the Empire are to come.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I can very well understand that hon. Gentlemen are anxious to divide after the passionate appeal of the Prime Minister; but I would venture to put before them one consideration. We are engaged in discussing a Bill of the gravest and most momentous character. Whatever may be said with regard to there being any change of opinion as to this matter, nobody, I think, will deny that this is a matter that demands the very careful and the constant attention of the House, and that it is not a matter to be decided by speeches of the character of that which the Prime Minister has just made. I wish hon. Gentlemen just to consider what it is they are about to do. You are now about to increase enormously the electorate of the whole United Kingdom. You are going to introduce into the constituencies an enormous number of persons who have had no political training—that is to say, you are going to largely extend the limits of our legislative system; and you will have to submit to a new House, composed largely of men without experience, one of the most difficult problems of legislation—namely, redistribution of seats, which means redistribution of political power. Well, we have before us a scheme, but it is an incomplete scheme; and we are not able to see how far it may be possible to introduce any changes without producing serious results. We naturally try the strength of a chain by its weakest link, and in this case the weakest link is undoubtedly the representation of Ireland, both in respect of the enormous number of new persons who will be brought on to the electorate by this Bill, and of the character of the questions which will immediately have to be submitted to us. Do not let us think that we are dealing with a question which can be made a battle ground year after year. You will have a new Parliament highly excited on the questions which will have to come before them, and demanding their immediate settlement, and this may have most serious consequences. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary told us there were two courses open to us—we might make England and Scotland wait until Ireland was ready, which he said would be unreasonable; or we might make one law for England and Scotland, and another for Ireland. But I beg to point out that there is a third course, and that is that the Government should make their scheme complete. If we were able to see what are the proportions in which they intend to distribute political power, and what are the figures, then it might be that we should arrive at some practical conclusion. At the present moment the right hon. Gentleman is dealing inadequately with the subject, when he suggests only two possible courses. Then there was a remark made by the Prime Minister which is deserving of observation. The Prime Minister said we need not fear the results of this new increase in the Irish electorate; for although there may be a tendency on the part of the electorate to make use of their newly acquired power to break the Union.—[Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] Well, supposing that such a thing were possible, he says we shall have England and Scotland to rely upon; but I say that is not what we ought to rely upon. You will be taking a great step towards the moral breaking up of the Union of the Empire if you set England and Scotland against Ireland. What we want is the representation of what is known as the Loyalist Irish feeling from Ireland itself. We do not want to have a solid vote in a Separatist sense in Ireland overborne by a solid vote in England and Scotland. We want to see what is the feeling of the different classes in Ireland, just as we see what it is in other parts of the Kingdom. When we obtain that information, and are able to form a proper judgment on such a matter as that, then we can deal more safely with this great question. I quite see the difficulty which the Chief Secretary has pointed out of having different legislation for different parts of the Kingdom, and I do not think you can make a satisfactory settlement by that means; but until the Government make their scheme complete, and enable us to see how it is to work, it is our duty to resist its application everywhere, and especially to the weakest point of our system—namely, the representation of Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Tottenham.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he could not assent to the Motion.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought the proposition was most reasonable. This subject had been brought before the Committee by his hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). That hon. Gentleman was replied to by the Chief Secretary, and he was followed by his hon. Friend the Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), and the later phases of the debate were too fresh in the minds of the Committee for any reference to them to be necessary; and he wished to put it to the Prime Minister that this was a subject in which very great interest was felt, and that there was a very strong desire that all reasonable facilities should be given for carrying on the discussion. He could not see on what ground the right hon. Gentleman based the extraordinary decision at which he had arrived; and the right hon. Gentleman had not vouchsafed a solitary reason why the Committee should be debarred from the full discussion of this subject. He entertained opinions upon the subject which were not precisely those which had been so eloquently urged by his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket); but he arrived at the same conclusion; and he ventured to ask the Prime Minister not to attempt to stop the mouths of those who had a perfect right to speak before being called upon to vote in a matter of this kind. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must admit that the request he made was perfectly reasonable, and that the Committee would be justified in demanding that facilities should be given for an adequate discussion.

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

QUESTION.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—TELEGRAM.

Sir **WILFRID LAWSON**: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that a telegram has been received containing important news as to the safety of General Gordon?

Lord **EDMOND FITZMAURICE**: This telegram from Mr. Egerton has been received this afternoon from Assonan—

> "May 16.—A party of refugees arrived yesterday at Assouan from Berber and Korosko, who say that the road between these places was quiet. They had no trouble. They heard that Gordon had made successful sorties, and was well."

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — THE CROSSMAGLEN PRISONERS—MICHAEL WATTERS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. **LYNCH**, in rising to call attention to the case of Michael Watters, and the conviction of the Crossmaglen prisoners; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the facts connected with the conviction of the Crossmaglen prisoners and the subsequent release of Bernard Smith,"

said, he hoped he would be accorded that indulgence by the House which was usually accorded to those who addressed it for the first time. His remarks upon the subject would be very brief, as upon this occasion it would be quite unnecessary for him to enter into the details of the case of these Crossmaglen prisoners or their treatment, as his hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had very humanely taken up the case of these unfortunate men; and he was, therefore, better qualified to deal with it, and to lay the full details before the House. He should, therefore, leave the matter in his hands. In adopting that course, however, he would, he hoped, be permitted to urge upon the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland the necessity for allowing this inquiry which they sought to be made. By doing so the people of Ireland would acquire more confidence in the administration of the law in that country, and it would tend to remove a very painful impression which prevailed amongst a large number of people concerning this case.

Mr. **HEALY**, in seconding the Motion, said, the case was one to which he had drawn attention now for the third time. The Crossmaglen prisoners and the case of Michael Watters he had now placed before the House on three different occasions; and he trusted that the statement which he should make should establish the necessity which existed for an inquiry into the case of the prisoners whom they believed to be innocent men. About two years ago, some 12 young farmers were arrested in a district in the counties of Armagh and Monaghan, which was known as Crossmaglen. This district was at the time in a state of intense quietude, and no outrages of any kind, except the sending of a few threatening letters, which they could prove to have been written by the informer Duffy, were heard of in the district. A young man, aged, he believed, 17 years, named Michael Watters, was arrested under the Coercion Act, and with him two or three other persons of the same class in life, and they were kept in gaol from January, 1882, until the expiration of the Coercion Act. Then they were, however, only discharged at the door of Kilmainham to be re-arrested upon the main charge of conspiracy to murder. After they had been in gaol on this charge for a short time, another batch of men were arrested, and a magisterial inquiry was held in the town of Armagh. At this magisterial inquiry the informer, Patrick Duffy, came forward, and made several allegations with regard to a number of these men. Constable Gartland swore various corroborations with regard to the statements of the man Duffy, with regard to Patrick Gahagan and others of the prisoners. In support of this, the Crown called several gentlemen from the neighbourhood, who proved that they had received threatening letters. One of the number, however, swore that, so far as some of the men in the dock were concerned, he knew nothing whatever to their detriment, but everything to the detriment of the informer Duffy. It was a remarkable fact that all these men, when the case was sent before a Belfast jury, were called, except the man who had discredited the informer, and spoken in favour of the prisoners, to give evidence. The men were returned for trial at the Summer Assizes, before Judge Harrison, than whom a more impartial Judge did not possess the confidence of the Irish people. But the Crown put forward a statement to the effect that an important witness was absent, and claimed an adjournment from the Summer Assizes. Everyone knew what that meant, and the prisoners had to remain in from July to December and January. Well, this important witness, a man named Edmund O'Hanlon, was sworn by the Crown to be absent, although it could be proved that he was going about his business in his locality all the time that the Crown were making the statement, and before the Assizes for five months. He had walked the day before the Assizes 10 miles as a witness on behalf of the prisoners. The venue of the cases was changed to Belfast from Armagh, and, instead of being tried before Mr. Justice Harrison, they were heard before the notorious Mr. Justice Lawson, against whom he would not say a word, but leave his character to the appreciation of the public. In the meantime the Crown arrested Edmund O'Hanlon, whom they said was a very important witness. He had made various affidavits swearing the guilt of the prisoner. He, however, swore that this was done while he was under the influence of drink, and declared that all the prisoners were as innocent as the child unborn. Accordingly the Crown put him into the dock with the other prisoners, and he was at the present moment in Mountjoy Gaol. After detailing at length the proceedings at the trial, the hon. Member commented very strongly upon the conduct of the police officer who had conducted the case, and also as to the *modus operandi* of the Crown. Two books were produced on the trial, the Crossmaglen book and the Mullabawn book. Now, contrary to all decent practice in England, the men were never shown the Crossmaglen book until a few minutes before the informer was to be examined by the counsel for the prosecution. Why was it not produced at the magisterial inquiry? Because it was said that it was contrary to the public interests; and yet, when it was produced at the trial, it was handed over to the reporters of the chief Gladstonian organ in the North, *The Northern Whig*, and published in that paper. Now, what was the evidence against these prisoners? The first fact in the case that Duffy swore was that Peter Finegan instigated him to shoot Mr. Brooke on the 24th of July, 1880. Finegan cried out that he was in Glasgow that day—an unfortunate statement for poor Finegan, for the Crown mended their hand, and at the Assizes Duffy swore that there was a second attempt on Mr. Brooke's life, at Finegan's instigation, on the 15th of August. Now, that was a remarkable holiday in Ireland. He had several affidavits to prove that Finegan left Glasgow that very night. The most remarkable circumstance about this particular part of the case was that Sub-Constable Dempsey corroborated the informer on both occasions. Now, the second tangible proof in the case related to Denis Nugent. Now, he esteemed it an honour that he shook the hand of that convict in Mountjoy Prison. He believed that Nugent was suffering there as an innocent man. He was a remarkable man. He was a classical scholar, and spoke French, and was a man of superior education; and if the Crown inquired at Mountjoy they would find that from the Governor down to the warders they believed that not only Nugent, but all those 12 men were innocent. Duffy swore that Nugent collected money for burning M'Cullagh's mill, and gave John Donnelly £7 for doing it. But the fact was that Donnelly was in America for months and months before this time, and the Orange Grand Jury of Armagh rejected the presentment for the malicious burning of the mill; and the chief witness against the application was the great Gartland, the policeman, who was at the bottom of the whole affair. Now, wherever did that Crossmaglen book come from? Gartland swore that he got a note saying where he would find the book. At the Assizes the Crown was asked to produce the note. "Oh, here it is," said Mr. Murphy—now Judge Murphy—and then he fumbled for it, but he could not get it; and afterwards a Sub-Inspector was put up to prove that he lost the note out of an iron safe, of which he had the key. Really this was taking matters too far. The Crossmaglen book set out with declaring that Duffy was expelled from the Patriotic Society, and yet he was represented as being present at all the subsequent meetings of the Society from which he was expelled. Now, the next case was the case of Peter Develin. Peter Develin, on one occasion, threw Duffy out of a wake, neck and crop, as a bad character, and just after that night Develin's name appeared in the book. Duffy swore in his informations that he attended a meeting of the Patriotic Brotherhood on the 21st of June, 1881, and that it was held at Cox's Mill. The Crossmaglen book, which was supposed to corroborate Duffy, recorded that the meeting was held at Lara, which was 12 miles from Cox's Mill. To prove the statements he had made, and to disprove the Crown case, he was prepared, if the Government would give him a Select Committee, to bring forward 200 witnesses. He might be asked why these 200 witnesses were not produced for the defence at the trial? The reason was well known to the Crown. The Crown selected the venue at Belfast; they gave the prisoners no knowledge whatever of the statements that would be made against them, and before the prisoners could communicate with their friends in Crossmaglen, they had been convicted and been hurried into convicts' jackets. On the last day of the trial scores of men left Crossmaglen and hurried to Belfast to disprove the statements made on the part of the Crown; but the trials had concluded. The second witness examined for the Crown was Constable Gartland, and he was the heavy villian of the piece. Nugent, one of the convicted men, had threatened to prosecute that constable at the succeeding Petty Sessions for obtaining money under false pretences from his solicitor. Nugent was thereupon arrested under the Coercion Act. He wrote to his friends that on his release he would proceed with the prosecution of Gartland; but he never was released, for Gartland had him included in the conspiracy to murder. Therefore, these two men were at enmity. He had affidavits from three men stating that Gartland offered them large sums as rewards if they would swear against Nugent and Geoghan and other prisoners. The right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), when Chief Secretary, had empowered by a Circular, which *The Freeman's Journal* exposed, every head constable of police to offer money rewards to any persons he pleased for the discovery of crime. These three men refused, and then Gartland himself went upon the witness-table at the Assizes to corroborate the informer, although he had stated at the magisterial investigation that he knew nothing against some of these men. He swore that on the 5th of March, 1881, the American flag was suspended from a public-house in Crossmaglen by Patrick Burns, an American citizen. He had affidavits to show that Patrick Burns had left for America before March 5, 1881. He had affidavits to prove that fact from persons in Providence, Massachusetts; also from the owners of the steamship in which he sailed, and also from persons residing in Liverpool. It was true that the American flag was hung from the public-house alluded to; but it was not on March 5, 1881, but on the first Friday in November, 1880, and it was displayed by an American in honour of the election of General Garfield to the Presidency of the American Republic. Constable Gartland had an entry in his diary that on March 5, 1881, President Garfield was elected. This entry clearly showed the diary was a concoction, for everyone knew that the election for the American Presidency was always held in the month of November. The Irish people were expected to reverence law and order, and to believe policemen; but how was this possible so long as transactions of the kind he had detailed were connived at and encouraged by the authorities? It was an unfortunate fact that the only other corroborative witness was a man named Owen Corrigan, a brother of a policeman concerned in this case, and one who was shown to have made strenuous efforts to have large rewards offered to get evidence against the prisoners. He would not touch upon the Crossmaglen book. He had shown that this book, contrary to all the principles of decency and fair play, if not of law, was denied to the prisoners, and only handed in at the trial. It contained the names of men absent from the district at the dates written in connection with their names. One had gone to America, another to Glasgow, and others to England for the harvest. An expert in handwriting was brought from London, who swore that he had been engaged on the Tichborne trial; but it turned out that in that case he was only called to prove some mere matters of detail, having no more to do with handwriting than with this witness proving that Orton was at Wagga Wagga. The witness stated that the Crossmaglen book was in the same handwriting as a certain copybook produced at the trial. That might be. The copybook was sworn to be in the handwriting of Watters. But by whom? By Duffy, who said that he had got Watters to write the book in his forge. Fancy the harmonious blacksmith, Duffy, in his forge getting his fellow-conspirator to fill a copybook with pothooks and hangers. The book contained two long speeches; and he asked the Home Secretary whether it was likely that at a meeting of raw-heads-and-bloody-bones a young rustic of 17, who knew nothing of shorthand, would have taken down long speeches about the freedom of Ireland, and the necessity of crushing landlordism that might have come out of a copy of *The Irish World?* Mr. Inglis, the wonderful expert, swore that this was in the handwriting of Michael Watters, and that his handwriting was disguised.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. HEALY thanked the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) for having given him a short period of repose. It was a remarkable fact that, though the handwriting was disguised, Michael Watters should have put his name at the foot of every page. He now came to another portion of the pile of manuscripts. The Mullabawn book was declared to have been got up by Edward O'Hanlon, now in penal servitude; and O'Hanlon stated, in the affidavit prepared for the purpose of his defence, that he wrote the book at the suggestion of Duffy, and that they hid it in the thatch with an old pistol, a revolver, and some blasting powder. There was another remarkable feature of this case. Duffy was proved to have been at deadly enmity with Bernard Smith. Smith was convicted with the other man, but had not been in prison for more than a month when he was released by the Lord Lieutenant. That was a damning fact in connection with the whole case. Smith also said it was most improbable that O'Hanlon and himself should be members of the same Society, considering the enmity that had existed between them during the last five years. It was also shown in Smith's statement that the prisoners were tried in two separate batches. He was in the second batch, and he could plead when the first batch was found guilty, and the solicitor's clerk, Mr. Mulholland, came to him in the prison, and said that he would get out in 12 months if he would plead guilty; but he refused. They were afterwards called into the Governor's office, and the clerk repeated to them collectively what he before said to them individually; but they again refused to plead guilty. Again, as they were being marched to the Court, on Easter Monday, the clerk tried to induce them to plead guilty; but they refused to do so. He had occupied a long time in stating the circumstances of this case; but he did not think that, considering its magnitude, the House would grudge the time. The Crown had released one of the men, thereby admitting his innocence, and all the others who had been convicted on the same story were still suffering penal servitude. He would ask the Government respectfully to hold out some hope that the case of these prisoners would again be investigated. He could produce 200 witnesses who would give evidence in their favour. He had a huge file of affidavits. It had cost him days and nights to go into the case. He never saw one of the men till he visited them in prison. He never knew anything of the case till he read of it in the newspapers. His interest in it was of the slightest description beyond the interest which any Member of that House who had a duty to these innocent men should have in it. He had no concern in the matter one way or another; and if the men were guilty, he should have said they richly deserved their fate. But, being innocent, he appealed to the House on their behalf. Nobody in that House had shown more opposition to the Home Secretary than he; but in all the right hon. and learned Gentleman's dealings with English criminals, and even Irish-English criminals, throughout the whole range of his Department, he noticed as much tenderness of heart as the limits of justice would allow, and he could not but contrast the conduct of this English Gentleman, dealing with an English Department, with that of an English Gentleman dealing with any Irish Department. It appeared that when an English official went over to Ireland his feelings and nature changed. Just as a certain kind of wood when put into water became petrified, so when an English official went to Ireland his heart was turned into stone. He did not know what there was in the Castle—whether it was the associations or not—which changed his mind and soul; but here was the case of this boy Watters, who was declared by the Governor of the gaol to be dying last June, and whom he also declared in that House to be dying, and who died in October. Yet, after his statement in that House, the Government not only refused to release him, but absolutely refused to surrender his corpse. The release of Bernard Smith on the plea that he was suffering from ill-health looked very strange by the side of Michael Watters' confinement. The case was one either against the whole of them or against none of them. There were the same facts, the same oaths, the same policemen in the case of the whole dozen, and the same juries convicted them. If one was innocent, they were all innocent. He respectfully implored the Government on behalf of those men. If they themselves would go into the prisons and see how these convicts were engaged; if they would try to put themselves in their position, knowing that there was some chance of their innocence, and remembering that their wives and families were in impecunious circumstances, at least they would have some sympathy for them. There was, at least, some doubt of mistake; and what a horrible burden it was to pass year after year of their convict life with the sting in their souls that they had been falsely accused, and were suffering because of the oaths of ill-minded men and blood-money and bribery. Most of them had some sympathy with the causes that drove men into crime; but they had no sympathy whatever for the crimes that were committed. These men were driven often into crime by the state of the laws, and yet they were pursued as if that had not been the case. He was speaking of the general system of trials in Ireland. He solemnly believed that any Irishman sitting in Dublin Castle governing the country—if he was an Irishman sincerely attached to England—would endeavour to let bygones be bygones—let the past lie, in order that the system of retaliation might not be carried out in the future. They might convict Irish criminals—they might break up Irish conspiracies; but as sure as the story of the sufferings of those men went about among the population, they were heaping up a fresh reservoir of hatred—they were heaping up a fresh mountain of conspiracy. They actually fed these conspiracies, and gave fresh fuel to the flame, for every Irishman who was believed to be wrongfully convicted on false and perjured evidence. He implored the House, if they wanted to stem this tide of hatred, to show that if a mistake had been committed they were willing to rectify it. He believed that if they showed that the law was intended not merely as an instrument of punishment, but as an instrument of justice, they would do more for the peace of the country than a dozen prosecutions successfully conducted to the bitter end, such as that of the Crossmaglen conspiracy.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the facts connected with the conviction of the Crossmaglen prisoners and the subsequent release of Bernard Smith,"—(*Mr. Lynch*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that anyone must sympathize with some of the statements made by the hon. Member for Monaghan—for instance, the sufferings of convicts who were undergoing the sentence of the law. But the demands of the law were a matter of higher consideration than all this; and if the observations of the hon. Member were pursued to their logical consequences, he need not tell the hon. Member that they would strike at the root of the administration of all justice. Now, dealing with the Motion before the House, he himself, of course, as the hon. Member knew, had no knowledge of these matters beyond the documents before him, and the information these documents furnished; but he would ask the House to consider a few broad facts that appeared, he thought, undisputed in the case. Without going into minute details, into some of which the hon. Member for Monaghan had entered, he thought he might say that nothing would be more dangerous to the administration of justice than that a course should be pursued in that House or anywhere such as that after a trial had been had before a jury with the aid of a Judge, after they had convicted the prisoner, and after the sentence of the law had been passed, a trial should be again gone into over again upon declarations or informations made by interested persons. [Mr. HEALY: The Tichborne trial.] On declarations made by persons beyond the seas by persons in America and other places, who would naturally be, many of them, incriminated. Nothing could be more dangerous, and nothing more likely to strike at the root of the administration of justice, if such a thing were allowed. He would refer to some of the leading facts which led the jury to come to the conclusion at which they arrived, and which led the Judge to say that he saw no reason why the law should not take its course, although the prisoners had been defended by one of the ablest counsel at the Irish Bar, and although he urged on their behalf nearly all the arguments which the hon. Member for Monaghan was now able to supply. It appeared that this Michael Watters filled a position of some consequence in the district. Although young, he was an educated man. He was the assistant of a National School teacher in the district. He was nephew of Patrick Watters, who was examined at the trial. At that school Watters was intrusted with the teaching of the young of a great portion of that district. Assuming, now, that the jury arrived at a right conclusion, when they found that Watters was closely connected with this shocking conspiracy, he thought he might say, without fear of contradiction, that Watters, filling that position, was one of the principal culprits of those 12 persons who were there arrested and convicted. The prisoners were tried on a charge of conspiracy to murder and of treason-felony. They were convicted of the conspiracy to murder, and therefore they were not arraigned afterwards on the other charge. They were brought up for trial at the first Assizes at which they could be tried—namely, the Winter Assizes of Belfast, in December, 1882, there being no Winter Assizes in Armagh. As Edward O'Hanlon, who had made an information for the Crown, did not appear, the trial was postponed till the following March Assizes at Belfast. [Mr. HEALY: Why Belfast?] They were brought up at Belfast first, and it was natural that they should be brought up there again, he apprehended. He did not think that a fairer trial could have been had in Armagh than was had in Belfast. In fact, he believed that, under the circumstances, a fairer trial could be had in a locality like Belfast, where the prisoners were unknown. Patrick Burns hung out the American flag in Crossmaglen on March 4. The hon. Member had drawn attention to the case of the American flag which had been hanging from the window of the public-house. It was, however, proved that in this case a man named Patrick Burns came over from America —as was recorded at the time—that he came over as a delegate from O'Donovan Rossa. ["Oh!"] This was the case, as was proved at the trial, and he came over in order to unite all the secret societies in the district into one. It was also proved that Mr. P. J. Sheridan was in the district—this man, whose name was now known far and wide, and who, in this case, appeared to have left his native Mayo in order to visit the Crossmaglen district. According to the evidence which was given, it appeared that a secret society was formed, which received the name of the "Patriotic Brotherhood"—a name which had been given to other societies of a similar character. One of its books was discovered, which contained records of a most interesting character. Among them was the oath, part of which was to the following effect:—

> "Should it fall to your lot to be appointed at any meeting to murder anyone or assist, will you do so?—Yes."

It also showed that arrangements were actually made from time to time, according to which it appeared that some of the prisoners had lain in wait for some gentlemen to shoot them. These cases were detailed at length in the records which were to be found in these documents. These records contained the names of each of the 12 prisoners. It was also shown that a number of persons, whose names were recorded in this book, had fled the country, and some had gone to America. It was proved that at various places which had been named by the informer, Duffy, meetings had been held at night, which were watched by the police, who saw several of the prisoners leaving the meetings at 2 o'clock in the morning, in twos and threes. The book had been found by Constable Gartland, of Crossmaglen, in the place which had been indicated. This book, in itself, afforded ample evidence on which to convict the prisoners. According to the law, and justly so, an informer's evidence required confirmation by independent testimony; and the evidence of Duffy was confirmed by that of other credible and reliable witnesses. Three books had been found, but one of them was of no value in the case. The book found in Duffy's possession had been proved by him to be in the handwriting of Watters. Duffy, who was an uneducated blacksmith, could write his name, but no more. It had not been alleged at the time that Duffy was capable of writing the book; but he understood the hon. Member for Monaghan to say that the cousin of the prisoner, who was now in America, compiled the book with Duffy. But what was the evidence in regard to the writing of this book? First, there was the positive evidence of Duffy, which had been corroborated; secondly, the genuine handwriting of Watters. When in prison Watters wrote letters, the genuine character of which had not been disputed in the course of the case. The experts to whom those letters were referred stated that they were written by the same person who had written the contents of the book. The jury had also compared the two handwritings, and they had arrived at the conclusion that two of the books were in the same handwriting as that of Watters. A number of threatening letters had also been produced, and they had been proved to be in the handwriting of Watters. Therefore they had three kinds of corroborative evidence on this point; the positive evidence of the informer, the evidence by comparison of the writing, and the evidence given by an experienced expert. It was also proved upon the trial that the informer was concealed, not on the top of a load of straw, but underneath it. It was, he believed, in the interests of justice not desirable that, after careful trials had taken place, and prisoners were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment, declarations should be made by interested persons, and statements should be made in that House to impeach the sworn evidence upon which the prisoners were convicted. Such a course would be highly dangerous to the interests of justice. The hon. Member had discredited what was found in the books which were produced at the trial; but he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) was sure that anyone who had any experience of criminal trials would admit that it was frequently the case that the case against prisoners who were charged with offences of this kind had been materially strengthened by documentary evidence of this character. All the discrepancies, or nearly all, referred to by the hon. Member, had been commented on by the Judge and the counsel in the case. Then there was the evidence of Corrigan——

MR. HEALY: The policeman's brother.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he did not think that detracted from the value of the man's evidence. He proved that Daly asked him to join the secret society, and he refused. Then, as regarded Kelly, documents traceable to the Fenian Society were found. The prisoners were found guilty, and Watters was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude, and two others to shorter terms of punishment. Now, as to the case of Michael Watters, the hon. Member did not refer to it fully; but as statements, to which the Chief Secretary could not reply, had been already made, he would wish to go into the particulars of the case. Watters was received into Mountjoy Prison on the 3rd of April, 1883, and he remained perfectly well till the 6th of June, when he reported himself as suffering from slight derangement of the stomach. On the 7th of June he was seen by Dr. Young, and he was admitted to the hospital, the statement of Dr. Young being that he was not able to leave the gaol, the case being a serious one. Dr. Young asked for a consultation, and on the 27th of June he held a consultation with an independent physician—Dr. O'Kelly, of Jervis Street—who was not a prison doctor, and they both came to the conclusion that the disease was a very serious one and likely to terminate fatally. The doctors stated that the prisoner was not then, nor at any time afterwards, in a condition to be removed without danger to his life. On June 28 the Governor of the prison communicated to the prisoner's uncle that Watters was seriously ill in hospital, suffering from a stomach affection which might terminate fatally; and the uncle came up from the country on the 28th of June. The result was that a Memorial was sent to the Lord Lieutenant and received on the 13th of July asking for the release of Watters.

MR. HEALY: And never replied to.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the usual course was taken, and it was referred to the doctors, who gave the Report that he was bad.

MR. PARNELL: Give us the date of the doctors' certificates that he could not be released.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I have not got them.

MR. HEALY: Give us one.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he had one, and he would give it. Dr. O'Kelly reported on the 8th of October—

> "His condition since 1st August has been so critical as not to permit of his removal, and now the case has become so aggravated as to place his life in imminent danger. His removal would be impossible."

It was then thought desirable that a consultation should be held, and there were consultations on the 13th and 14th of October, upon which the doctors came to the conclusion that the disease must terminate fatally. It was on the 17th of October that the Memorial was received from a local Catholic clergyman setting forth reasons for his release, which were inadequate. Reports were constantly received until his death on the 23rd of October. He received the best treatment which could be given to him in the hospital. On the 24th a Coroner's Jury had returned a verdict that he died from the stomach disease from which he had been suffering.

MR. HEALY: Why did the Government not reply to the Memorial?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, it was referred to the Judge in the usual course, with Memorials relating to others of the prisoners, and the Judge reported that there was no reason why the law should not take its course; and, accordingly, the clemency of the Crown was not offered to them. The case of Bernard Smith had also been referred to. In that case the Judge had adverted strongly to the evidence of the informer not being corroborated, and on June 28 had reported that it was a proper case for the clemency of the Crown on account of there being insufficient corroboration, and because a medical Report stated that the prisoner was suffering from chronic bronchitis and blood-spitting. He was sure, therefore, that after what he had stated from documents before him that the authorities could not be accused of callousness; and he thought it would be to the last degree dangerous and mischievous if *ex parte* statements were allowed to prevail over facts clearly stated in evidence before a Coroner's Jury and carefully examined, and evidence gone into in Court under the direction of the Judge.

MR. PARNELL said, he was very much surprised to hear a gentleman of the knowledge and experience of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) express the opinion that the course which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had taken was an unheard-of one, and a mischievous and dangerous one. The hon. and learned Gentleman surely could not have recollected, when he gave that opinion, the case of Edmund Galley. After he had suffered a great many years' penal servitude, Galley's case was brought before the House by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot); and, his innocence having been established, he was released and granted compensation by the Crown. The hon. and learned Gentleman must also have forgotten the case of Barber, who, in 1856, petitioned the House of Commons that his case of alleged wrongful conviction and imprisonment might be investigated by the House; and upon the Petition and a Motion made by an hon. Member a Select Committee was appointed. Barber was enabled to prove his innocence; and for his imprisonment he was awarded by the Government, he (Mr. Parnell) believed, the sum of £7,000. He (Mr. Parnell) could give several other instances if it were at all necessary to do so; but he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would see that he was carried away by the force of his own eloquence when he expressed the rather rash opinion which he (Mr. Parnell) had been obliged to take notice of. The hon. and learned Gentleman dwelt particularly upon the case of the unfortunate man Michael Watters, who died in Mountjoy Prison last year, notwithstanding the repeated attempts the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) made to obtain a consideration of the man's case. Before he (Mr. Parnell) proceeded to the consideration of the general case, he wished to go over the case as made out by the Solicitor General for Ireland in defence of the Government in respect to their action towards Watters. He should not have touched upon the matter were it not that the hon. and learned Gentleman himself introduced it, and put forward a defence of the conduct of the Government, which he (Mr. Parnell) should not characterize as lame, but as the most careless and most inhuman that he had ever heard. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the doctors in their certificates gave it as their opinion that Watters could not have been released from prison without danger to his life, and that that was the reason why he was not released. But there was a discrepancy between the excuse now given by the hon. and learned Gentleman and the reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) last year. Last year, when appealed to in the House of Commons in regard to this case, the Chief Secretary said that Michael Watters could not be released because there was no danger to his life, and because his case differed from that of Bernard Smith. It was stated by the Chief Secretary, at the same time, that Bernard Smith was released because he was suffering from blood-spitting and his life was in danger, and because there was no corroborative evidence against him. If they were to accept the statement of the Chief Secretary last year as accurate, and to compare it with, and even fortify it with, the statement of the Solicitor General made that night, it came to this—that the Irish Executive allowed Michael Watters to die in prison because there was corroborative evidence in his case, and because the Judge considered there was stronger evidence of guilt in his case than there was in that of Bernard Smith. But the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland was still more unfortunate in the case he now attempted to make out with regard to the conduct of the Irish Executive. He had referred, in a general way, to the Reports of the prison doctors. When asked for the dates of those Reports the hon. and learned Gentleman said they were received when it would have endangered Watters' life to discharge him from prison. Watters was taken ill in June, and the first Report the Solicitor General had referred to was dated the 10th of October. Dr. Young, the prison surgeon, had charge of this unfortunate man on the 6th of June, and Dr. O'Kelly had charge of him in the middle of October. The Solicitor General had only been able to refer to the Report of Dr. O'Kelly, which was dated in October, and which certainly was to the effect that it would be dangerous to the life of the prisoner to remove him from prison. But that was four months after the request was make by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) for his release, and four months after the prisoner was taken ill. He (Mr. Parnell) thought this was a very important matter; and he trusted that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan) would lay the Reports of the doctors with regard to the state of health of Michael Watters on the Table of the House, in order that hon. Members might be able to ascertain whether there was a single particle of foundation for the defence, which the Solicitor General for Ireland had attempted to set up that night, that it was in consequence of the Reports of the prison doctors, that it would endanger the prisoner's life to remove him, that the Irish Executive did not order his release, a defence which was in direct contradiction of the statement made by the Chief Secretary last Session. Now, with respect to the general question of the Crossmaglen alleged case of conspiracy. The Solicitor General for Ireland had, of course, conducted the defence of the Government with great skill; but he had entirely evaded the whole gist and point of the case brought forward by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). The Solicitor General for Ireland had attempted to divert the attention of the House by dwelling at great length upon minor matters, which really had no bearing at all upon the strength of his hon. Friend's (Mr. Healy's) case. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had repeated some of the evidence; but his hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan never claimed that there was not plenty of evidence of a certain sort. There was evidence to convict a dozen or any number of men of conspiracy; but his hon. Friend's claim was based upon the character of the evidence; upon the character and the position of the men who gave the evidence; upon the discrepancies—the proved and admitted discrepancies—arising in the course of the case in the evidence itself; and upon the vast accumulation of testimony which it had been possible to collect since from witnesses now in America, in Scotland, and from witnesses near the scene of the alleged conspiracy, which absolutely established an overwhelming case in proof of the innocence of these unfortunate men. His hon. Friend had pointed out the fact that the men were taken from their homes; that their trial took place in Belfast—a locality where political passions and prejudices were at boiling point—that at the time the revelations regarding the Invincible conspiracy in Ireland had excited the classes from whom the jury was chosen to such a pitch that it was absolutely impossible that a verdict of "Not Guilty" could be returned; that no Catholic was allowed to be empannelled; that every Catholic was objected to by the Crown; and that the jury empannelled to try these unfortunate Armagh peasants was packed by Orange Protestants of the lowest class. His hon. Friend had also pointed out that the principal portions of the evidence upon which the Crown relied for a conviction was deliberately kept back from the prisoners until the last moment; that even during the trial counsel for the prisoners were not allowed to see the two books upon which the whole case for the Crown depended. The Solicitor General for Ireland had asked why the prisoners should not receive a fair trial in Belfast? There had been some revelations recently as to the sort of material of which these common Orange Belfast juries were composed; and they had heard from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant a very eloquent and brilliant description of the doings of some of these men—men brought from Belfast and other Northern towns with sack loads of revolvers. Such was the sort of material which the Government deliberately selected a year and a-half ago for the purpose of trying these unfortunate men—and to try them at a time when political feeling was at fever height and people were ready to believe any idle tale. So entirely were the jury biassed against these men that though Mr. Justice Lawson hinted that if they found a verdict of "Not Guilty" in certain cases—in the case of Cockburn and Bernard Smith—the ends of justice would not be defeated, they found them all guilty of the same offence. Now, this was a case which very well illustrated the want of a Court of Appeal. There was no Court of Appeal before which the administration or mal-administration of justice in Ireland could be brought. This was a case which the Solicitor General for Ireland must know had excited a great deal of attention and feeling in Ireland, more especially in the districts to which the prisoners belonged, and in which they had been well known and respected during their blameless lives—blameless, at all events, up to the time of this alleged conspiracy. He (Mr. Parnell) had formed a very strong opinion about the innocence of the men. He firmly believed that if their case could be re-investigated, in these quieter times, before an Appeal Court—if, for instance, the Bill which the Government introduced last Session, and successfully carried through the Grand Committee, had been passed into law and had been applied, retrospectively, to the case of these prisoners, he believed the result would have been that the verdict would have been reversed, and that these men, who were now suffering the horrible punishment of penal servitude, would have been released and allowed to return to their homes. There were certain matters in connection with the whole case which deserved to be kept in mind. In the first place, the district was free from outrage. A few threatening letters were sent; but it was alleged these were written by Duffy, the informer. The district of Crossmaglen was not like many other districts in Ireland, where, concurrent with alleged conspiracy, alarming and murderous outrages occurred; it was absolutely free from any outrage whatever. He asked the House whether it was reasonable to suppose that if a number of men were banded together, during several years, to commit outrages, it could possibly have happened that no attempt to commit an outrage would have been made? The absence of any outrage was a striking proof of the improbability of any such conspiracy as was alleged existing. The name of the man, P. J. Sheridan, was dragged into the case to prejudice the Judge, and it had its effect. He was sorry the Solicitor General for Ireland imitated that night the bad example set by the Judge. He did not mean to say that the hon. and learned Gentleman deliberately intended to convey a false impression by his statement that night with regard to the presence of P. J. Sheridan at Crossmaglen. The hon. and learned Gentleman had only recently assumed his present high Office; and he was naturally not so well informed respecting details in matters of this kind as he might have been if he had held his present position during the last three or four years. If the hon. and learned Gentleman, however, would take the trouble to inquire into the matter, he would find that at that time Sheridan was really and truly engaged on a mission of mercy. The work in which he was engaged was perfectly open to the light of day; he was bringing evicted tenants and their wives and families into the town of Crossmaglen from the evicted estates in the neighbourhood, and he was assisted in that work by a clergyman of the Unitarian Church, who certainly would not have connected himself with any matter of a secret nature—he (Mr. Parnell) referred to the Rev. Harold Rylett. He was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland did not deliberately introduce the name of Sheridan to prejudice the case of these prisoners, as undoubtedly it had done that night, and as undoubtedly it did at the time of the trial. The House would recollect that Sheridan was in the district to distribute aid to evicted tenants, and for no other purpose; that he went about openly, just as any other person might have done; and that his presence there was a matter of notoriety to the general public, because his proceedings were chronicled in the newspapers. The case of these unfortunate prisoners was such an intricate one that it was exceedingly difficult to present all the points to the House in a satisfactory way. He thought it was eminently one which the Government would do well to reconsider in all its bearings, and in which to grant the Select Committee which his hon. Friend (Mr. Lynch) had asked for. It was the case of men who were not alleged to have committed any crime, except that of conspiracy; it was not alleged that they committed any overt act or any outrage. He had said that no outrage was committed in the district. Granted, for the sake of argument, that there was conspiracy, no crime or criminal act resulted from it, no harm was done. He agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. Healy) that even if the Government supposed that there was at one time in this district a conspiracy, they would have done well to let the matter sink into oblivion. The Government knew perfectly well that at the time the prosecutions were instituted the alleged conspiracy had ceased to exist, and that no crime had ever occurred as a result of the supposed conspiracy. Inasmuch as the district had never been stained with crime it would have been far better and wiser for the Government to have abstained from this prosecution, and thus have presented the unpleasant and bitter recollections in the district which the prosecution had produced. He believed the debate that night would do good. At all events, the case of the Crossmaglen prisoners could not be allowed to rest until the innocence of these unfortunate men, in which the Irish people quite believed, had been demonstrated to the minds of the Government and of the House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) appealed so strongly to him that, though he should not otherwise have desired to take part in the discussion, he thought he ought to say a few words on what had taken place. He came that night perfectly fresh to the case. He knew nothing of it before. He, however, listened with great attention to the very able statement, and he must add the moderate statement, of the hon. Member for Monaghan. He listened, on the other hand, very carefully to the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. Now, a great part of his (Sir William Harcourt's) time was occupied in exactly the same kind of business which now occupied the attention of the House. It was the duty of his Department to consider all representations as to miscarriages of justice. He regretted, with the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that that duty now devolved upon the Executive Government. Long before he was a Member of a Government he was extremely desirous there should be a tribunal, independent of the Government, to whom such matters as this could be referred. However, the Executive Government did the best they could under the circumstances. Now, he did not think it was possible for a case to have been more fully stated than this case had been that night. He could not agree with the hon. Member for the City of Cork that, under no circumstances, would the House of Commons be a desirable tribunal as a Court of Appeal. It was well that an Assembly, actuated necessarily more or less by political bias, should not have to be appealed to in cases like the present; but if they got into the practice of considering that the House of Commons was not a proper tribunal before which to bring such matters, it would not only be injurious to the functions of the House, but injurious to the interests of justice. If it was supposed that the Executive Government were not disposed to do their duty in considering these cases, that was a different matter. He had no bias in the matter at all; and he had listened as if he were a Judge of Appeal sitting upon the case. He had listened to the very ingenious and able arguments of the hon. Member for Monaghan, just as he would have listened to counsel. The hon. Gentleman had raised a number of points in favour of the prisoners. He had indicated discrepancies in the evidence. Discrepancies would occur in every case; there were very few cases in which something could not be alleged in favour of the accused. Well, knowing nothing of the case until that night, he was bound to say that the Solicitor General for Ireland had advanced a mass of solid proof which constituted the staple of the case for the prosecution. It was true there were points to be alleged against the prosecution. Those points could not have been better stated than they were by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan; but whether he (Sir William Harcourt) were acting in the capacity of Secretary of State, or of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, or of a Member of a Judicial Court of Appeal, he could not allow that the hon. Member for Monaghan had made out so strong a case as to induce him to interfere with the verdict given by the jury. That, he was bound to say, was the honest impression produced in his mind by that night's discussion. He assumed the statements of the hon. Member for Monaghan and of the Solicitor General for Ireland to be correct; and, as far as he could see, those statements were not inconsistent one with the other. The House could not come to a decision upon such a matter as this; and he asked the hon. Member for Monaghan and the hon. Member for the City of Cork to believe that if they could now, or at any future time, lay before the Chief Secretary for Ireland any evidence which was not forthcoming at the trial, or any evidence which showed that there was an improper appreciation of the facts at the trial, the Executive Government would not close their ears to such evidence, but would endeavour to do justice. He was speaking for Lord Spencer as he would speak for himself. Whatever feelings a political antagonist might entertain towards Lord Spencer, he (Sir William Harcourt) was sure the House believed that the Lord Lieutenant was not a man who, if evidence of a solid and sound nature were placed before him, would not give a proper and fair judgment upon it. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork made one observation which he (Sir William Harcourt) must notice. The hon. Gentleman said—

> "Admitting, for the purpose of argument, there was a conspiracy, no harm resulted."

The hon. Member must admit that if a number of people were banded together—and that was the case alleged here—in a conspiracy to murder, it was impossible, if the conspiracy were detected, to leave it unpunished, because murder did not occur. Now, as he understood, the pith and marrow of the case rested upon the authenticity of certain books and documents. He gathered from the statement of the Solicitor General for Ireland that the books and documents were verified and supported by solid evidence which was accepted by both Judge and jury. He (Sir William Harcourt) ventured to say that if the hon. Member for Monaghan or the hon. Member for the City of Cork could bring before Lord Spencer in this case, or in any other case, evidence which, in the mind of a fair and just man, could raise not only a conviction, but a serious doubt as to the justice of the conclusion which had been arrived at, Lord Spencer was not the man who would refuse to do justice in the matter. It was the practice of this country to invite evidence which should tend to show there had been a miscarriage of justice. The hon. Member for Monaghan had been good enough to admit that the duty of accepting and sifting evidence tending to show a miscarriage of justice was, at all events, recognized in England. In the hands of Lord Spencer this matter was in as able, certainly as sincere, hands as it would be in his (Sir William Harcourt's); and, speaking for Lord Spencer, he promised that whatever fresh evidence was produced should be fairly, fully, carefully, and anxiously considered with a view to arrive at a just decision.

MR. HEALY suggested that, after the encouraging statement of the Home Secretary, the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Lynch) should withdraw his Resolution. He (Mr. Healy) would undertake to lay a mass of evidence before His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SUPPLY,—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

[BILL 124.] COMMITTEE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st March] "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill.

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Power to appoint revising barrister).

MR. TREVELYAN said, he thought that, under the circumstances, it was hardly fair to proceed with the Bill further. A very great point had been gained by the Speaker having left the Chair, because they would now be able to take the Bill up at any time. Many hon. Gentlemen who had got Amendments down upon the Paper were not present, besides which no statement with regard to the Bill had been made by the Minister in charge of it, in the presence of the hon. Gentlemen who were opposed to the measure. The Government would not be justified in pushing the Bill through Committee in the absence of Gentlemen who took great interest in it; and therefore he begged to move that Progress be now reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

MR. HEALY said, he did not wish to oppose the Motion, but to point out that the opposition to the Bill was purely factious. The Amendments which stood on the Paper were bogus Amendments; they were put down by hon. Gentlemen for certain hon. Gentlemen who had not the courage to oppose the Bill themselves—namely, the right hon. and learned Members for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket). He (Mr. Healy) thought it would be reasonable to proceed as far as the clause to which there was an Amendment, before the Motion to report Progress was made.

Mr. COURTNEY reminded the hon. Gentleman that they had got as far as Clause 2, to which Notice of Amendment had been given. A distinct advantage had been gained by getting into Committee; and he put it to the hon. Member whether it would be quite fair to proceed further under the circumstances? The hon. Member was well aware that the Government put down Supply for that night; and it was only at the last moment they determined not to go on with effective Supply.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, the Bill would throw a comparatively large burden upon the British taxpayer, yet not one word of explanation had been offered by the Government. He agreed that it would be most unreasonable to proceed further with the Bill that night.

Mr. HEALY said, the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) had put the matter very fairly, and he (Mr. Healy) would not oppose the Motion to report Progress. He suggested, however, that the Bill should be put down for an early date.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (REPEAL, &c.) BILL.—[Bill 55.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HIBBERT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he desired to make but few observations. The Bill had been put down nearly every night since the commencement of the Session; but, owing to the opposition of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), he had not been able to obtain a second reading before this. The Bill, which he believed was not opposed by anyone in the House except by the hon. and learned Member, merely sought to repeal a number of portions of obsolete Acts, and to carry out what his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) intended to carry out when he passed the Summary Jurisdiction Bill of 1879. The Bill was approved by the Lord Chancellor, and other Law Lords; and, therefore, he (Mr.Hibbert) trusted he would now be allowed to take the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Mr. WARTON said, he might be the only person who had put a block to the Bill; but he had done so in the interest of the ratepayer, who might find his position materially altered with regard to the collection of the poor rates. He had received a letter from the Vestry Clerk of St. Mary's, Islington, in which it was stated that it was feared the Bill would lead to great difficulty in the collection of rates. It appeared to him (Mr. Warton) that the Bill was open to very serious objection. As many as 146 Acts were dealt with by the measure; and, therefore, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would consent to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. HIBBERT said, that those who had fully considered the Bill did not agree with the view taken by the rate-paying authorities; but he was quite prepared to remove any doubts by Amendments. As to the suggestion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, he had proposed that some time ago; but really, considering the pressure of hon. Members in Committees at the present time, he should scarcely like to suggest it now. If hon. Members had any Amendments to propose he should be glad to consider them, and try to come to an arrangement with the House.

Mr. WARTON wanted to point out——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. and learned Member that he is not entitled to make a second speech.

Mr. WARTON: Very good, Sir. I was going to speak on another point.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, with regard to matters of detail connected with the Bill, there were several points that would arise in dealing with it which would require careful consideration; and he, therefore, could not help thinking that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. He would ask the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hibbert) to reconsider his decision in the matter.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MR. WARTON: Could it not be put down to a later date, to consider the question of referring it to a Select Committee?

MOTIONS.

FISHERIES (OYSTER, CRAB, AND LOBSTER) ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

MR. SYKES: I beg to move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend "The Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act, 1877."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: We cannot have a Bill like this brought in without any explanation.

Several hon. MEMBERS: Explain it.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill to amend "The Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act, 1877," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SYKES and Colonel DAWNAY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 208.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 5) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Unions of Cashel, Clogheen, Navan, and Tipperary, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND and Mr. TREVELYAN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 205.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

Resolutions [May 15] *reported*, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill, upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of the whole House, upon Ways and Means, on the 28th day of April, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolutions.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 206.]

METROPOLITAN POLICE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to provide for the appointment of an additional Assistant Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, and for other purposes relating to the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of such Police, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 209.]

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had added the following fifteen Members to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill:—Mr. Brinton, Mr. Edward Clarke, Mr. Thomas Collins, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Gabriel Goldney, Lord Claud John Hamilton, Mr. Charles James, Mr. Patrick Martin, Mr. Marum, Mr. Mellor, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Newzam Nicholson, Mr. Pickering Phipps, Mr. Sellar, and Mr. Storey.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 19*th May*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Marquess of Donegall, after the death of his brother.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) * (102).

Second Reading—Gas Provisional Orders * (81); Land Drainage Provisional Orders * (82); Public Libraries Acts Amendment * (95).

Report—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (68).

Third Reading—Local Government Board (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) * (69), and *passed.*

Royal Assent—Freshwater Fisheries Act Amendment [47 *Vict.* c. 11]; Public Health (Confirmation of Byelaws) [47 *Vict.* c. 12]; Contagious Diseases (Animals) [47 *Vict.* c. 13]; Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order [47 *Vict.* c. xiii]; Marriages Legalisation (Wood Green Congregational Church) [47 *Vict.* c. xii]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order [47 *Vict.* c. xiv].

WESTERN PACIFIC—DEPORTATION OF FRENCH RECIDIVISTS.

POSTPONEMENT OF MOTION.

The Earl of ROSEBERY, who had a Notice upon the Paper to call attention to the proposed deportation of recidivists from France to the Western Pacific, and to move a Resolution, said: My Lords, it is an open secret that I am about to postpone my Motion, and I have only kept it on the Paper that I might offer a few words of explanation. Your Lordships will remember that this is the second time that I have been obliged to postpone this question, and, therefore, I think I should be wanting in respect to the House if I were to refrain from saying a word of explanation on this occasion. I have postponed the Motion, because, acting on the best advice that I can obtain, it is said that a discussion might cause a false impression in France, where it is most desirable to avoid misunderstanding. And it would be affectation to deny that at the present moment among the promoters of this Bill in France it is felt that such a discussion might do harm, and resemble an attempt to interfere in a matter of purely domestic concern. I need hardly say that no idea of the sort has crossed my mind. But what is felt in France is this—that there is a wish in Great Britain to prevent her establishing a convict depôt on her own territory. I disclaim any such idea. It never occurred to me to protest against the erection or constitution of a prison by the French Government in French territory. My apprehensions are widely different. I deprecate a proposal to place the worst characters in France at liberty on a small island within an easy sail from some of our noblest and most attractive Colonies, to which these criminals must, in the nature of things, make their way with all convenient speed. There is a great difference between the two propositions. Let me illustrate it by a familiar analogy. Suppose one is in lodgings, and the lodger on the next floor takes lessons on the flute, we may suffer but we have no right to complain. But if, on the other hand, he has a nest of favourite snakes at liberty in his room, as some eminent naturalists have, I think one has a right to say that he is not acting in a very neighbourly manner. And so it is with New Caledonia. It is not precisely the neighbour that one would choose; criminals escape constantly and land on Australian shores, and expirees also. But so long as due diligence is observed in endeavouring to guard them there is nothing to be said. On the other hand, a proposal to turn the crime of a great nation loose and free on New Caledonia, with an occasional leave on parole of six months, may well cause some concern among the neighbours of New Caledonia. But there is another point on which I wish to offer a word of explanation. I am deeply impressed with the Australian feeling on this subject. I think it is both justifiable and dangerous. But I certainly do not wish to hold out Australian feeling on this subject as any matter for the consideration of France. If the Bill passes, her trade with and through Australia will probably suffer, if not cease, from the restrictive measures which it will be almost the duty of the Australians to adopt. That is, however, a comparatively small matter to a great nation like France. But I do hold out Australian sentiment on these points as a great danger for this country. If the Bill passes, Australia, as two statesmen so cautious as M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire and the Secretary for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) have admitted, must pass measures to protect herself. There is such a measure already which only needs the addition of a few words to render it applicable. I do not presume that the Imperial Government would veto the addition of those words. If it allows them, there is an almost unavoidable risk of collision or ill-feeling in the penalties they impose on captains, knowingly or unknowingly bringing convicts or expirees to the Colony. If it does veto them, such a veto would provoke a feeling in Australia as regards the Imperial Government of which I, for one, decline to calculate the consequences. I do not doubt that Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to all this, and have laboured assiduously in the matter. But I thought it advisable, in postponing the Motion, to say at least this much to show our fellow-subjects in Australia that even in postponing the discussion we are mindful of their interests.

Motion *postponed.*

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA AND WALLFISCH BAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, What national flag was now flying at Angra Pequena and Wallfisch Bay; whether sufficient measures were being taken for the protection of British interests on those coasts pending the negotiations with Germany; and, whether the Government would inform itself before making a final settlement of the question what views were entertained on the subject by the newly-formed Government at Cape Town? said, that he hoped that the noble Earl would not state that these were purely Colonial questions, but that they would be looked at from an Imperial point of view. With respect to Angra Pequena, it was for us to assert and establish our claim to its possession if we thought it worth our while. At this moment there was an English magistrate exercising jurisdiction on that coast at Wallfisch Bay. The harbour was as fine a one as there was on the whole Coast of Africa. With regard to Delagoa Bay, he was informed that, though the arbitration went in favour of the Portuguese Government, that Government was not very anxious to retain it, but was in treaty for its cession to the Dutch Government; and if that were done the whole of the trade in that part of South Africa—which would prove most valuable in the course of a few years—would go into the hands of the Dutch and Germans, who would be in possession of Delagoa Harbour on the East and Angra Pequena on the West Coast.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, in answer to the various Questions which have been put by the noble Lord opposite, I wish, in the first place, to say that, as far as I am aware, no controversies have arisen, and no controversies are likely to arise, with regard to Wallfisch Bay. It has been claimed and taken possession of as British territory, and it has been administered by officers appointed under the authority of the Cape Government, and I am not aware that our claim has ever been disputed. We have been in possession of Wallfisch Bay for some years past, and no objection has been taken to our possession. With regard to Angra Pequena, there are, as the noble Lord is aware, two separate questions involved —the question of the islands outside the harbour, and the question of the harbour itself. The islands are, I believe, unoccupied.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: I think they are occupied by English merchants at the present time.

THE EARL OF DERBY: They may be occupied for temporary purposes; but what I meant to say was that there is no Settlement there and no Representative of any Colonial or Imperial authority. They have been claimed as British possessions, but I do not know whether any flag is flying there. If there is, it is undoubtedly ours. As to the harbour and mainland, the question is one of greater complexity. We have never formally claimed it as far as I am aware. We have never established any Government there. I am not forgetful of the fact that nearly 90 years ago a British vessel, under Captain Alexander, touched there and took possession of the place in the name of the British Crown. But, as that transaction took place 90 years ago, and was not followed by any notification to Foreign Powers, the question might fairly be raised how far a nominal claim of that kind would be held to be valid now. The language we have held with regard to that territory is that, although we have not formally claimed the Bay, we have claimed the right to exclude Foreign Powers on the general ground of its nearness to our Settlements, and the absence of any other claims; but we have never set up any Government there, and never attempted to make it a Settlement or a Colony. There is, as the House is aware, a German Agent lately established there. But the establishment of trading stations does not in itself constitute any claim to the territory, and has nothing to do with the question of Sovereignty. With regard to the second Question of the noble Lord, I have to say that we are in correspondence with the German Government. During the progress of negotiations, I am not aware that any special protection has been shown to be necessary for British interests. As to the third Question, I have, by anticipation, acted on the suggestion embodied therein. I sent a telegram on the 3rd instant, asking whether there was any probability of the Cape Government being prepared to take possession of

Angra Pequena, in the event of its being declared British territory. I received a reply requesting that the matter should be kept open, as the general elections were then in progress, and the Ministers were absent from Cape Town. In addition to that, it was well known that the fate of the then existing Ministry was very doubtful. On the 7th of May, having received no answer, I telegraphed again in the same sense. In the meantime, as the noble Lord is aware, a change of Government took place at the Cape; and on the 15th, four days ago, I received a telegram stating that the new Government were considering the subject, and promising an answer within the next 10 days. I shall, therefore, receive the answer within about a week from now. Having taken these steps, and having consulted the Colonial authorities on the subject, we shall do nothing at present that can bind our future action.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — HOUSE OF LORDS—INTERIOR ARRANGEMENTS.

RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD renewed the suggestion that he had made when the "Black Rod" Committee was named, and many times previously, that the Royal Gallery, a large room adjacent to the House, now unused, should be partially furnished for the convenience of Peers. He understood that the objection to this proposal came from the noble Chairman of Committees, to whose judgment the House willingly bowed, except when he opposed a useful reform.

Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, or other authority having charge of the arrangements of the House of Lords, to furnish in a substantial manner a portion of the Royal Gallery as a writing room for the use of Peers during the sittings of the House."—(*The Earl of Longford.*)

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, he supported the proposal of the noble Earl, and would like to know to what authority application should be made in such matters, as whenever he had applied to anyone he had always been referred elsewhere? He thought there were some other matters which were also entirely neglected in their Lordships' House. In the first place, no post-box was placed in the Library. Again, the stationery supply to the House was inferior to that supplied to the House of Commons; and the lights on the reading tables were quite insufficient. He felt grateful to his noble Friend for starting this subject, and hoped that it would not be lost sight of.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) was of opinion that there was no great desire on the part of Members of that House to have the Royal Gallery turned into a writing-room. The noble Earl first brought this subject forward in 1867. At that time the Committee were not disposed to accede to his request; but when the Irish Church Bill was before the House it was thought desirable that some tables should be put into the Gallery, and to a very small extent they were used. After that period the room was not used at all; but in 1872 the noble Earl renewed his application to the Committee, who directed the Board of Works to partially fit up the Gallery, and accordingly four tables were placed there. They were still there in 1877, when the noble Earl renewed his application, because there were no chairs. Accordingly, chairs were placed there; but during the three years 1877, 1878, and 1879, not a single pen was used at any one of the tables. He thought, after that, their Lordships might be satisfied that there was no great demand for having the Royal Gallery turned into a writing-room.

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS remarked, that he had just been into the Library, where there were 12 writing tables, capable of accommodating eight persons each, and nobody was using them at present.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, that those tables might as well be placed in Palace Yard for all the use they were; and he saw no reason why his proposal should not be considered, except for the crotchets of the noble Earl.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE had at first intended to support the Motion; but he now thought the noble Earl opposite had conclusively shown that the room was not required.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON remarked, that although on ordinary occasions there might be no need for additional accommodation for correspondence, yet when large measures were discussed there was great difficulty in finding room, and, therefore, he did not think the question of providing increased accommodation was unworthy of consideration.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday in Cornwall—Was *presented* by the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe; read 1ª. (No. 102.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 19th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage District) * [211]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) (District of Arlecdon and Frizington and others) * [212]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) (Parishes of Bisley, and others) [213]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) (Parishes of Barnwood, and others) * [214]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) (City of Oxford, and others) * [215]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Salt Works and Cement) * [216]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) (Unions of Delvin, and others) * [210].

Second Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) (Saint James, Westminster, &c.) * [195]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (Unions of North Dublin, &c.) * [189]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) (Colchester, &c.) * [196]; Merchant Shipping [1], *debate adjourned;* Middlesex Registry of Deeds [169]; Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment [111], *and committed to Select Committee.*

Committee—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) * [55], *discharged, and committed to a Select Committee.*

Select Committee — Yorkshire Land Registries [24]; Yorkshire Registries [80], *nominated.*

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOCAL INSPECTORS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that thirty-six Local Inspectors have recently been appointed by the Irish Board of Works compared with twenty-two in 1880; what reason is there for the increase; whether old employés have been passed over and young inexperienced persons have been appointed; and, whether one of those recently appointed is son of Colonel French, lately suspended from his office of Inspector in the Detective Department in Ireland; and, if so, what is the special qualification of that young gentleman for the office?

Mr. COURTNEY: Since April, 1883, there have been 36 Inspectors employed by the Board of Works in connection with loans to occupiers under the Land Act of 1881; this number is no more than what is required to keep pace with the work; no old *employés* have been passed over; but the appointments have been carefully made from a list of over 200 applicants. The Mr. French referred to is not the son of Colonel French; he is an able and experienced engineer.

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—STATISTICS OF EXPENDITURE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What, in 1882, was the average payment by the Irish National Board per pupil in salaries, result fees, and capitation grant—In ordinary national schools; in model schools; in Catholic convent schools; and, the payments in the above classes, including pensions, for education of monitors, for school buildings, and teachers' residences?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the average payments are—in ordinary schools, £1 6*s*. 1¾*d*.; in model schools, £2 17*s*. 1*d*.; and in convent schools, 15*s*. 1¾*d*.; and that the payments under the heading of expenditure named in the Question for the three classes of schools respectively were in the financial year 1882-3 as follows:—Pensions — ordinary schools, £9,686; model schools, £489; convent schools, £14. Education of monitors—ordinary schools, £4,129; model schools, *nil*; convent schools, £1,471. School buildings—ordinary schools, £13,459; model schools, £6,631, including teachers' residences; convent schools, *nil.* Teachers' residences — ordinary schools, £681;

model schools—the amount cannot be separated from the general charge for buildings already stated; convent schools, *nil.*

ARMY (IRELAND)—USE OF PARTY TUNES.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that on Wednesday 7th instant, the band of the South Down Rifles played party tunes very offensive to Roman Catholics for upwards of two hours, in presence of the staff sergeants and near to the residence of the adjutant; and, whether he will give orders that it is not to be repeated?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am informed that the band of the battalion did not play any party tune on the 7th instant, but that a small drum and fife band among the recruits played in the afternoon inside the barracks for their own amusement, and, among other tunes, they played one which is stated to be a party tune. In the evening they played outside the barracks, but no party tune was played. The officer commanding the battalion states that he is certain of this, as he had strictly forbidden it, and an officer of the regiment was present during the whole time.

Mr. BIGGAR asked whether party tunes played inside the barracks could not be heard outside?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I do not know how far it goes outside, but playing party tunes inside the barracks is against the regulations, and the officer informs me that they are strictly forbidden.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—RED BAY PIER.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, At whose expense was the pier and harbour at Red Bay, Cushendall, county Antrim, constructed?

Mr. COURTNEY: The works at Red Bay, like other fishery piers, were paid for partly from public funds and partly from money provided by the locality, in the proportion of £3,500 of the former and £1,500 of the latter.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—VETERINARY INSPECTORS (IRELAND).

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Government Veterinary Portal Inspectors in Ireland receiving a high salary are allowed to practise their profession to the great injury of local veterinary surgeons; whether local veterinary surgeons are excluded from holding the office; whether the Portal Veterinary Staff were prevented from practising when under Professor Ferguson, Dublin, but are now permitted to do so by the Privy Council; and if the Government would make it conditional on the appointment of a member of the Veterinary Staff at each port to not privately practise, or permit local veterinary surgeons to hold the office of inspectors at the different ports; and, whether, in England and Scotland, local veterinary surgeons are appointed as Portal Veterinary Inspectors?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Inspectors in Ireland are required to give their whole time to the service of the Department, if required, and the Government do not recognize any right on the part of the Inspectors to engage in private practice; but where the Public Service does not suffer and is not neglected in any way, the Government do not interfere with any Inspector who engages in private practice on his own responsibility. Local veterinary surgeons are not excluded from holding the office. The course taken in regard to private practice when Professor Ferguson was Director, was the same as at present. The Government do not think it necessary to make any change in the conditions. I understand that the conditions in England and Scotland as to these appointments are the same as in Ireland.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER INNY.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he has heard that a number of tenant farmers, living by the River Inny, in that part of Longford county lying between the town of Ballymahon and where the Inny falls into the Shannon, sustain great losses annually from the flooding of their pasture and meadow land by the river; and, whether something will be done to prevent the periodical overflow of the river?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, it was true that the district between the town of Ballymahon and where the Inny falls into the Shannon was liable to be flooded; but the Government had no power to take the initiative to prevent the periodical overflow of the river, and there was no Drainage Board in this district.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—"HOME FARMS."

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the Local Government Board inquiry into the schemes under the Labourers' Act, prepared by the Sanitary Authority of the Mullingar Union, some persons holding ordinary farms on which houses were proposed to be built, claimed exemption because they resided on those farms, and that therefore their lands were "home farms" within the meaning of the Act; whether these farms were exempted by the Local Government Board; whether the Secretary of the Local Government Board subsequently wrote, admitting the correctness of the definition of the term "home farm," furnished by the Solicitor of the Sanitary Authority; and, whether, since the effect of the decision of the Local Government Board would be to prevent sanitary authorities obtaining sites on any farm on which the tenant resided, the Government will provide a mode of appeal in such matters from the decisions of the Local Government Board?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is the fact that in four cases exemption was claimed on the ground that the farms on which it was proposed to build were not ordinary agricultural farms, but "home farms" within the meaning of the Act. The Inspector who held the inquiry was satisfied as to the evidence on this point. and the Local Government Board, having consulted their legal adviser, allowed the exemption. These exemptions were not on the ground of mere residence, and the effect of the decision would not be to prevent sanitary authorities obtaining sites on any farm on which the tenant resided, if the conditions as to the place being a "home farm" were not fulfilled. This would be a question of evidence in each case. In the Mullingar Union the decision has affected only nine or ten proposed houses out of a total of 128.

REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION—LEGISLATION.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What steps the Government proposes to take this Session with a view to carrying out the recommendations of the Reformatories and Industrial Schools Commission?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, his hon. Friend was aware that there were a great number of recommendations in this Report—some of which would require legislation and others not. With regard to legislation on the subject, he was afraid that at this period of the Session it was past praying for; but what could be done administratively in the matter would be carefully considered now.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MR. JOHN JAFFRAY (BIRMINGHAM).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that one of the magistrates on the Bench during the examination of the three men charged with treason-felony at Birmingham was Mr. John Jaffray, proprietor of certain newspapers called *The Birmingham Weekly Post*, *The Birmingham Daily Post*, and *The Birmingham Daily Mail*, in all of which papers there have appeared articles and paragraphs prejudging the case for the defence; and, whether copies of the *Daily Mail*, describing unrefuted evidence against Egan as "damning," and expressing the opinion that—

> "There would be nothing surprising in the announcement that pick and spade had dislodged some more sensational evidence against Egan,"

were actually circulated in court during the trial in which Mr. Jaffray acted as one of the judges?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the Question referred to matters of which he had no knowledge. He knew nothing about the contents of the newspapers referred to, and even if he knew their contents he would be powerless to interfere. If it was desired to make any complaint against the conduct of a magistrate, that complaint ought to be addressed to the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. BIGGAR: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman who represents the Lord Chancellor in this House?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I cannot answer that Question.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PROMOTION OF TEACHERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Irish National teachers are promoted by competition out of a limited number of the best answerers selected from all who present themselves at the annual examinations, or whether they are promoted upon answering a certain per-centage on the examination papers; if they are promoted upon the latter system, what are the necessary percentages to obtain third, second, first, and first of first respectively; and, whether these per-centages have been changed at any time within the last five years; and, if so, the cause of such change?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the conditions required for promotion are the answering of a certain percentage on the examination papers, combined with merit as school teachers. The percentages are 65 and 55 respectively for the first and second divisions of the first class, and 50 for the second and third classes. In all classes it is necessary that there should be no failure in any subject. Within the last five years a change was made with respect to the first class, the percentage for which was 60 in each division. This was altered in 1881 on the consideration that it was too low for the first division and too high for the second.

Mr. HEALY asked whether this rule as to school-teaching would not place the teacher under the power of the Board if there was a bad feeling against him?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I will make inquiries into the subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BANKRUPT MAGISTRATES.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Magistrates in Ireland who become bankrupt are allowed to retain the Commission of the Peace?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Whenever it comes to the Lord Chancellor's notice that a magistrate has become bankrupt, or arranged with his creditors, his Lordship causes a notice to be sent to such magistrate, calling his attention to the 21st section of the 35 & 36 *Vict.* chapter 57, and informing him that in consequence of the provisions of that section his name must be omitted from the list of those holding the Commission of the Peace.

Mr. HEALY: I will send the right hon. Gentleman a copy of the newspaper report dealing with this matter.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that the Act in question refers to a magistrate who makes an arrangement with his creditors?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That is the answer I received from the Secretary of the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. HEALY: Does the Lord Chancellor consider it sufficient to have a man's name appear in *Stubbs' List?*

[No reply.]

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What steps, if any, have been taken by Her Majesty's Government, first, to check the disturbances and fighting in Zululand, and, secondly, to prevent the Boers settling down in that Country; and, whether the Transvaal Government have been called upon to warn their subjects against such proceedings?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: In reply to the hon. Baronet, I beg to say we have taken no action beyond the frontier of the Reserve, for the peace, order, and integrity of which we hold ourselves responsible. As to the second part of the Question, in answer to the last representation which we made to the Transvaal authorities, our Resident at Pretoria telegraphed on the 14th instant—

> "Transvaal Government reply that they will inquire into the facts of alleged Boer invasion of Zululand, and take all steps in their power to prevent unlawful proceedings."

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: The hon Gentleman has not answered the Question whether any steps have been taken on our side to prevent the Boers from settling down in Zululand?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir; I answered that when I said that we had taken no action beyond the frontier of the Reserve. There are no Boers there.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS—RETURN OF LEGISLATION.

MR. WARTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will object to a Return of all Bills introduced into this House, during the last twenty years, having for their object the regulation or restriction of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor, distinguishing those for the promotion of Sunday closing, whole or partial, and also distinguishing the kingdoms, counties, and parts of counties for which it has been sought to legislate; and, a Return of all Motions made in this House on the like subjects during the like time?

MR. HIBBERT said, he had been requested by his right hon. and learned Friend to reply to the Question of the hon. and learned Member. As the preparation of the Return asked for by the hon. and learned Member would involve the expenditure of a considerable amount of time and labour without any corresponding value, and as it scarcely appeared to be within the province of the Home Office to undertake the compilation of such a Return, the reply to his hon. and learned Friend, he feared, must be that if the Return were moved for the Home Secretary would be under the necessity of declining to grant it.

MR. WARTON asked whether one reason for the refusal was that these Bills had been so numerous that the Return would be expensive.

MR. HIBBERT said, he did not refer to the expense, but to the amount of labour which would be entailed upon the Home Office.

ARMY—MILITARY BALLOONING.

MR. GREER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the recent successful ballooning operations in Tonquin, and the circumstance that the French Government are largely extending their ballooning staff, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to undertake the formation of a balloon corps without further delay?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: That subject has been for some time, and still is, under the consideration of the Engineers' Department of the Army, both with reference to the preparation of material to be used in ballooning expeditions, and also with reference to the training of officers and men for the duty. It is not, however, considered desirable at the present stage of the inquiry to enter into any detailed explantion on the subject.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—SARAKHS.

MR. JERNINGHAM asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can now lay before the House Papers respecting affairs in Central Asia of a later date than the 25th of January last; and, especially, whether he can at an early date present, for the information of Members, the Correspondence of Her Majesty's Government with the Government of Russia respecting the reported cession of Sarakhs to that country?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I regret that I am unable to lay upon the Table at the present moment the Papers for which my hon. Friend asks. The usual practice makes it inexpedient to do so until the Correspondence on the subject is concluded.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: In reference to this question, may I ask the noble Lord whether he can inform the House how many hundred miles the Russian Forces have advanced towards India since the present Government came into Office?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must ask for Notice of that Question.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, on the 6th instant, at Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, a boy named Edward Shadlock, aged ten years, charged with stealing, was remanded to the 19th instant, by Mr. J. J. Young, a magistrate of the county; whether the governor of the prison in which the boy is confined has reported that he is very small for his age, and only four stone weight, and that he thinks it a cruelty to keep the boy so long in prison; whether the action of the magistrate was within the law; and, what action, if any, will be taken?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The statement in the Question is true. I have received a Report from the Governor of the prison to the effect that the boy was very small for his age, was only 56 lbs. in weight, and that it was cruelty to keep him so long in prison. The boy, after he was charged, was remanded for a fortnight, which was equivalent to a fortnight's imprisonment. But, unfortunately, the case has been delayed in coming before me, or I should have taken the same course, as I did in another case, that of a little girl 11 years of age at Portsmouth, who had been committed for obtaining tea and sugar by false pretences. The trial was not to come on for three months, and I ordered bail to be obtained for her. I think such a course ought to be pursued in all cases.

Mr. WARTON asked whether, seeing how many cases of the sort arose, it would not be well if the right hon. and learned Gentleman issued a Circular to the magistrates to let them know what the law on the subject was?

NAVY—THE COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE SHIPYARDS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty will consent to place on the Committee recently formed to inquire into the construction of ships in private yards, some representative of a dockyard constituency?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: The Members of the Committee recently appointed, of whose duties my hon. Friend's Question does not give a complete description, have been invited to serve on it on account of their personal experience in, and acquaintance with, the business of building and repairing ships, and not because they represent any particular interest or constituency. The Admiralty see no reason to add to their number.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will the hon. Gentleman place upon the Table a copy of the document constituting this Committee and the Order of Reference?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I have stated, in answer to a Question, both the names of the Members of the Committee and the Order of Reference.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I shall call attention to this subject in Supply.

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS—THE PEABODY TRUSTEES.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General, If he is aware that the following notice was issued on the 10th instant to the tenants of the Peabody Dwellings:—

> "Tenants are requested for the future to pay their rent in silver, as the superintendent is intructed not to give change for gold. By order of the Trustees, J. Crouch, secretary;"

and, whether the Trustees are legally entitled to refuse to take gold tendered in payment of rent by their tenants?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) was understood to say that the hon. Gentleman had drawn a wrong inference in the last paragraph of the Question. Of course gold was a legal tender, but any person could refuse to give change for gold. As the rents were probably paid in sums less than 20*s.*, he presumed the Trustees simply required that the exact amounts should be paid, and the difficulty of giving change thereby obviated.

ARMY—THE 45th REGIMENT AT ATHLONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, What course has been taken with regard to certain officers reported to the Colonel of the 45th Regiment at Athlone for being concerned in an attack upon a dwelling-house; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the Report, and of any documents connected with it?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: From the reports I have received it would seem to be exaggeration to describe the incident referred to as an attack upon a dwelling-house. It appears that three months ago some officers played a silly practical joke at the lodgings of a brother officer, whom they had failed to awake. A fanlight was broken and a plaster statuette damaged. The damage was fully paid for, and the landlady declined to take further proceedings. The officers were admonished, and the affair was thought too trivial for official report.

Mr. SEXTON: I would like to ask the noble Lord whether, in his opinion, the throwing of a champagne bottle through a fanlight——

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not in Order to ask a Minister for his opinion.

Mr. SEXTON: Well, I will endeavour to get the opinion of the noble Lord on a future day.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875—INSPECTORS.

Mr. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the useless expenditure incurred by the ratepayers in rural districts in Ireland by the working of the Explosives Act of 1875; if inspectors are really required, if it is not practicable to appoint the police to carry out the almost nominal duties; and, if the Government will sanction the transfer of the duties to the police, if magistrates at petty sessions courts appoint the constabulary as inspectors?

Mr. TREVELYAN: My attention has been previously drawn to this subject, and again by my hon. Friend's Question. The Government do not consider the expenditure incurred under the present system to be useless if the Inspectors appointed by the local authority discharge their duties; but they have considered the hon. Member's suggestion that the police should be appointed; and if the consideration of the matter by the local authorities be favourable, I hope that we shall be able to permit it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—ALLEGED RESISTANCE TO SHERIFF IN LEWIS.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged deforcement of a sheriff's officer in the Island of Lewis, arising, according to newspaper report, from an attempt by a sheriff's officer and certain estate officials to pull down a house of a superior description recently erected by a crofter, Murdo Graham, at his own expense; whether he will inquire into the circumstances; and, whether the Procurator Fiscal (the Public Prosecutor) is also Law agent for the proprietor of the estate?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have inquired into this matter, and I am informed that Murdo Graham holds his croft at a rent of four guineas, with which rent he is nearly three years in arrear. He has a wife and three grown-up sons living with him. Roderick Graham, one of these sons, having lately married, began, contrary to the regulations of the estate, the remonstrances of the estate officials, and the strongly expressed objections of his father, to build a house upon his father's croft with the avowed purpose of residing in it. His father complained to the Chamberlain, and a petition was presented in the Sheriff Court, at the instance of Lady Matheson, with concurrence of Murdo Graham, for interdict against Roderick Graham proceeding with the erection of the house, and for warrant to pull down what had been built. Although the petition was served on Roderick Graham, he did not appear. Interdict was obtained, and he was ordered to pull down the house within 10 days. He did not do so, and warrant was then granted to the estate officials to pull it down. They made two attempts to do so, but were driven off. On the 3rd of this month, Roderick Graham was convicted before the Sheriff-Substitute for breach of the peace on this occasion, and on the 15th Roderick's brother Donald and two other persons were also convicted of breach of the peace on the same occasion. Messrs. W. and J. Ross, solicitors, Stornoway, are, I understand, the local agents for Lady Matheson. One of them, Mr. William Ross, is the Procurator-Fiscal. The civil proceedings were conducted by his partner, Mr. John Ross.

SCOTLAND—THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

Mr. FRASER MACKINTOSH asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in awarding to the clerk said to have been instrumental in detecting the frauds in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, promotion on the occurrence of the first vacancy, it is the intention of the Treasury to promote him over the heads of the forty-nine clerks senior to him in the class; whether such promotion will not only be a direct reflection on the characters of every one of these clerks, but also deprive each of them of a step in the order of promotion, and permanently injure his prospects; whether it will not be at variance with the answer given by the Treasury to a Memorial presented to them by the clerks in January 1883; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of said Memorial, and of the Treasury's answer thereto?

Mr. COURTNEY: Promotion in this Department is not regulated by seniority, but by merit. The promotion, therefore, of an officer of exceptional merit is neither a reflection on the character of his colleagues, nor an injury to their prospects of promotion; neither is the step in this case at variance with anything the Treasury has caused to be said to the clerks. There is no reason for laying the Papers on the Table.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) ACT—SECTION 3 —LOANS FOR IMPROVEMENTS.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If, at present, no loan to small tenants, for improvements, can be granted by the Board of Works in Ireland for a less sum than £50; and, if he would consider the propriety of so far modifying the rule as to permit of loans of £20 being advanced, provided that three or more tenants, residing in the same district, applied at the same time for loans exceeding in the aggregate £50, so that the expense of inspection need not be incurred for a less aggregate sum than £50?

Mr. COURTNEY: The suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member was made some time ago, and was fully considered when made. The conclusion come to was that it would not be practicable, at least for some time to come, to reduce the minimum amount of a loan under the 31st section of the Land Act. It is now very difficult to keep the work under this section from falling into arrear, and the difficulty would be increased by the adoption of the proposal. Moreover, while we believe that every legitimate case is met by the present rules, we fear that it would be practically impossible to combine the inspections in the manner suggested.

ARMY—THE ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT ATHLONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the recent attack on a dwelling-house at Athlone, Whether the Irish Executive have questioned Police Constables Leddy and Mahoney, of Athlone, as to their knowledge of the circumstances of the outrage, and especially of the persons concerned in perpetrating it; whether any one on behalf of the Executive has questioned Miss Garty, of King Street, Athlone (the lady whose house was attacked), and her servants, as to when, in what manner, and by whom, steps were taken to induce the lady to refrain from making a complaint, and the servants from giving evidence on the subject; and, if such inquiries have not been yet made, whether they will now be instituted?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Constables Mahoney and Leddy have been questioned, and state that they know nothing whatever of the circumstances. They were on patrol duty at a distant part of the town at the time of the alleged occurrences and heard nothing of them until the next day. Miss Garty has also been questioned. She distinctly told the head constable at the time, and since, that she declined to take any proceedings, and that she did not wish the police to take any steps. She states that it is not the fact that anything was done by any person to induce either her or her servant to refrain from giving evidence on the subject.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the Government take any action in the matter if affidavits are laid before them?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I must consult the Law Officers on that point.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT OF CARLINGFORD, CO. LOUTH.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is at present any Catholic magistrate in the Petty Sessions district of Carlingford, county Louth; whether the Catholic population of the parish of Carlingford is not, by the last census, 6,929 out of a total population of 7,687 persons; whether any Catholic gentlemen from the district have been recently recommended to the Lord Lieutenant of the county or the Lord Chancellor; and, whether any of them have been entrusted with the commission of the peace?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I believe there is no Roman Catholic magistrate residing in the Petty Sessions District of Carlingford, but two Roman Catholic Resident Magistrates attend the Petty Sessions there. I do not question the accuracy of the hon. Member's quotation of figures from the Census Reports before the House. I am not aware whether any recommendations have recently been made to the Lieutenant of the County; but the Lord Chancellor informs me that the names of two Roman Catholic gentlemen of the district have been forwarded to him, and that he will consider them in due course.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, At what rate is furlough pay issued to the Officers of the several Indian Staff Corps who entered those Corps after the date of the publication of the Government of India Order, No. 1064, of 10th November 1868, published under the authority of the Secretary of State for India, but who entered those Corps before the date of the Despatch from His Grace the Duke of Argyll, republished by the Government of India in G.O.G.I., No. 588, 1st July 1881?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The rate at which furlough pay is issued to the officers in question is the official rate of exchange annually fixed by the Secretary of State in Council.

EXCISE—THE TOBACCO DUTY.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will grant a Return showing the amount of Manufactured Tobacco imported into the United Kingdom in each year of the last fifteen years, specifying each class of Tobacco and the Duty paid by each?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): If the hon. Member will refer to the Return made in 1881 on the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), he will find the information he requires for 40 years, from 1841 to 1880. I have no objection to supplement that Return by another for the period which has since elapsed. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman when he has seen the Return will speak to me.

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the paralysis of trade caused by the prospect of the Congo Treaty, the steamer which left Liverpool on Wednesday last having only a few tons of cargo instead of many hundred tons, he will inform the House when he can relieve merchants from the existing painful state of suspense, and give some definite information to the Country?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) on the 9th instant, when I stated that Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the Government of Portugal as to the best means of obtaining the acceptance of the Congo Treaty by other Powers, and that meanwhile I am unable to make any further communication to the House.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked whether the noble Lord would use his influence with the Prime Minister to secure an early discussion of this subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had no control over the arrangements of the House.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SPELDHURST NATIONAL SCHOOL.

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, in reference to the case of two boys being flogged in the National School at Speldhurst for attending a service at a Dissenting Chapel, Whether he has received any satisfactory guarantee against a repetition of the same conduct; and, if he will inform the House on the subject?

Mr. CROPPER asked whether the boys in question were not sons of the schoolmaster?

Mr. MUNDELLA: A letter was written by the Secretary of the Education Department, on the 26th of April, to the Rev. Donald D. Mackinnon, correspondent of the Speldhurst School, which set forth the grievance complained of, and which concluded as follows:—

> "In these circumstances my Lords require from the managers a distinct undertaking that no similar interference with the management of the school will be permitted, and that the master will be warned against administering punishment under similar circumstances. I am directed to add that any recurrence of such conduct will cause the school to forfeit the annual grant, and will endanger the continuance of the master's certificate."

In reply, we received the following letter, on May 3:—

> "Speldhurst Rectory, Tunbridge Wells, May 3, 1884. Sir,—I am directed by the managers of the Speldhurst Schools to further

acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April 24 last, and, in reply, beg to say they are willing to give the undertaking asked for in your letter, and further to say that the master has already been warned against administering punishment under similar circumstances. I have, &c. (signed), DONALD D. MACKINNON."

THE IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—THE VACANT INSPECTORSHIP.

MR. **HEALY** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can announce that the vacant inspectorship in the Local Government Board will be filled by a gentleman of the same religion as the late inspector ?

MR. **TREVELYAN**: The Local Government Board have selected Dr. Woodhouse, who has twice acted as temporary Inspector, for the Medical Inspectorship rendered vacant by the death of Dr. Roughan. It has, I understand, always been the practice of the Department to promote a temporary Inspector to the permanent office when he is eligible ; and Dr. Woodhouse had performed his work in a very efficient manner. Dr. Roughan was a Catholic ; Dr. Woodhouse is a Protestant. Of the three Medical Inspectors there will, I am informed, after Dr. Woodhouse's appointment, be two Catholics and one Protestant. This was the state of things up to the year 1876.

MR. **HEALY** asked whether Dr. Woodhouse was appointed because he had supported the starvation policy ?

[No reply.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND, &c. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION) ACTS, 1873 AND 1883 — COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS.

MR. **ANDERSON** asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it be true, as stated in *The Standard*, that he has arranged for the commutation of the Marlborough Pension of £4,000 a-year into a payment of £107,000, and of the Penn Pension of £4,000 a-year into a payment of £67,000 ; and, if so, what is the reason for the price of the one being 27¾ years' purchase, and the other 16¾ years' purchase ?

MR. **COURTNEY**: The statement is not accurate. The terms in the two cases are the same—namely, somewhat under 27 years' purchase, and as this represents a rate of interest of nearly 3¾ per cent, the transaction is a favourable one for the taxpayer.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—PENSIONS TO WIDOWS AND ORPHANS.

COLONEL **MILNE-HOME** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office, If any arrangements have been made for granting Government relief to widows and orphans of soldiers who were killed during the Soudan campaign, or who have died of illness then contracted; and, if so, on what scales the relief will be given ?

LORD **HENRY LENNOX** said, he desired to put to the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question on the same subject. What arrangements had been made for granting relief to the widows and orphans of the Naval Brigade, the seamen and mariners who were either killed during the Soudan campaign or died of illness since, and on what scale would this relief be given ?

SIR **ARTHUR HAYTER**: In answer to the hon. and gallant Member, I have to say that the War Office has proposed and the Treasury has assented to the handing over of the Soldiers' Effects Fund to the Patriotic Fund Commissioners, and that they have undertaken to provide pensions for the widows and orphans of soldiers who died of wounds or from illness contracted during the late campaigns. In doing so, any allowance or pension already granted from charitable funds will be taken into account. The rates will be regulated by the Commissioners, and by them the widow of a private soldier will receive, I believe, 3*s.* 6*d.* per week and 1*s.* 6*d.* for each child. These pensions to widows will be granted in future wars, and will be in lieu of the gratuity of one year's pay, which until now has been all that the soldier's widow received.

MR. **CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: In answer to the Question of the noble Lord, I have to state that it is in our power under an Act of Parliament passed last year to make an allowance to the widows and children of men who are killed in service, and no doubt advantage will be taken of that power in the present case. I cannot now state the scale of relief, as no Notice has been given of this Question.

POST OFFICE—ISSUE OF THE NEW ANNUITY AND INSURANCE TABLES.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked the Postmaster General, If he is yet able to fix a date for the issue through the Post Office of contracts under the new Annuity and Insurance Tables?

MR. FAWCETT said, he was sorry he could not fix a precise day when the new Insurance and Annuity Scheme would come into operation; but he quite hoped it would be brought into operation in the early part of June.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—COSTLEA, CO. LIMERICK—CASE OF MURPHY AND O'CONNELL.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the two tenants (Murphy and O'Connell) who were evicted off the property of Mr. C. John Coote, in the barony of Costlea, and county of Limerick, have proposed to Mr. Coote to pay for the farms they lately held whatever rent the Land Commissioners would fix on same, and to settle the arrears due on same terms; and, if so, why it is, under these circumstances, that six police are allowed to continue in charge of those farms, at the expense of the Country?

MR. TREVELYAN said, the Question only appeared on the Paper on Saturday, and it had been referred to Ireland for inquiry and report. The official answer had not been yet received. He had received a telegram from Mr. Coote, and another telegram from a private gentleman, but he had not been able to ascertain in what capacity the latter had written. If the hon. Member would postpone the Question, he would have the official Report.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he would repeat the Question.

THE MALAY STATES—ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

MR. WODEHOUSE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether further progress has been made towards the complete abolition of slavery in the Protected Malay States?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: All slave debtors became free in Perak on January 1st of this year, so that slavery of any description is now illegal there, as it already was in Selangor and Sungei Ujong. This emancipation has been accomplished without difficulty and at a small expense to the State, owing to the praiseworthy co-operation of the chief people. Most of the masters refused to accept payment and liberated their slaves voluntarily, following the notable example of His Highness Rajah Idris, Chief Justice of Perak.

THE COINAGE BILL.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the mintage or profit on the Coinage of Silver for the last five years, before the Coinage Bill is read a second time?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have no objection to give such a Return; but I should prefer that it should extend over a wider period than the last five years, during two of which the annual profit on the silver coinage has been exceptionally large. I will arrange with the right hon. Gentleman for the words of a Return.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering the grave consequences that might ensue from allowing other matters to be discussed by the Conference, he will now state to the House that the Government will not go beyond that which they have publicly stated as the object of the Conference, namely, the Law of Liquidation?

MR. GLADSTONE: The House having a knowledge of the basis of the Conference, I can state to the House that we adhere to that basis without any change. The Question of the hon. and gallant Baronet has more or less reference to another subject relating to Egypt, which has, I think, been mentioned in this House and "elsewhere." France has offered and has asked for explanations bearing upon our position in Egypt and an exchange of views which both Governments alike desire. After reciprocally communicating their views they will consult the other Powers, and we shall then at the earliest moment make known to Parliament our proceedings in this matter.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I beg to ask whether we shall be made acquainted with these communications with the French Government before the Conference meets?

Mr. GLADSTONE: They do not relate to the same subject-matter as the Conference, and I cannot give any positive intimation as to time with respect to these communications, because they have not concluded, and it is not for me to say how many days they may occupy, or whether they may occupy a week or more.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that these communications, or the result of them, will be laid before the other Powers. I think they should previously receive some kind of sanction from Parliament.

Mr. BOURKE: Are we to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that the subject of these communications with France is not to be laid before the Conference?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I really am a little surprised at the Question, because I have already stated we do adhere to the basis of the Conference, and I apprehend it would not be according to rule to lay Papers before a Conference unless they relate to the subject of the Conference.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Will the proceedings of the Conference be in any way dependent on the communications with France on other subjects?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman asks me to describe what may or may not take place in the minds of other Powers, and that I cannot undertake to do. All I can say is, that I do not anticipate anything of the kind, and that no Power in accepting the Conference has made any condition precedent to accepting it.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the negotiations now going on between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government do, directly or indirectly, in any degree recognize the principle of the Dual Control?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That would be entering into the heart of the matter of these communications. I am afraid I must ask the noble Lord to ascertain the views of the French Government, and compare them with the views of the English Government before I can give an answer to his Question.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S MISSION.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, for the satisfaction of those who believe that it has never been brought to the knowledge of the Mahdi and of the Soudanese who are engaged in Military operations what the object of the mission of General Gordon is, he will consider the feasibility of conveying to them that Her Majesty's Government, in sending an English General to the Soudan, only desire to effect by peaceful means the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops, Egyptian employés, and other Foreigners, who may wish to leave the Country; and, whether he will take steps to enter into diplomatic relations with the Mahdi, or whomsoever else may be the governing power in the Soudan, in order to prevent, if possible, all further effusion of blood, to establish a fixed frontier between Egypt and the Soudan, and to effect an arrangement by means of which General Gordon and those who may wish to accompany him will be enabled peaceably to withdraw from the Soudan?

Mr. GLADSTONE: As regards the first part of the Question, I have the fullest conviction that the pacific object of the mission of General Gordon is and must be perfectly well known to the Mahdi and to all persons of any position in the Soudan. Of that I entertain a moral conviction. As we have no diplomatic relations with the Chiefs and others, it is not possible for me to say more on the subject. The hon. Member will recollect that the Proclamations of General Gordon on the subject have been made public as far as he could make them public; and, as a matter of fact, his mission was a fact of great notoriety, and he put himself in communication with the Madhi, although I do not know that we are in possession of the terms. Likewise, in the neighbourhood of Suakin the Proclamations were made by the English authorities, which distinctly pointed to the pacific end of General Gordon's mission, and expressed a strong desire that the chief tribes in that portion of the country should go to Khartoum for the purpose of making arrangements with General Gordon.

Then, Sir, with respect to the second part of the Question, all I can say to my hon. Friend is that I hope he will not expect an answer of a definitive character—at any rate, unless he shows me how to go to work, and how we are to enter into diplomatic relations with the Mahdi or the governing Powers in the Soudan. But whatever measures the Government take will be in the direction indicated by the Question — to make effective arrangements with regard to bringing all the difficulties to an end.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the difficulties have not arisen through General Gordon asking for assistance to put down the insurrection and smash the Mahdi?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member is perfectly justified in his reference; but I am speaking of General Gordon's mission to the Soudan, and of the public and formal declaration of General Gordon to the people of the Soudan when he arrived at Khartoum. How far his later communications to the Government have become known in the Soudan, in the present state of our communications from that quarter I am not able to state.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the main object of the proposed Conference of the Great Powers is to find some means for enabling Egypt to meet her overwhelming financial embarrassments; whether, since these embarrassments have been in part produced by the high rates of interest at which the various Egyptian Loans were floated, and by the margin between the amount received by the negotiators of the Loans and by the Egyptian Treasury, the British Cabinet have any intention of proposing the reduction of the rate of interest on the debt held by the subjects of France or any of the other Great Powers; and, whether the Government will propose, in connection with any such proposal, that the margin between the moneys received of Messrs. Goschen and Frühling, and other firms consisting of British subjects, and the moneys received by the Egyptian Treasury, over and above the per-centage ordinarily charged in such cases, should be refunded?

Mr. GLADSTONE: With respect to the first paragraph of the Question, it is true that the object of the proposed Conference of the Great Powers is to find some means of enabling Egypt to meet her financial engagements. With respect to the second paragraph, it is a question distinctly involving the means by which the equilibrium of the interim charges is to be brought about in Egypt, and with respect to the future provision for the government of the country; and it will be anticipating the very purpose for which the Conference meets if I were to enter into the question of these means. With regard to the third Question, I am bound to say that, in the first place, I conceive that to enter upon a retrospect of transactions of this description, long ago concluded and accepted by all the parties, would be a matter entirely beyond the usual course of proceeding; but in saying that I must not be understood to be giving the smallest countenance to anything which the Question seems to indicate—namely, that the transactions of the eminent house referred to were transactions conducted otherwise than upon the most scrupulous principles of commercial honour.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether it was a fact that the nominal amount raised by those three loans of Messrs. Frühling and Goschen was £11,996,000; whether the actual amount received by the Egyptian Treasury was £7,648,000; and whether the difference between those amounts represented the scrupulous regard for commercial honour of which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have not in my mind the figures which represent the margin which the hon. Gentleman refers to. I have expressed no opinion on this subject, my object rather having been to avoid an expression of opinion, and especially an opinion bearing apparently upon reputations which I believe to be as unblemished as those of any Gentleman in this House.

Mr. BOURKE: With respect to the negotiations just announced as now going on between England and France with respect to Egypt, will the House have an opportunity of seeing the Papers relating to those communications in a short time?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have already said that we will produce these Papers at the earliest period consistent with our public duty. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman must understand that the first thing is that our communication with France should be such as to produce perfectly mutual co-operation. That done, we shall, at the very earliest moment at which that can be done, make known our proceedings to Parliament.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me if I ask another Question. It is of great importance—whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, in any negotiations with France or any other Power, to maintain the paramount interests of this country in Egypt?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I have to ask another on the same subject. If the right hon. Gentleman thinks fit to answer the Question—which I do not think he will—perhaps he will be good enough to say whether the self-denying Protocol signed by this country and other Powers in 1882 is still in force?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not quite certain whether I have in my mind at this moment the exact terms of the Protocol. With respect to the Question of the hon. and gallant Baronet, I think he must see that, subject to general laws and justice, it is our duty to maintain the paramount interests of England not only in Egypt, but all over the world.

FRANCE AND CHINA—TREATY OF TIEN-TSIN.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the article in *The National* with regard to the recent Treaty of Tien-Tsin, in which it is stated that the French "do not plume themselves on an exaggerated Liberalism in tariff matters; and, though they will not shut out Foreign trade from their new markets, yet they will make it pay its share of the expenses of the conquest and occupation;" whether the freedom of commerce in the provinces of Southern China will, in future, be hampered by prohibitive duties, and henceforth dependent on the goodwill of France; whether China has infringed the letter of her engagements with other Powers by her concession of exclusive rights to France; and, whether he will take any steps, and, if so, what, to prevent the destruction of British interests?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have not seen the article to which the Question refers, and Her Majesty's Government, I find, upon reference to the Foreign Office, are not in full possession of the details of the Treaty reported to have been recently concluded between France and China. I therefore think it would be quite premature to give any account of that Treaty.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

Sir DONALD CURRIE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the deplorable condition of affairs in Zululand, for which Great Britain is largely responsible, Her Majesty's Ministers will take immediate steps to prevent continued disorder and bloodshed, and to secure good Government in that Country?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman is, no doubt, aware that Her Majesty's Government has made itself responsible for peace and order in that portion of Zululand which is called the Reserve. With respect to the portion beyond and not included in the Reserve, Her Majesty's Government have not come to any decision to meddle, by military interference, with the affairs of that portion of the country. They will make it their duty to fulfil the engagements they have undertaken to those who have presumably acted upon the faith of those engagements, and will do all that is requisite for the security of the Reserve.

PARLIAMENT—RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—ALTERATION OF NOTICES.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Sir, I rise to a point of Order, which I venture to think is of great interest to Members of this House, and a matter bearing on the Privileges of the House. On Tuesday last I got the first place in the ballot, and I then gave the usual public Notice that on that day four weeks I would move for a Select Committee to inquire into the alleged prevalence of felonious practices among certain public officials in Ireland, and into the conduct of the Government in reference thereto. Shortly after Question time I handed in to the Clerk at the Table a written Notice couched in almost precisely the same terms. In the course of the afternoon I received from the Clerk at the Table a Notice intimating that you, Sir, took exception to the Notice on the ground that it was not sufficiently specific in regard to the officials referred to, and that it could not, in that form, appear on the Notice Paper. I at once communicated with the Clerk at the Table, and I tendered an amended Notice, giving, as I think, a closer definition of the scope of my Motion without mentioning names, and I then learned that the objection to my original Notice was that the whole class of officials in Dublin might consider that the phrase "certain public officials in Dublin" cast an imputation on them, and that I should specify the names of the particular persons I referred to. Well, Sir, I pointed out, in the first place, as far as I understood the Rules of the House, that it was sufficient in a preliminary Notice to state the subject of the Notice for the information of the Government, whose conduct was impugned in the Notice. I pointed out, besides, that if I were to specify the names at once, and give the exact terms in which I should subsequently propose the Motion, I should have to mention a large number of public officials as to whom the evidence in my hands was as yet only of a presumptive character, and I was most reluctant to do that until I had an opportunity of producing the evidence upon which I based my statement. But I should either have to do that according to that requisition, or I should be obliged to restrict the scope of the Select Committee's inquiry to two or three notorious cases in regard to which the evidence, in my opinion, was complete. The effect of that would have been to thwart the object of my Motion. Under these circumstances, I submitted to the Clerk at the Table that it would be less objectionable and hurtful to avoid mentioning names for the present until I had satisfied myself as to the terms of the Motion. At the same time, I distinctly intimated that, if pressed to mention the names, I was perfectly ready to do so. The Clerk seemed to be impressed with my view of the matter, and made a verbal alteration in the amended Notice, and I came away thinking that the matter was all right. I remained in the House during the whole of the Evening Sitting, and I heard no more of the matter until the House had risen for the night. Then, on leaving the House, I got a note stating that you, Mr. Speaker, still objected to the terms of my Notice, and that it would not appear on the Paper. Of course, it was too late that night to do anything in the matter. I came down to the House the next day and explained to you, Sir, how the matter stood. I may say that I had not thought it advisable to trouble you unnecessarily in the matter; but I had distinctly requested that, if the terms of my amended Notice were still objected to, I should be put in a position in which I should be able to exercise the right, which belongs to every Member whose privileges are interfered with, of making an appeal to you. You, Sir, when I mentioned the matter, were still of opinion that the names should be specified. That was the only objection you made to my Notice. You did not give me the remotest hint that my right of priority in the matter had been interfered with. I at once specified three of the most notorious names and handed in another Notice, which was accepted; and I thought the difficulty was at an end. To my amazement, on perusing the advance Orders on Friday I found my Motion was sixth instead of first on the Notice Paper for the 10th of June, and among other hon. Members who got precedence in the meantime was the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) for a Motion in reference to the Disestablishment of the Church of Wales, for which, if I remember rightly, the hon. Member did not ballot at all on that day. I asked the Clerk whether this was an accident; and I was informed by him that as other hon. Members had since given in Notices, and as I had not given any Notice on Tuesday—although I had actually given two Notices—I had forfeited the right of priority which I had gained in the ballot. I beg now to invite your attention, Sir, to the definition given in Sir Erskine's May's book as to the object with which the preliminary Notice is given, and the circumstances under which it might be interfered with. On page 272 he says—

> "Every Member is entitled to propose a Question, which is called 'moving the House,' or, more commonly, 'making a Motion:' but

> in order to give the House due Notice of his intention, and to secure an opportunity of being heard, it has long been customary to state the form of the Motion on a previous day, and to have it entered in the Order Book or Notice Paper."

It is not necessary to refer to the Standing Orders of the House determining priority; but Sir Erskine May, in describing procedure, says—

> "Each Member, in his turn, then rises and reads the Notice he is desirous of giving, without comment or debate, and afterwards takes it to the Table, and delivers it, fairly written out, and with the day named, to the second Clerk Assistant: but only one Notice may be given by a Member, until the other names upon the list have been called over. When all the names have been called, any Members may give further Notices. In 1876, attention was called to a practice by which several Members combined to give Notice of the same Motion, in order to secure an undue priority for that Motion in the ballot. Such a practice was condemned from the Chair as irregular, and an evasion of the Rules of the House. It is not necessary that the Notice should originally comprise all the words of the intended Motion: but if the subject only be stated in the first instance, the question, precisely as it is intended to be proposed, should, if possible, be given in some days before that on which it stands in the Order Book."

Then, in reference to the circumstances under which a Notice may be expunged, Sir Erskine May says—

> "Where a Notice infringes any Rules of the House, or is otherwise irregular or informal, it is corrected by the Clerks at the Table, before it is printed"—nothing is said of its never being printed at all—"if possible, in communication with the Member himself—and, in cases of special difficulty, under the direction of Mr. Speaker. If a Notice, when publicly given, is obviously irregular or unbecoming, the Speaker will interpose, and the Notice will not be received in that form."

I must remind you, Sir, that you did not interpose when I stated the Notice in exactly the form in which I subsequently handed it in. Under these circumstances, I ask your ruling, in the first place, whether, in its original form, my Notice did not sufficiently state the subject of my Motion for the information of the Government? I ask you, also, to rule that the subject was eminently one of which the House could properly take cognizance. It is an inquiry into alleged courses which have created a scandal in the public service in Dublin. I ask you, further, to rule—apart altogether from the names of the individuals—that whereas my Motion inpugned the conduct of the Government in reference to these alleged scandals—of which the Government perfectly well knew all about—it was already sufficiently definite without mentioning the names at all? Finally, I ask you to rule that when I—having altered the Motion in the sense in which you desired it to be altered, having distinctly intimated that I would alter it still further by giving the names if required, and having, also, distinctly claimed the right of an appeal to you—if you are still of opinion that my amended Notice was not a regular one—I ask you to rule that I did all that was in my power, and that I took every step I could to give the House proper Notice, and that I am not to be damnified or to lose my right of priority merely because the Clerk at the Table neglected to inform me, before the rising of the House, that my Motion was still irregular? I ask you, further, to rule whether, if the Clerk objects to the wording of a Motion, and if other Motions are given in before there is any opportunity of discussing those objections or settling them—possibly by collusion with the Clerk at the Table, although, of course, I only put that as a possibility—whether that fact would destroy that right of priority?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise to Order. I heard the hon. Member say that something has occurred by the possible collusion of the Clerk at the Table.

Mr. O'BRIEN: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstands my meaning. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. GLADSTONE: I certainly heard the words "possible collusion," and in my opinion those words are irregular.

Mr. HEALY: Certainly not. My hon. Friend said it might possibly happen.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Whether it has happened or might happen does not matter in the slightest degree. The words "possible collusion" ought not to be introduced into the debates of this House. The Clerk at the Table has not the protection which we all enjoy in the power of defending ourselves. I am afraid, Sir, that I can quote no precedent bearing on this point of Order, because, although for more than half-a-century I have been a Member of this House, I have never, until the last three or four years, known such an attack made.

MR. O'BRIEN: I rise to Order. The right hon. Gentleman has no right to intervene when I am putting to you, Sir, a Question of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: If I had considered that the right hon. Gentleman was out of Order I should have called him to Order. The right hon. Gentleman is entitled to proceed.

MR. O'BRIEN: Will you allow me, Sir, to go on?

MR. SPEAKER: I call upon Mr. Gladstone.

MR. GLADSTONE: My object, Sir, in rising to Order was to invite your protection for the Clerk at the Table.

MR. HEALY: Nobody attacked him [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. GLADSTONE: I said that I was not able to cite precedents in this case for the protection of the Clerk at the Table, because I have never, during more than half-a-century, until within the last three or four years, heard those gentlemen, of whose method of performing their duties, generally, I say nothing, made the subject of attack in a manner which I will not characterize further. I will only say that the Clerks are here without the possibility of defending themselves; and it does appear to me that if the Rules of this House are to allow of attacks of this kind upon gentlemen who cannot defend themselves, it is a matter of importance seriously calling for the consideration of the House. I respectfully submit to you, Sir, whether or not the protection of the House ought not to be extended to these gentlemen?

MR. O'BRIEN: Upon the point of Order—[*Loud cries of* "Order!" *amid which the hon. Member resumed his seat.*]

MR. SPEAKER: I should have risen at once to vindicate the impugned character of the Clerks at the Table if the statement I was immediately about to make in reply to the hon. Member did not itself amply vindicate it. With reference to the remarks made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), I have to say——

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker—[*Loud cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I have to say that the hon. Member gave a Notice of Motion couched in these words—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the alleged prevalence of felonious practices among certain officials in Ireland, and the conduct of Her Majesty's Advisers in Ireland in reference thereto."

My attention was called to that Notice, as being of too vague and sweeping a character; and the hon. Member was requested to put the charge in a specific form. Some time elapsed. The hon. Gentleman was, I believe, privately spoken to, and on Friday he put in his amended Notice in the following terms:—"To call attention to the felonious practices alleged to prevail among certain public officials in Ireland." The Clerk at the Table, in the exercise of his duty, did, I believe, object to that Notice as being tainted with the informality of the original Notice—namely, that it was too vague and sweeping in its terms. In defence of the Clerk at the Table, I am bound to say that, when complaint was made as to the vagueness of the charge, the hon. Member himself stated to the Clerk at the Table that it was easy to find names, and that he would, if necessary, put in the name of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and before a month had elapsed he had no doubt he would find evidence against him. I appeal to the House whether that is a Notice which should be allowed to remain on the Order Book of the House. When the hon. Member complains that he lost priority, I have only to submit to the House whether he did not lose it by his own informality and want of observing the Rules of the House?

MR. O'BRIEN: Perhaps I may now be permitted a word of explanation. In the first place, as to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, I venture to say that they are as much beside the question as they are out of Order. I did not, in raising the last question I put to you, Sir, make the statement he has attributed to me.

MR. SPEAKER: I must tell the hon. Member that it would not be proper to allow a debate to arise on a question of this kind. The hon. Member has asked a question on a point of Order, and my ruling has been given, as it is my duty to give it whenever a question of Order is raised.

MR. O'BRIEN: Sir, an attack has been made upon me. Surely, two sentences of explanation are not unpermissible. In raising the latter portion of my question I did not, in the least degree, intimate that in this particular instance there had been any collusion on the part of the Clerk at the Table. I simply put that as a possibility, as an illustration of the inconvenience that might arise if you were to rule that the Clerk at the Table, at his own discretion, having raised an objection to the wording of a Motion, would be able to deprive a Member who had given Notice of a Motion of his priority.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member wishes to withdraw his imputation against the Clerk at the Table, he is in Order and may proceed; but otherwise he is out of Order, and I must tell the hon. Member that he must not go any further.

MR. O'BRIEN: Sir, I have made no imputation, and, therefore, I have no imputation to withdraw. With reference, Sir, to your statement that I mentioned that I would add the name of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to those that I would have to specify as guilty of felonious practices, permit me to say that there is no truth whatever in that statement. Quite the contrary, I pointed it out, as one of the inconveniences of obliging me to specify names, that I should have to lump together the names of a large number of officials in Ireland, coupling with the names of those who were guilty of felony those Irish officials who, in my estimation, have been guilty of screening them.

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask you, Sir, for the information of the House, if you will be good enough to state whether a Member loses his priority of Motion if the terms of his Motion should be objected to by the Clerk at the Table, and other hon. Members intervene with Motions?

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion being out of Order, it was amended and put in after two other Notices had been handed in, which, consequently, took precedence of the Notice given by the hon. Member.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to ask you, Sir, on the point of Order—because the matter is of considerable importance to many hon. Members—whether it is necessary for a Member who has the first place in the ballot to give to the Chair

his Notice of Motion in the exact terms in which he intends to move it; and, further, whether it is not sufficient for a Member who has obtained the first place in the ballot to give Notice of his Motion at any time during the evening on which he had obtained that first place? It appears that my hon. Friend, according to your statement, has been deprived of the right which he had obtained of the first place in the ballot by the fact that two other Members came before him on the same evening before he had perfected his Motion in accordance with the direction of the Chair. I can only say I think it is of importance that we should have information upon this matter, because I think that a great majority of Members entertain an entirely different idea.

MR. SPEAKER: I have only to say, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, that if the amended Notice had been given on the same day, it would have been in Order, and the order of precedence would not have been broken; but it was not given in until 5 o'clock on the following day, at which time two succeeding Motions had been handed in, and had thus obtained priority.

MR. O'BRIEN: I beg to give Notice that, whenever the Government applies for a Vote on Account, I shall call the attention of the House to the charges of felonious practices against James Ellis Ffrench, Inspector and Detective Director; Augustus Cornwall, Secretary of the Post Office in Dublin; and George Bolton, Crown Solicitor; and to the conduct of the Irish Government in reference thereto.

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister what Business he proposed to take before the Whitsuntide holidays?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the Government proposed to take the Committee on the Franchise Bill to-morrow, and Committee of Supply on Thursday, when a Vote on Account would be proposed, and other Votes would be proceeded with. After the Committee of Supply, the National Debt Bill would be taken—not the Bill relating to coinage; on Friday morning the Committee on the Franchise Bill would be resumed, and in the evening there would be Committee of Supply as usual. On Monday they would again proceed with the Franchise Bill, and on Tuesday the first Business must necessarily be the Motion for the Adjournment of the House. The first day after the holidays would be devoted to Supply, according to established usage.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—REMOVAL OF YORK ASSIZES.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked Mr. Attorney General, If there is any truth in the report that it is contemplated to remove the Assizes altogether from York to Leeds; and, whether he can give him an assurance that no such a step will be taken?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that he could not give the hon. Member the assurance which he required, because he had had no information of any such report.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.—[Bill 1.]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Holms.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I have to express my regret that I have been unable to call the attention of the House to the subject at an earlier period. In the course of this Session, on several occasions, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) has pressed the Government to give an early day for the second reading of this Bill. I certainly do not complain of the pressure which he has endeavoured to put upon the Government. I think I am right in saying that it was dictated by a friendly interest in the Bill; and I am sure that he has at heart, as much as I have myself, the object which the Bill is intended to accomplish. But I can assure him that I have been at least as anxious as he is, and with greater reason, to bring the matter to an issue; because, in the course of the long and somewhat heated controversy that has taken place on the matter outside the House, many harsh things, some unjust things, and some untrue things, have been said about myself and about the Department which I have to administer; and although, on the present occasion, I intend, as far as possible, to dismiss these things altogether from my mind, in so far as they are not essential and pertinent to the discussion, yet I do feel that it is due to the House, and due to the Board of Trade also, that there should now be made a full statement both of the facts and the information which are in my possession, and upon which I have formed my proposals, and also a full explanation of those proposals themselves. Sir, I do not think the delay that has taken place, although I greatly regret it, has been altogether unprofitable. It has enabled me, at all events, to have conferences with gentlemen, most representative men, whose large experience and great knowledge of affairs has put them in a position to offer very valuable advice, and who are fully qualified to represent the interests which the measure is expected to touch; and as a result of the frequent conferences I have had with those gentlemen I cannot but hope that the way is somewhat smoothed. I think I have been able, at least in their case, to remove some of the misunderstandings that have unfortunately prevailed; and I am quite certain that I have profited by the advice and suggestions they have been good enough to give me. I shall tell the House, in the course of my speech, what has been the result of these conferences; but, in the meantime, all I want to say is that, while I think that the main principle of this Bill—the principle, that is, that it is a wrong, an inexpedient, and an immoral thing that a man should be able to make a profit out of the loss of his ship, with the lives he has in his charge—while I say that this principle, indisputable and undisputed, has not been denied, as far as I know, by any person in the course of this controversy, yet, when we come to discuss the means by which effect shall be given to that principle, I have not been presumptuous enough to suppose that I could, of my own motion, devise a perfect scheme that could not possibly be amended. I have always been of opinion that, in a matter so difficult and so complicated, it was certain that the proposals which might be originally made by the Government would be very considerably altered and improved by discussion; and I have always anticipated that this work of amending, criticizing, and improving the Bill would be performed by the Grand Committee on Trade, my experience of which last Session convinced me that no better or more powerful instrument for the purpose has ever been devised. Unfortunately, shipowners, acting, as I think, entirely under a misapprehension of the nature of the inquiry by such a Committee, have shown themselves indisposed to refer the Bill—at all events, in its present form—to a Grand Committee; and, that being so, I have not hesitated to say, both in this House and in answer to applications made to me, that I should be perfectly ready to meet the representatives of the great interests concerned in friendly discussion to endeavour, as a preliminary step, to remove, if possible, the chief points of difference between us, in order that the matters of detail, which would still stand over for discussion, might, by common consent, be referred to the Grand Committee.

I do not conceal from myself that the great obstacle to anything like a satisfactory settlement of this question has been the irritation, widespread and very deep, which has prevailed among all classes of shipowners, and which has been founded upon the impression that great and undeserved imputations have been made upon their character as honourable men, which they were bound to resent. Well, I think the shipowners are in this matter under an entire misapprehension. I am not conscious of having made any such charges against them. If I have done so—if by any deficiency in the necessary qualifications which one has to apply to general statements I have produced this impression—all I can say is, I am very sorry for it, and that I hope any failings in the advocate will not be allowed to prejudice a good cause. But I will add this—that, having read over the various speeches I have made on this subject, I am unable to see what is the ground for the impression which has prevailed among the shipowners. I have tried on every occasion to guard myself, in the most distinct terms, against being supposed to bring anything like a sweeping and indiscriminate charge against this class of Her Majesty's subjects; and on every occasion I have appealed to the majority of shipowners—to what I called on one occasion the vast majority of respectable shipowners—to co-operate with me in bringing about an improvement in a state of things which all agree with me in thinking deplorable. But the misunderstanding has existed, and has prejudiced the settlement of the matter; and it, therefore, becomes necessary that I should try once more, in the presence of the House, to state what are the allegations on which I found this Bill. I will endeavour to state them plainly, and I hope I shall do so in terms that will not give offence to anybody. I have resented the statement that I have brought charges against shipowners; but we will not quarrel about words. I have made two distinct allegations—you may call them "charges" if you think fit. The first allegation I have made is that there are black-sheep in shipowning as well as in every other trade with which I am acquainted; and that it is the duty and the interest of all good shipowners to do all in their power to discountenance the proceedings of the less scrupulous members of their body. That is the only allegation I have made with respect to persons; but I have made another allegation to which I attach much greater importance. After all, though we are bound to legislate for exceptions, we should not be justified in touching the whole of these complicated interests, if it were only for the sake of legislating for exceptions. But I have brought a charge against the law—not against persons, but against the state of the law—and what I have said is, that any law which enables a man to make a profit out of the loss of his ship and the loss of his crew is a law contrary to sound policy. I say that, as long as human nature is what it is, one of the most powerful motives to which we can appeal is the motive of self-interest; and I say that I desire to enlist this self-interest on the side of safety, instead of allowing it to operate, as it now does, in the opposite direction. Well, Sir, these are the two charges I have made, which have been repeated in various speeches of mine, and have appeared, amplified and enlarged, no doubt, in documents issued from the Board of Trade. I confess that, that being so, it is with a little surprise I have read speeches by Lord Salisbury—one of them delivered at Lillie Bridge, in Chelsea, and another in Manchester—in which the noble Lord the Leader of the Conservative Party described this Bill as an unjustifiable attack upon a great interest, and as being made on horrible and fantastic grounds. Well, I am sorry to have to answer the noble Lord in his absence; but that is inevitable, I am afraid. He cannot come down to me, and I would not, if I could, go up to him. But I will only say this—that I think the noble Lord has a very short memory, and I think he must have forgotten entirely all the proceedings, in reference to this subject, of the Government of which he was a Member; and, above all, he must have forgotten the speeches made by his Colleagues in that Government in this and in the other House of Parliament. Why, Sir, this is not the first time attention has been called to the circumstances on which I found my proposals. It has been a subject of consideration and anxiety to several Governments, and to none more than the Government of our Predecessors. In the year 1876 the Government of Lord Beaconsfield brought a Bill into this House, dealing with this subject of Marine Insurance and Marine Liability, which was called the Maritime Contracts Bill. That Bill was thought of so much importance that it was intrusted to the Leader of the House, the right hon. Gentleman who is now Leader of the Opposition; and the right hon. Gentleman, I must say, showed such a mastery of this technical, difficult, and complicated subject that I am going to quote from the speech which he made on that occasion; because I cannot find any words which more adequately or more admirably represent the views which I have attempted to put before the public, and upon which alone I base the proposition I am now going to make. The right hon. Gentleman said, on February 10, 1876—

> "It is the opinion of the Government that we should take a step further for enforcing more strictly than at present the liability of shipowners, and throwing on them more distinctly the duty of taking care that their ships and the lives of their seamen on board of them are properly provided for. As I said before, whatever the Government can do in this matter the Government is attempting to do; but, after all, what the Government can do is as nothing compared with what the shipowners themselves can do. The Government may stop one or two patent leaks, or prevent one or two patent evils; but, after all, it cannot take that care—that continuing, that efficient care—which a shipowner is himself liable and bound to take of his vessel; and it is, therefore, to the exertions of the shipowner that we are mainly to look for improvements in this matter."—(3 *Hansard*, [227] 144.)

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "But there has long prevailed in this country and elsewhere a system of insurance, the effect of which is that if a man partially insures his ship he mitigates his loss; if he wholly insures her he covers his loss; and if he over-insures her it is possible that his loss may become his gain. Therefore, unless proper attention is paid to this subject, and care is taken to prevent, as far as possible, the over-insurance of ships, it is possible that a system most excellent in its intentions, most valuable in its working, may be the cause of great abuse and evil."—(*Ibid.* 146.)

Further on in his speech the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "God forbid that I should impute to shipowners as a class, or, indeed, to any man, that he would deliberately send his ship to sea over-valued, in the hope that she may be lost; but I would point out that this practice of over-valuation exposes shipowners to very great temptation. And not only has it that effect, but it produces on seamen and the public at large an unsatisfactory feeling—namely, that the loss of a ship may be an actual gain to her owner—a feeling which cannot be at all good for the service. It cannot be satisfactory that that which is loss of life and property to a great mass of the population should be not only no loss, but a subject of gain, to any one class of that population."—(*Ibid.* 149.)

That is my case. I should be perfectly content to rely upon that language, and not to go one atom beyond it, in order to recommend these proposals to the House. I confess I hope and believe that I may make an appeal to both sides of the House, and to all Parties in the House, to treat this matter as altogether outside Party politics. I am sorry that the noble Lord, to whom I have already referred, has treated it differently. For my part, I will not follow his example. I do not claim for Liberals, and I do not claim for the Liberal Government, any monopoly of interest in the safety and welfare of the sailor. But I say that, having made these proposals on grounds similar to those I have just quoted, I hope I may have from the other side of the House a large measure of support for the Bill I ask to have read a second time. Going back for a moment to the allegation that these statements of mine are horrible and fantastic charges, I should like to say that in repudiating such allegations I do not rely alone upon what has been said by the late Government, or by any Government. I am quite content to accept the language of shipowners themselves. I shall have to quote a number of shipowners in the course of my observations; but at the present moment I will only quote two short extracts, which have recently been brought to my notice. One is an extract from a Circular headed "Turnbull and Sons Steam Shipping Company." Messrs. Turnbull, of Whitby, are the well-known shipowners, who manage with great skill and integrity a very large fleet of vessels. I am informed that this Circular has been issued by the shareholders in the Company, who happen to be advocating the formation of a new Association for self-insurance; and in the course of it I come upon these words—

> "It is an acknowledged fact that there are fewer ships lost, and less sacrifice of life at sea, where self-assurance is adopted."

Is that a horrible and fantastic charge against shipowners? If so, it is made by shipowners, and I only accept it from their mouths. I have noticed also in the papers a trade advertisement of a great line of steamers, the National Steamship Company (Limited); and this trade advertisement concludes with a notice to the effect that—

> "This Company takes the risk of insurance up to £100,000 on each of its vessels, thus giving passengers the best possible guarantee for safety and avoidance of danger at sea."

I shall have to return to this matter presently. In the meantime, I pass on to another ground of the opposition which has been so strongly expressed to this Bill. I admit fully that this Bill means a great alteration of the law and practice affecting the shipping interest if it is passed. There is no doubt that it would cause, in the first instance, at all events, considerable inconvenience to the interests affected, and considerable disturbance of trade. Under these circumstances, it is quite natural—and I do not complain— that this great industry should resist the application of this new measure to them. All experience shows that you cannot pretend to interfere in any way with any great trade or industry in the country with the full consent and approval of that trade itself. Let anyone try now to deal with the licensing legislation, and see how far he will have the approval and benevolent support of the Licensed Victuallers. Let anyone try to deal with the Banking Laws. Let us take our illustrations from the past. Let us consider what happened in the case of manufacturers when the Factory Acts were first proposed to Parliament. I say it with great regret, having been a manufacturer myself, and being still proud to have belonged to that great class; but I am bound to say that very few manufacturers supported the application of the Factory Acts. They protested against them on the ground that they disturbed their trade; that it meant a transfer of their industry to other countries; and that they were wholly unnecessary laws. Now, however, it is admitted, with common consent, that they have been of the greatest possible advantage, not only to the women and children whom they were principally intended to protect, but to the manufacturers themselves, who derive advantage from everything that improves the condition of their workpeople. But these Acts were opposed by almost every manufacturer in the House. The same thing happened with regard to mines. The legislation for mines was strongly opposed by the mining interest. It will be in the recollection of the House how, in the present Parliament, the Employers' Liability Bill was opposed by hon. Members, and especially by the late Mr. Knowles, who was universally respected in this House, and who was as honest as the day, and as transparent as possible; yet who came down here, believing every word he said, and declared that he and all his fellow mine-owners would be ruined if the Act were passed, and that foreign countries would reap enormous advantages. We all know that those doleful predictions have not been realized; that no one has been injured by the Act; and during the short time it has been in operation it has conferred great advantages upon those interested in it. But on that occasion the shipowners came down and voted against Mr. Knowles in favour of the application of the Employers' Liability Act to the mine-owners. Now, I ask the shipowners to show good cause why the mine-owners and manufacturers should not vote against them when I propose that equal laws should be applied to the sea service.

I say, then, that the shipowners will have to make out a very good case, and will have to show very good grounds, against further interference with their trade. They will have to show that the necessity is less than it is in other trades which have been constantly interfered with by Parliament. Well, is the necessity less? I shall have a good deal to say about that presently; but, in the meantime, I will mention only one fact as having some bearing on what I am now saying. As soon as this Bill was introduced, in the very heat and fury of the storm raised at its introduction, there was held a great meeting of delegates of the shipping interest at the Cannon Street Hotel. All sorts of persons connected with shipping attended; there were present the picked men in the trade, selected because they were the best fitted to bear aloft the flag of this great profession, and to vindicate the character and honour of the trade they represented. They were certainly not in a very friendly or conciliatory mood towards myself upon that occasion; and I am afraid they did not make any practical suggestion I was able to utilize on a subsequent consideration of the subject. A full account of the meeting was given in *The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette,* and I have taken from that paper the names of the delegates who attended. Of the 59 picked men present 49 were shipowners in their own names, others were shipowners not registered in their own names, and many held shares in Shipping Companies. Forty-nine, as I say, were registered in their own names. I have looked up the matter, and I find that in the last five years these 49 owners, who, it must be remembered, were picked men, have lost 65 ships and 367 lives; and that, of the 49, nine alone have lost 36 ships and 177 lives. I beg the House to understand what my object is in bringing these facts forward. I am not going to found any accusation against these gentlemen. That is not the purpose of my argument. It may well be—I hope it is—I have no reason to doubt it—that every one of these casualties was such that no human skill or human foresight could possibly prevent it. They are all, perhaps—I dare say it is so—the act of God; but what I say is this—that the trade of which such statements can be made concerning the picked men in it, and in which a loss of life so terrible is an ordinary incident, is not a trade that can come here to assert its independence of criticism, and to say that it will not assist in making the changes which are suggested in order to save life in future. I should like, before leaving this matter, to say a word about another meeting held about the same time—a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool. Although the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool had disapproved of many portions of the Bill, they gave it a careful and exhaustive consideration, for which I am exceedingly grateful. They made many admirable suggestions, the majority of which I found myself able to adopt; and if all shipowners had given me the consideration on this question which the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce did we should have come to an agreement very early. At this meeting of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce there was a gentleman present whose name was Captain Hatfield. He denounced the Bill as one which would hamper a legitimate industry; he denounced the Chamber for giving it a moment's consideration; and he intimated that it was a Bill which should be kicked out at once. With much rhetorical emphasis he took the Bill out of his pocket and threw it on the floor and stamped upon it. The incident seems to have been the cause of much laughter, and it had almost passed out of my mind when a correspondence in a Liverpool paper between Captain Hatfield and Mr. James Samuelson, accusing Captain Hatfield of having lost ships, and specifying the date, excited my curiosity, and I made inquiries. This is Captain Hatfield's history. I find that since 1877—less than seven years—Captain Hatfield has owned 12 ships, and in the course of that time has lost 11 of them. Adding together the periods for which each vessel has been owned respectively, I find that he has lost annually one in three of the ships he owned; and then he goes to the Chamber of Commerce in Liverpool, and says—

"Mr. Chamberlain is hampering a great industry." Is this an industry the House of Commons is going to protect? It is not an industry at all; or, if it is, it is best described, in the sailor parlance, as "the trade of selling ships to the Underwriters." It is a trade by which nobody benefits—by which the Underwriters do not benefit, although, perhaps, they do not lose.

MR. MAC IVER: I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in making personal and libellous attacks of this description without giving previous notice in order to afford the possibility of a reply?

MR. SPEAKER did not answer the question, but called upon Mr. Chamberlain to resume his speech.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I will not take any notice of the language of the hon. Member who has interrupted me; but I may say that I have taken these facts from documents which I shall be willing to lay upon the Table of this House, and with regard to the accuracy of which there cannot be the slightest possible doubt. There can be no doubt that during the last seven years the gentleman to whom I refer has owned 12 ships, of which he has lost 11; and if the hon. Member desires it I am prepared to give him the names of them. I have said nothing more than that. To make such a statement as that would not be libellous outside of the House, and I do not see that it can be libellous to make it inside the House. What I say is, that this trade—this industry—is not a profitable industry to the nation. It cannot be a profitable one when 11-12ths of the capital invested in it goes to the bottom of the sea; and that is what has happened in the present case. Before leaving this branch of the subject, I will now quote the words of another shipowner of a very different class, to whom I desire to pay all honour and credit. The proceedings of this meeting of Liverpool shipowners were opened by the reading of a letter from Mr. Papayanni, who said—

> "I do not intend coming to the meeting, because I cannot speak in public. I am in favour of the passing of the Merchant Shipping Bill into law, with or without modification. I am not afraid that my interests will be affected; but even if they would, I see no reason why sailors' lives should be sacrificed to save my interests. It matters not whether the statistics are exaggerated or not; whether the yearly number is 4,000, or 3,000, or 2,000, or less; it is quite enough for me to know that lives are lost, and that lives may be saved by the passing of the Bill, whether many or few. I have no right to dispose of other people's lives, and say that only 3,000 are lost annually. If I do not feel disposed to help the sailor and his family, I ought not to oppose those who are willing to do so. In my opinion, this is not a purely commercial question, to be dealt with in the ordinary way of business. I shall be obliged if you will hand this letter to the Chairman at the meeting. — I remain, &c., BASILIO PAPAYANNI."

I say this is a letter that is a credit to the man who wrote it, and I believe the spirit it expresses is shared by many shipowners, if I may judge from the expressions of opinion from shipowners which have reached me, and with which many others, I have no doubt, sympathize.

I now pass on to state the points which I am going to prove to the House; and if I fail in proving them, then my case for the Bill will, of course, be seriously weakened. I propose to show to the House that the loss of life at sea is excessive, and that it is increasing rather than diminishing. I propose to show, in the second place, that it is due to causes which are more or less preventable in their character. I propose, in the third place, to show that all impartial authorities agree that an increase of care and precaution would diminish these losses; and, in the last place, I propose to show that the state of the law and the practice of the trade undoubtedly tend to relax ordinary motives for care, and afford a temptation to negligence. If I prove these propositions, I hope the House will not accept the responsibility of further delay, but will do something to improve and amend a law which I think, under the circumstances, will stand self-condemned. The House is aware of the immense magnitude and importance of this trade with which I am attempting to interfere. I will start with an admission that no unnecessary obstacle should be thrown in the way of the development of this trade; and if there is any word, line, or clause in the Bill which interposes unnecessary obstacles, which hampers the trade without directly tending to the saving of life, then that clause, or line, or word, ought to be omitted or amended; but I must say that up to the present time, although the shipowners have been more or less complaining, we do not seem to have interfered very seriously with the prosperity of their trade. I say that the shipowners have been, more or less, complaining. I dare say it will be in the recollection of the House, or, at any rate, of those hon. Members who are older Members than myself, that the indignation and anger which were expressed at the passing of the Navigation Laws were quite as great as anything which has occurred at the present moment. Coming down to a later time, we know how much discontent was expressed by shipowners in the early stages of what is known as the Plimsoll agitation; in the later stages the voices of the shipowners were drowned by the display of popular feeling which Mr. Plimsoll succeeded in arousing; but in the earlier days the shipowners complained, as they complain now, that any attempt to touch their trade would hinder its development, destroy its prosperity, and drive it into the hands of foreigners. What really happened? I have here the figures for three decennial periods, which are as follows:—I hope I am not troubling the House; but I will give the figures in thousands of tons, omitting the hundreds. In 1862 the steam tonnage of the country was 537,000 tons; in 1872 it was 1,537,000 tons; and in 1882 it had reached 3,335,000 tons; it had, therefore, increased six-fold in the period to which I allude. The sailing tonnage diminished slightly in the same period. It was 4,335,000 tons in the first period; in the second period it was 4,155,000 tons; and in the third period it was 3,586,000 tons. The total had greatly increased, from 4,872,000 in 1862 to 6,921,000 in 1882; and, enormous as that increase is, it does not represent the real facts of the case, because the substitution of steam for sail gives a much more effective carrying power, which is reckoned in some quarters as something approaching to five times the value of the old carrying power. But, taking it at four times the value, the whole increase appears to be from what would have been equivalent to 6,483,000 effective tons to 16,926,000, or an increase of 161 per cent. No doubt, that is an immensely satisfactory state of things; and we should have nothing but satisfaction to express if it were not for this terrible loss of life which continually accompanies the development of the trade. I will now deal with the figures relating to the loss of life, concerning which much controversy has arisen; but the controversy is due, in part, to some confusion arising from the different Returns which have been made dealing with different parts of the same subject. There was a valuable Return moved for by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); but that Return is not the one to which I will refer on the present occasion, because, in the first place, it includes Colonial ships, with which, I think, we have not much to do; and, in the second place, it omits other causes of loss of life besides drowning in wrecks and casualties at sea. I refer now to a Return presented on the first day of the Session, numbered [C. 3875]. It is a Return which I may describe as the most complete of any ever presented to Parliament. It professes to give the total loss of life by drowning or accidents in British merchant ships registered in the United Kingdom. The loss of life among passengers I do not intend to refer to, because it is so extremely varying a figure. If an emigrant ship happens to be lost the Returns for that year at once go up abnormally, and nothing like a clear average can be obtained. I am sorry to say that even this Return must be taken with some qualification. I find, however, that the qualification does not affect the purpose for which I am going to use the Return. I should not, however, be candid if I did not explain that fact. The first column professes to give the number of masters and seamen employed. It has been taken from a Return prepared by the Registrar General of Seamen, but prepared for a different purpose. It has been drawn up with no regard to the loss of life at sea. It was ordered by the House of Commons, with a view, I believe, to show what number of men might be counted upon for the Royal Navy; and, upon examination, I discovered that it included a certain number of men employed in fishing vessels. Well, I believe that, in order to make the figures accurate as showing the number of men exclusively employed in the Mercantile Service, we shall have to deduct a seventh or an eighth. But the House will see that, as far as this alteration has any effect at all, it will make the case appear worse than it does in the Return as it actually stands; because, if the men are fewer, the proportion of loss of life will appear greater. As I shall, however, show, that is corrected by another observation which I have yet to make. The second column gives the number of seamen lost in wrecks and casualties. It is taken from *The Wreck Register*, and is absolutely accurate. The third and fifth columns show the number of seamen lost by accident when the vessel was not damaged nor the crew drowned—for instance, when they were washed overboard, or fell from the mast. This, also, is prepared by the Registrar General of Seamen, and it is prepared in connection with the duty which falls upon him of distributing the estates of deceased seamen. I find it is incorrect in several particulars. For instance, if a man had no estate, although drowned by accident, he would not be included in this Return; consequently, the real loss of life would be greater than appears here. That would also make the case worse than it appears in the Return. On the other hand, I find that there are some duplicate Returns, and also that a certain number of these cases are accidents arising in connection with fishing vessels and Colonial vessels; so that altogether a deduction, which is also about a seventh or an eighth, must be made from the total for these various causes. Therefore, putting aside any loss of life by accident or casualty, which does not come before the Registrar General of Seamen, we get the result that, although the figures in the several columns are not absolutely accurate, the proportion shown in columns 7 and 8 may be taken as practically correct for every purpose. With those observations, let me call the attention of the House to the facts as disclosed by the Return. In the first place, taking the total loss of life, and dividing the 12 years embraced in this Return into periods of three years, the results are these. The total loss is 9,314 in the first three years; in the next there is a slight falling off, the number being 9,181; in the third period the number is 7,612, a great falling off; and in the last three years 9,553, which is the highest figure in the series, showing, therefore, as I have already said, that the loss of life, on the whole, is tending to increase rather than to decrease. Now, the decrease in the third period can be accounted for in this way. It followed almost immediately on the Plimsoll agitation; and although I do not myself think the legislation of that time can be said to have produced any very great result, yet I think that the attention which was called to the matter, and the self-examination of shipowners themselves in view of the agitation going on around them, had a very advantageous effect in diminishing the loss of life. Well, Sir, the proportion of seamen lost to the total number employed was one in 72 during the whole period named, and one in 66 for the last three years. Some of the shipowners have complained, with reference to these figures, that I have always referred to the worst year, 1881. That was because, at the time when I first took hold of the subject, 1881 was the last year for which we had any Return. But these shipowners have gone on to refer to the great and satisfactory diminution which took place in 1882, when the loss fell to 2,832, having been 3,748 in the previous year. But, Sir, unfortunately that was only a very temporary improvement. Since the presentation of this Return we have got one for 1883, and in that year the loss of life went up again. It amounted to 3,304, and that is more than in any previous year of the series, excepting 1872, 1874, and 1881. It amounts to a loss of one in 66 of the whole of the seamen employed.

Mr. WHITLEY: Does that include coasting vessels?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: It includes the whole of the merchant shipping registered in the United Kingdom. Certainly, it includes vessels engaged in the coasting trade; but it must be taken with the qualification I have already explained to the House, which vitiates, to some extent, the Returns of the Registrar General of Seamen. That, however, does not at all affect the proportion. This increase during 1883 has taken place chiefly under the head of missing vessels; and missing and foundered vessels are of the class of cases which are always referred to by shipowners as the only class for which they ought to be held responsible. They assert that the other classes ought to be eliminated from the comparison; but that they are fairly liable to criticism in the matter of missing and foundered vessels.

Mr. CHARLES PALMER: Would the right hon. Gentleman give the distinction between missing vessels and other casualties?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No; I cannot give that, because it is not in the Return. I may say, however, that whilst the losses from missing vessels in 1882 were 881, and from other causes 629, in 1883 the losses from missing vessels were 1,251, and from other causes 662. One argument in reference to these figures is that we ought to take into account the great increase of tonnage, to which I have already called attention, and the great increase in the number of voyages. That, I think, is an entire misapprehension, and has nothing to do with the argument. The danger is not measured by the tonnage, or by the number of voyages. What we have to look to is not the tonnage or the mileage, but the time during which the sailor is exposed to risk; and there is no reason to suppose that the time of employment of an ordinary sailor now occupies a larger period in each year than it did before. Now, I say that these figures constitute, at all events, a *primâ facie* case. There is terrible loss of life. The shipowners complain that I have taken a single year. Well, drop the single year and take the whole 12. What is the fact with regard to the whole of these 12 years? It is this—that in that time 36,000 men suffered violent deaths; and of the whole number one in six lost his life. [An hon. Member: One in 66.] No; one in six of the average number employed in the whole 12 years, of every man, every boy, every officer, and every seaman, lost his life in the British Merchant Service. Go on, and carry that a step further. If you assume that the average working life of the seaman is 24 years, then you will find that one in every three will, in the course of his working life, perish by a violent and dreadful death. [*Murmurs.*] Many who go on a forlorn hope have a much better chance of existence than our British sailors. I hear a little murmuring behind. I hope there will be no misunderstanding. I am not at present drawing any conclusion from these facts, and certainly I am not basing upon them any charges. If I have to bring any charge I will endeavour to bring it so that nobody shall be under any misapprehension as to who are the persons against whom I bring it. All I say of these figures, and I am sure I carry the House with me—shipowners as well as other Members—is that a trade with such incidents as these, it will be agreed, is not altogether in a healthy or satisfactory condition. It cannot be regarded with equanimity, this tremendous loss of life, or be considered a necessary incident of any traffic. I may take an extreme view of this matter; but I ask myself sometimes whether we are justified in carrying on a trade if such a loss of life as this is inevitable in connection with it. We boast of our national prosperity, take pride in the development of our national wealth and national enterprize. These things, good as they are, may be bought too dear; and, in my opinion, they are bought too dear if they cannot be bought without a sacrifice of life such as I have described.

But, Sir, this loss, instead of increasing, ought to have gradually decreased, considering what has been done by Parliament, by public authorities, and private philanthropy to diminish loss of life. I will not speak of legislation. I do not think it has been very successful; but even that has done something. But take the enormous improvements which have been going on around our coasts in regard to harbours. In the course of 12 years the Tyne, the Wear, and the Tees, have been deepened; these rivers have become magnificent waterways, and there are now found at their mouths safe harbours, where formerly no shelter could possibly have been obtained. The same process has been going on all around our coasts. The lighting of our coasts has exhibited an extraordinary development. I am informed by the Lighthouse Boards that during the period which I have chosen there have been erected 10 new lighthouses, while 6 new light vessels have been provided. During the same time 11 lighthouses and seven light vessels have been greatly improved and furnished with all the modern improvements; and there has also been created all round the coast a system of fog signals from which the best results are expected. I am told that over £500,000 has been provided for new works alone, and nearly £4,000,000 have been expended in the maintenance of the whole system. The National Life-boat Institution, in the same period, reports that 9,744 lives have been saved, either by their boats or in connection with services for which they have given rewards. Appliances under the control of the Board of Trade have saved 4,765 lives; and yet, in spite of all those tremendous efforts, the annual loss of life at sea is increasing continually; and having been one in 72 in the first period of three years of the time to which I have referred, it has become one in 66 in the last year for which we have any Return.

I will ask the House to consider this from another point. This seems a tremendous loss of life; but it will seem still greater if you contrast the loss of life at sea with the loss of life in the most dangerous land pursuits. Take the case of railways. In 1873 the number of persons employed was 274,000, of whom 773 were killed, or one in 354. The loss of life at sea is five times greater than the loss of life among the employed on railways in 1873, since which time accidents have been diminishing. Although I do not know what the number employed now is, I know this at least—that it is in excess of what it was in 1873, and yet the number of lives lost has been reduced to 553; so that I am certain I am within the mark if I say that not more than one in 600 annually lose their lives in the service of the Railway Companies by violence. Then I come to the case of mines, and I take for the purpose of comparison the average of nine years, during which I find the loss of life was one in 454, which is, I think, about one-sixth of the loss of life which takes place at sea. And whereas in the first three years the loss of life was 506, in the last three years it was only 455, although there was a great increase in the number of hands employed. I have endeavoured to find out the loss of life in the sea service of other countries, and I have obtained from the Foreign Office certain figures; but I am not sure that implicit reliance can be placed upon them. The information is to the following effect:—In Italy, for five years past, the loss of life was one in 454 of the seamen employed; in the Netherlands, one in 232; in Norway, during a period of eight years, one in 277; and in Germany, the worst case I could find, one in 123 on an average of five years. I really am not justified in asking the House to rely on these figures; but, so far as they go, they would seem to show that loss of life is less in foreign sea service than in our own.

Now, Sir, I cannot help thinking there has been a little too much readiness in some quarters to accept this terrible and deplorable loss of life as an inevitable incident. I do not believe that it is an inevitable incident. It is impossible to say how many of those lives could have been saved; but what I can show the House clearly is, that those lives have been lost from causes which are in the nature of preventable causes. I do not mean, by that, that all of them could have been prevented; but they are in the nature of causes which might have been modified, according as greater or less precautions have been taken. In order to show this clearly to the House, I propose to analyze the Returns for a single year, and I take the Returns for the largest year, 1881. The total loss of life in that year—3,748—was one in 56; of that number, 2,352 perished in wrecks and casualties. Dividing them again under different heads, I find that 104 lost their lives owing to collisions. Now, collisions form one of the causes which shipowners in some quarters believe should be entirely eliminated from our calculation. The shipowners say—and this appears reasonable at first sight—"How can you possibly hold us responsible for an error of judgment of our captain thousands of miles away?" I think, however, that I can show the House that the irresponsibility of the shipowners is not so clear. There is still a responsibility from which they cannot escape. I will quote one single fact in corroboration of that opinion; and that is, that the Underwriters, who ought to know something about it, insist that in collision cases the shipowner shall take 25 per cent of the risk. It is true that 25 per cent is frequently covered by honour policies, or in some other way; but, at all events, the shipowners are required to take 25 per cent of the risk; so that, so far as the practice and intentions of the underwriting business goes, shipowners are required to take a quarter risk in collisions. From this it would appear that it is held that if they bear part of the risk collisions are less frequent. I have just received a preliminary Report of the Committee nominated by the Society of Arts upon Collisions at Sea. In that Report, presented in May, 1884, the Committee says—

> "The Committee has no doubt, judging by the evidence, that the illegal practice pursued by many steamers of proceeding in fogs at speeds other than moderate is not only very common in the Merchant Service, both in the 'open ocean' and in the 'narrow waters,' but is the almost invariable practice in the 'open ocean' by many of the most important lines of steamers."

I can only say that, if this Report be accurate—and it is based upon the evidence taken by the Committee—that is, if steamers are breaking the law by proceeding at full speed when they ought to go at moderate rates, then I say every shipowner is responsible, should a collision take place, for showing that he has, at least, given definite and distinct instructions to his captain and officers that they are not to break the law. Then there are other causes of these casualties which are, more or less, under the control of the shipowners. I have a letter from the Committee of Lloyd's, dated the 28th of February, 1884, in which they say—

> "Although the Committee are unable, for want of materials, to form an adequate opinion, they cannot but think that collisions are mainly due in some part to the fact that steamers sometimes do not carry their proper complement of able seamen to keep watch and to furnish look-out."

I shall have to say a word upon the subject of under-manning directly; but I wish to point out for the consideration of the House that, at all events, what I have stated shows that even in cases of collision, although there is a probability that in a majority of instances the owners have no control over the casualty, yet there may remain some proportion of cases in which they must have such control. I come next to cases of stranding. Strandings are accountable for 585 lives in the year 1881. I find that here, again, I can appeal to the Underwriters. Mr. Danson, a well-known Underwriter, who has written a pamphlet on recent losses, says—

> "Stranding is occasionally only a partial escape from foundering. It is now and then sought as such. It is most common with steamers, and too often comes of hugging the land, and shaving headlands to save time."

I might also refer to a case tried by Mr. Raffles, the able and well-known stipendiary of Liverpool, in which the Court held that the owner was to blame because he had not provided proper charts for his captains. In such cases, of course, stranding might be due to causes which might be controlled if greater care had been taken. And such, also, is the opinion of Mr. Rothery, with regard to both stranding and collisions. Mr. Rothery, the Wreck Commissioner, I am sorry to say, is very unpopular with shipowners. Shipowners are a very sensitive race, and also a very censorious race. I am bound to say that I am still smarting under their sting. I say they are censorious—I hope without offence—because I find that everybody who has the misfortune to differ from them comes in for their unmitigated condemnation. It does not matter who it is, whether it is the President of the Board of Trade, or Mr. Rothery, who sits as an impartial Judge in the Wreck Commissioner's Court, or whether it is the Admiralty Court, or Local Courts, which give a decision against them, or those officers who have to administer the Department of the Board of Trade—as, for instance, Sir Thomas Farrer, the Permanent Secretary; or Mr. Gray, the Assistant Secretary of the Marine Department; or Sir Digby Murray, our Nautical Adviser—for one and all of them, I am sorry to say, the shipowners have not a single good word. I cannot help thinking, however, that their criticism would be more weighty if it were not quite so indiscriminate. Some of us may have been culpable perhaps; but it is difficult to believe that this can be the case with regard to all of us, and that all are equally culpable. As for Mr. Rothery, I can only say that, by the common consent I believe of all who know him, he is a very able and intelligent man. He is absolutely impartial, and has no personal interest in the matter in any way. He sits as a Judge; and although I do not suppose he would claim to be infallible any more than any other Judge, yet I do think that when he expresses a serious and deliberate opinion in his official capacity, at least it is entitled to some respect and consideration. Now, Sir, Mr. Rothery has presented a Report, which has been made a Parliamentary Paper, and is in the hands of the House. He has examined into all the cases which have come before him since his appointment as Wreck Commissioner, and he has made an analysis and given the result, which has been laid before the House. He says, in the course of his Report, February 22, 1884, in connection with strandings and collisions—

> "We also find, on examining the Returns more closely, that in cases of stranding or collision the fault, as might naturally be expected, rests in general either with the master or with some person on board the vessel; but even in these cases the owner is not always entirely free from blame. The casualty may have been due to her having been sent to sea in an unseaworthy condition, or badly equipped, or with an insufficient crew, or without proper charts; and, in these cases, the owner must bear his share of the responsibility. Again, in many of these cases, the casualty may have been due to the expressed or implied instruction of the owner that the master should make a quick passage; for I find, in a great number of these cases, the casualty is due to reckless navigation, arising either from the vessel having been run at too great a speed on a dark night or in a fog, or from the unwillingness of the master to lose time by stopping his vessel to take a cast of the lead, even though in entire ignorance of his true position."

Well, now that I have said that, I must say a word upon the subject of undermanning, which has always been a cause of loss of life at sea, and is becoming a more frequent and serious cause of loss of life. I find, for instance, certain general facts from which I am inclined to draw that conclusion. It appears that while the tonnage between 1871 and 1882 increased by 23 per cent—that is to say, from 5,634,000 in 1871 to 6,921,000 in 1882—the number of men employed declined from 218,000 to 212,000, or a decrease of 3 per cent. So that while the tonnage has gone up 20 per cent, the number of men has gone down 3 per cent. Of course, the decrease in the number of men employed is due partly to improved appliances. [An hon. MEMBER: To steam.] Yes; no doubt, steam has had a great deal to do with it. The introduction of steam machinery, steam winches, steam apparatus for lowering and raising sails—in short, the more general use of machinery—justifies a certain decrease in the number of hands. But the decrease is, in many cases, more than can be justified. It ought not to be carried too far, for steam, though it can do a great deal, cannot keep a look out. You must have men of intelligence to do the work that is expected from many sailors. I have taken another series of facts and interesting figures on this subject from *The Liverpool Journal of Commerce*, which took account of the number of men employed in 25 steamers at two different periods. In the first period the number of hands was 1,083; in the second period it was 939; while in the case of 35 sailing vessels there were 767 hands in the first period, and 718 in the second. But another illustration, still more significant, I take from a very interesting Circular addressed to the Members of the House of Commons by the Scottish Shipmasters' Association, which dealt with this amongst other subjects. They compared certain vessels, not at different times, but with certain other vessels belonging to different owners; and this is the result of their comparison. In 16 vessels, with a total tonnage of 20,384 tons, there were 600 hands employed; while in 16 others, with a total tonnage of 20,957 tons, or slightly more, there were carried only 366 hands; and they ask the question—and it seems to me difficult to answer it—if the owners of the first-class vessels thought it necessary to employ 600 hands to manage 20,000 tons, how was it possible that the owners of the other vessels could think that 366 hands could manage 20,000 tons?

SIR JOHN HAY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the voyages were the same?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am afraid that information is not given in the Circular. The names of the ships were given; but, I think, not the voyages.

MR. NORWOOD: Were the first class employed in the passenger trade, and the other not?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot give that information. I cannot give all the particulars. I can give only the sources of my information—namely, the Scottish Shipmasters' Association, who, I have no doubt, will be able to give further particulars. My hon. Friend (Mr. Norwood) is anxious that we should contrast this matter in cases where the circumstances are similar. Well, I will take a case that I think is significant, though I should be sorry to press it too far. I am going to ask the House to consider the cases of two vessels, both belonging to owners of whose honour, integrity, and high character there cannot be the slightest doubt. Both were in the same place, at the same time, on the same day. On the evening of September 2, 1883, they were called upon to sustain a terrific storm in the Bay of Biscay. One—the *Inchclutha*—went down with 26 hands; the other—the *Ajax*—weathered the storm, and came home safely. Now, is there anything to account for that? It may have been a mere accident; one ship may have been more fortunate than the other. But there are some facts connected with these ships which may have some bearing on the question. The ship that was lost—the *Inchclutha*—had 26 effective hands, as against 43 effectives carried by the *Ajax*, the tonnage of the latter being 374 gross tons more than the tonnage of the former. If the crew of the *Ajax* were reduced in proportion to the tonnage of the other vessel, the comparison would be 26 effective hands in the latter, as against 37 in the *Ajax*. There was an inquiry into this case, and the Court found that the *Inchclutha* was seaworthy, and not overladen; but that, though her gross tonnage was 374 tons less than the *Ajax*, she carried 187 tons more cargo, and was, therefore, in a less favourable position to weather the storm. I find, also—I do not attach much importance to it, and I only mention it because the subject of insurance will form so large a portion of my argument—that while the *Ajax* was self-insured, the *Inchclutha* was insured £1,000 above her cost, with no allowance for depreciation, and £6,300 on her freight, being the total amount at risk. Taking all these facts into consideration, I do think the question of undermanning is one deserving the most serious consideration. I have not, however, thought it right to include in the Bill any provision to fix a statutory limit in respect of the manning of ships; and for this reason—that the moment you declare a statutory minimum, it has a tendency to become the practical maximum. The result of this would probably be that we should get an average worse than the present. But undermanning will be one of the things which will be brought under the definition of unseaworthiness; and unseaworthiness will involve heavy penalties; so that, as this will be an indication of the intention of the law, I hope that owners will be induced to look very carefully to the manning of their ships.

I must go on to deal with further loss of life. We have dealt now with collisions and with strandings; and I come next to the cases in which ships are put down as missing, or as having foundered. There was in 1881, in these cases, a loss of life of 1,559. The Wreck Commissioner reports that, so far as his experience goes—that is to say, since 1876—one-half of these cases of loss brought before him were due to causes for which the owners were responsible. He says that he has had 127 of these cases before him, and that in 67 the owners or their agents on shore were to blame. In the Returns for 1881, 104 lives are accounted for under the miscellaneous heads "explosions," "spontaneous combustion," "breakdown machinery," &c. Out of 45 of these cases brought before Mr. Rothery, the Court found the owners to blame in 17, and it is possible that some of these casualties might have been prevented. Now, I come to the last column of the Returns from the Registrar General of Seamen —1,123 persons drowned and 273 killed from other accidents. Taking them as they stand, I find that they are classed by the Registrar General under the following heads:—Drowned, 494; washed over, 162; fell from aloft, 166; fell overboard, 167; lost from boats, 45; fell over on leaving ships, or coming on board, 40; miscellaneous, 49. Under the head "Accidents other than drowning," we find—fell from aloft, 117; fell down hold, 26; other falls, 11; killed by machinery, 4; struck by spars, 14; killed by the sea, 16; killed by exposure, 7; killed by burns, &c. 15; killed by drink, 2; killed by miscellaneous causes, 61. I think the House has seen from this classification that it is clear that there is plenty of room for care, and that a little more or less negligence must make all the difference in the Returns. These accidents may have been due entirely to the fault of the men who suffered from them, or they may have been due to defective equipment, or improper machinery, undermanning, or overloading. If a ship is undermanned, the crew may be overworked, and so they become unfit to perform their ordinary duties, and liable to accidents. If a ship is overladen, she may get water-logged, the sea comes over her, and the men get knocked about and hurt, perhaps killed or washed overboard. I have with me a number of cases in which it is alleged that the accidents are owing to one or other of those causes; but it is enough for my present purpose to go through this list. There is not one single head to which this loss of life is attributed, which is not a class of what I call preventable loss—by which I mean not loss which could certainly have been prevented, but loss which might possibly have been prevented. The facts which these figures disclose constitute a very serious state of things. I am not going to appeal to the sentiments of the House of Commons. Common humanity will suffice to make us give the facts serious consideration. I have been accused of having been sensational in my statements. [Mr. MAC IVER: Hear, hear!] I take up the cheer of the hon. Member for Birkenhead, and I tell him that I do not think he will find in any language of mine statements so sensational as the facts. I cannot help it if the facts are sensational, and people may well shudder when they hear that thousands of their fellow-creatures are hurried every year to a premature and dreadful death. And these people are not Soudanese—although I do not wish to depreciate the interest the House should take in people who are not subjects of Her Majesty—they are our fellow-countrymen, who are especially entitled to our sympathy and protection, not only because they are engaged in a calling necessarily perilous, but also because upon them depends the maintenance of that commercial prosperity of which we are so proud, and, in a sense, upon them depends our very existence as a nation.

Well, I say we are bound to carry our inquiry a little farther. I have shown what is the amount of the loss, and what is the character of the loss. Now, I am going to call attention to the opinions of authorities who will, I think, be respected, as to how far these losses are preventable. At present I have only said that they may be prevented; but I am going to show, on the authority of people who command confidence and respect, and not on my own authority, that many of them might be prevented. I have already quoted the opinion of the Wreck Commissioner; I will now quote the opinions of the Assessors who sit in his Court. Who are the Assessors? They are appointed by the Home Office, and are independent of the Board of Trade. I have nothing to do with them. They are sea captains, or naval captains of great experience, who have no personal interest in these questions, and who sit to advise the Court upon technical matters. I invited three of them—those who had most experience—to give me the benefit of their views. The gentlemen whom I consulted were Captains Methven, Castle, and Parish. They, as I say, are all of them sea captains, who have been 20 and 30, and even as much as 40, years actively engaged in their profession; and they have given me their opinion in writing in the following terms:—

> "In our opinion (1) a ship properly constructed, loaded, manned, and navigated, ought to be able to keep the seas and perform her voyage in all weathers, excepting only in those exceptional cases where the weather is phenomenally bad; (2) there are many losses that are certainly due to under-manning, including strandings and collisions; (3) a great many ships, as at present loaded, are doomed to founder if they meet with successional gales, such as those which have recently happened, and which experience shows we must expect."

That statement is most significant, and is well worthy of the attention of the House. According to these gentlemen, many vessels leave the coast doomed to founder, unless they are so fortunate as to escape gales, the possibility of which may arise at any moment. They go on to say—

> "(4) If an owner were to give the master proper means for insuring safety, and were to make the safe prosecution of a voyage the first consideration, there would be fewer losses; (5) if a loss to the ship was to be more felt by the shipowner than it is, he would take more care in loading his ship and selecting proper officers and crew, and losses would materially diminish."

Well, Sir, that is the opinion of these three gentlemen, who occupy an official and judicial position. Now, I am going to call as evidence the shipowners themselves—shipowners quite as honourable as any in the country. My first witness is Mr. Dawes, a manager of one of the greatest and most splendid undertakings known to British enterprize—the British India Steam Navigation Company. This gentleman, with his colleagues, has under control 160,000 tons of shipping; and his authority, therefore, is entitled to some weight. He says—

> "I am myself fully persuaded that a very large proportion of the losses at sea are preventable. The chief causes of the disasters are

overloading, under-manning, and over-insuring."

Then, I will refer to the opinion of Mr. James Harrison, a well-known shipowner of Liverpool. He says, in a letter he wrote to an hon. Member, and which was forwarded to me—

> "I thoroughly agree with him in his view that this terrible loss of life through foundering, &c. is, to a very large extent, a preventable loss. I speak as a shipowner of much experience."

Mr. MacGregor, the Managing Director of the Glen Line, which owns altogether about 37,000 tons of shipping, says he agrees with the remarks I made to a deputation which waited upon me; and he points to under-manning as an evil only in degree less than that of unfair loading, and he calls attention to over-insurance as a question of paramount importance. I have got other quotations, but I am afraid of wearying the House. ["No!"] Then I will give one more opinion. It is that of Mr. Laing, who is a shipowner at Leith. Speaking at a meeting of the Scottish Shipmasters' Association, on the occasion that my Bill was under consideration by them, he said—

> "With regard to Mr. Currie's vessels"—

—Mr. Currie being the President of the Association and Chairman of the meeting—

> "the remarks of Mr. Chamberlain did not apply, as Mr. Currie had every reason and inducement to keep them right; but he (Mr. Currie) did not see the vessels going to sea out at Shields laden down to the gunwale. Instead of going across the Atlantic he would not go to London in them. Neither the lives of those on board nor the thought of desolate homes affected the cupidity of such owners."

Now, Sir, those are the words of a shipowner speaking to shipowners. Now, I should like to quote, as a sample of others, the opinions I have received of one or two shipmasters. Mr. Cassap, who is a shipmaster of some experience at Sunderland, in a letter he wrote to *The Shields Gazette*, says—

> "It unfortunately has become too common with owners, without an iota of feeling or of principle, to get their ships insured high, running them at all hazards, and loading them in an unfit state to contend with the elements, quite regardless of the lives of those on board."

Captain Jackson, who for the last 28 years has been actively connected with first-class sailing and steamships, writes to say—

> "Until it is made the positive interest of a certain class of owners to keep their ships afloat, neither ships nor sailors will get fair play."

I think I have said enough to show that there is a prevailing opinion amongst all classes of persons who are qualified to judge of these matters that, at all events, a considerable portion of these losses might be prevented if increased precautions could be enforced. Well, now, do not let it be supposed for a moment that I endorse any charge, if any charge has ever been made against any shipowner, that he has deliberately sent his ship to sea that it might be lost, and that the sailors might be drowned, for the sake of gain. If such a man existed he would be a monster in human form; he would be guilty of murder, and hanging would be too good for him. I do not say there have not been people who have gone very close to it. I will quote one case—that of Berwick and Houldsworth. It was proved that these men had lost 15 ships, one after another, in order to get the insurance, and they were brought up and convicted in the 15th case; one was sentenced to 20 years', and the other to 15 years' penal servitude. In these cases, however, I believe, they so arranged matters that there should be very little, if any, loss of life. But that is not the charge. The charge is not that shipowners deliberately do anything of this kind. The statement made is this—that unless it is distinctly their interest to take every precaution, even those which are doubtful, they will not take all the precautions which they ought to take; because it is an essential feature in this case that you cannot say about any particular precaution that it will infallibly save life. Take the case of over-loading, and suppose a vessel with a freeboard of 4 feet. No man in the world can say that if that vessel had a freeboard of 4 feet 1 inch she would be quite safe, but that with a freeboard of 3 feet 11 inches she was absolutely unsafe. But no one can deny that with 4 feet 1 inch she would be more safe than with 4 feet, or with 3 feet 11 inches freeboard. All I want to do is to put on the shipowner every pressure I can, in common fairness and ordinary reasonableness, in order to induce him to take as many and as great precautions as he possibly can. And I am quite certain that when it is done the loss of life at sea will be very much less than it is at present.

Well now, Sir, I ought, perhaps, to say a few words as to the failure of our existing legislation, because I admit that it has not succeeded. I think we have proceeded on wrong methods and principles. We have attempted to do two things. We have attempted, in the first place, to establish a kind of Government supervision, because we have given power to the Board of Trade to detain ships which their officers think to be unseaworthy; and, in the second place, we have endeavoured to fix criminal liability upon shipowners who are proved to have been in default in respect of precaution which they ought to have taken. Now, as regards the first point—Government supervision. It has been used to a very considerable extent; it has been used, perhaps, with some good effect. Since 1876 I find that down to last June we have detained altogether 832 ships on various grounds; and of that number only 13 have been released unconditionally — that is to say, only 13 have gone to sea without the alteration either in the loading or in connection with repairs, or in some other way which the Board of Trade thought it necessary to require. But although we have done that, and although, therefore, it is probable we have prevented accidents which might otherwise have occurred, we have acted under circumstances of the greatest difficulty; we have always acted with a sword suspended over our heads. If any of our officers make mistakes—and it is impossible that these officers, who are not very highly paid, and who are required to work in isolation, can be omniscient and omnipresent, and can avoid making mistakes at times—if any of our officers make mistakes, the Board of Trade is had up for improper detention, and a jury always gives the heaviest damages in a case in which guardians of the public purse are defendants. Consequently, we have to be exceedingly cautious, and we allow many cases to pass in which we cannot approve of the condition in which vessels leave the country, because we dare not stop them, for fear of making a mistake. As I have said, that is not all. To do his duty without failure, an officer of the Board of Trade must be omniscient as well as omnipresent; he must be on the spot every moment of the day and night, in order that when vessels leave the port—and there are hundreds leaving some ports every day—he may be able to say, on the spur of the moment, whether they are seaworthy; whether the construction of a vessel is right; whether her loading is right; whether her stowage is right; whether she has got a sufficient crew; whether her hatchways are properly ventilated; and whether a hundred other requirements, which, at present, I cannot recollect, are complied with. It is impossible. You are putting on the men more than they can possibly accomplish, and numberless cases have escaped our notice. Why, the worst case which has happened since I have held my present Office is that of the *Marlborough*. Although I am quite prepared to admit I do not suspect the owner of having deliberately sent the ship to sea in order that it might go to the bottom, still it was a case in which the grossest negligence was practised. It was a case in which it was proved conclusively before the Court that the ship was sent to sea over-loaded—grossly over-loaded—and also under-manned, and that in spite of the reports which had been made by previous crews, who had come home from voyages in her, and refused to have anything more to do with the ship—one set of men after another leaving her, because she was so unsafe at sea. That vessel was not stopped by the Board of Trade, although she had a load line of only 4 feet, when she ought to have had a load line of 6 feet at least. She was not stopped, and why? She completed her loading at 8 o'clock one dark night in November, and she went from the pier-head at 5 o'clock the next morning. Is it possible that an officer of the Board of Trade can interfere in such a case? I may mention another case to illustrate another of our difficulties; it is the case of the *City of Limerick*. Here, again, I am not going to attach any blame whatever to the owners. The *City of Limerick* was a vessel of 2,700 tons gross. She was built in 1855; but after that she was altered and built up in various ways with deck erections, until she had one storey piled on the top of another, and we came to the conclusion that she was absolutely unsafe. She was detained;

the owner appealed; the Court of Survey released her; and the Board of Trade was condemned in heavy damages, which it has since had to pay. No blame, therefore, could be cast on the owners, because they may appeal to the decision of the Court of Survey to justify themselves. Yes, Sir; but what was the result? What was the sequel to the story? She made her voyage out; but, on a subsequent voyage home, she went to the bottom with all hands. Another vessel of the same character, and, I believe, connected with the same concern—the *City of London*—also went to the bottom with all hands, in November, 1881. The Board of Trade, I admit, may be wrong; the Court of Survey may be wrong; but, after all, the owner knows more about the matter than anybody else; and I would like to think that, in every case, it was distinctly and clearly to the owner's interest that every precaution should be taken. Then, I do not think that he would run so great a risk as he sometimes seems inclined to do at present. Sir, I cannot conclude the case against the present legislation better than by using the words of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood), who, speaking to the Chamber of Commerce of Hull, some time ago, said of the Board of Trade—

> "They attempt to regulate and to dictate to the shipping community of this country as to the conduct of the most difficult, most intricate, and most technical business existing on the face of the earth; they have undertaken, in point of fact, to lay down rules for the conduct of a business which requires of the ablest and most experienced person all his energies to successfully conduct. And what has been the result of this legislation? The result of this legislation is the natural outcome of a Government undertaking what they are incompetent to perform. The result has been that the parties whose interest was to protect themselves, and to provide for their own safety, have proved themselves perfectly indifferent, because they say—'The Board of Trade and the Legislature provide certain regulations for our protection, and, therefore, it is unnecessary for us to take any trouble to protect ourselves.'"

I agree with every word of that portion of my hon. Friend's speech, and I am glad he used those words, because, if I had done so, they would have been described by Lord Salisbury as amounting to a fantastic and horrible charge.

Then, Sir, I have said we have also endeavoured by legislation to fix criminal liability upon the owners. This has failed in practice, and no recent prosecution has succeeded. You are trying to fix criminal liability on a man who, after all, may not be guilty of a criminal offence. If you are going to prove a criminal offence, your proof must be overwhelming. It is not enough to have circumstantial evidence, however strong; you must have absolute proof of the man's intentions. You can show the most extraordinarily culpable negligence. You can show that the ship was unseaworthy; that her equipment was disgraceful; and that she was overladen. All these things have been shown, over and over again. But you cannot always demonstrate that the owner was cognizant of these things, and that he deliberately allowed the ship to go to sea in that condition. There is another argument used, and it is this. If we prosecute the owner, and bring him before the Court, we are then asked—"Why did not the Board of Trade stop the ship? It must have been because they thought her seaworthy." And the Court refuses to convict. If, on the other hand, we do stop the ship, then it is said that the criminal act was not complete, and that, perhaps, at the last moment, the ship would not have been sent to sea at all; and thus, in one way or another, these prosecutions break down. And it is not to be wondered at. Here is a case illustrative of the difficulties we have to contend with—the case of a vessel which foundered in 1881, with 27 men on board, and which the Court found was overladen. She was insured for £16,000, at the rate of £15 per ton, which was altogether beyond the value. The vessel was 20 years old, and the Assessors advised the Court that a first-rate new vessel could have been bought for the same money. The Court thought so strongly with regard to this case that, in order to mark its sense of the conduct of the owners, it charged them with the cost of making the inquiry. But punishment of that kind must necessarily be a very inadequate one, supposing the owners to have been guilty of so serious an offence. I had the strongest legal opinion that it would have been useless to prosecute, as the overloading took place at Odessa, and the owner was not there at the time, and that, consequently, it would be impossible to fix responsibility on him. It would be impossible to say what amount of knowledge he possessed with regard to the matter. Then, agreeing with my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Norwood), and other shipowners in this House, I must say I think that if legislation has hitherto been on wrong lines, we ought, in the future, to put it upon right lines. But we shall never do that, until we can rely upon the shipowners, and not altogether upon the Government, for the management of this business. But I do not think we shall ever be able to rely upon the shipowner, until we make it impossible for him to make a profit out of his loss.

My object is to make it to the personal interest of every shipowner who has a larger knowledge of all the facts, and a greater power than anyone else, to take every possible precaution, and give the turn of the scales always in favour of safety, and to hesitate to incur a risk which otherwise he might be inclined to venture upon. The present law is the very reverse of this. I will describe the present law in the words of a gentleman who, I think, will be recognized as one of the highest living authorities on the subject. Mr. Hollams is a gentleman who has had as extensive experience of shipping cases as anyone; and he has been employed on almost every insurance litigation for a generation—generally on the side of the shipowners. Well, he has said to me that what the present law does is this—and it is impossible to put it better—the present law says to the shipowner—"Buy your ship as cheaply as you can, equip her as poorly as you can, load her as fully as you can, insure her as highly as you can, and send her to sea. If she gets to the end of her voyage you will have made a very good thing of it; if she goes to the bottom you will have made a very much better thing of it." That is the state of the law as described by Mr. Hollams. That, I say, is the opinion of a gentleman who is not a sensationalist, but who is pretty well known as a tolerably cool lawyer; and I say that a law which can be described in these terms is a scandal to the country, and ought at once to be amended. There are two ways in which we can do that. We can, in the first place, insist on the civil liability of the shipowners to the passengers and owners of goods, whom their negligence may injure; to the seamen in their employment; and to the underwriters with whom they make contracts; and, in the second place, we may attempt, at all events, to prevent the possibility—I will not call it the probability—of over-insurance—that is to say, making a profit out of the loss of the ship. Dealing with over-insurance first, I say that on this subject there is an overwhelming consensus of authority. The matter, I think, was brought before the House so long ago as 1836, when a Committee was appointed to consider the subject. I find the argument stated in an old copy of *Tait's Magazine* as far back as 1833. Every one of the dangers and evils that I am endeavouring to describe to the House, and that I would prevent, are mentioned in an article in this old magazine—a magazine published 50 years ago. Half-a-century has elapsed; this evil has been recognized during the whole of that period; and yet nothing has been done. The Select Committee on Shipwrecks, in 1836, said that—

> "The system of marine insurance, though affording the means of protecting individuals from excessive loss, has nevertheless a tendency, by transferring the pecuniary responsibility for such losses from the owners of ships to the underwriters who insure them, to induce less care in the construction of ships, less efficiency in their equipment, and less security for their adequate management at sea; inasmuch as the risk of such loss to the shipowners can be covered by a fixed premium of insurance, which, being charged on the freight and then recharged on the goods conveyed, fixes the real responsibility and the real loss ultimately on the public, as all the parties actually engaged in the transaction can secure themselves from any participation in such loss by the aid of marine insurance."

Then, in 1873 and 1874, the Unseaworthy Ships Commission made its Reports; and they went very carefully into this question of insurance, and made some very important observations in reference to it. They stated, for instance, that—

> "The system of our marine insurance, while it protects shipowners against losses which would otherwise be ruinous, tends to render them less careful in the management of their ships. . . . . . The contract of marine insurance is in its essence a contract of indemnity, and the spirit of the contract is violated if the assured can make the occurrence of a loss the means of gain. The law has, however, allowed a considerable deviation from this fundamental principle. . . . . It appears to us that our whole system of insurance law requires complete revision, for not only does it allow the shipowner

in some cases to recover more than the amount of the loss actually sustained by him; but it also, on the other hand, deprives him of an indemnity in cases in which he ought to be protected by his insurance."

And they go on to say that it appears unwise to interfere with the contract between the assured and the underwriter, unless the whole system of marine insurance is completely revised; and they recommend that an attempt should be made to induce foreign nations to confer with regard to framing and adopting a general Code of insurance law. They also recommend that there should be a further inquiry into the subject. Now, Sir, there was an inquiry into the question of foreign law, and we have now all the particulars of this matter, and I shall have to call attention to the difference between the foreign law and our own in a few minutes. But, having obtained this information from foreign countries, the Government of Lord Beaconsfield did not think it necessary to wait for further inquiry. They thought the time had come for action; and in 1875, when there was a debate in the House, raised on the Motion of the hon. Member for Hastings (Mr., now Sir Thomas, Brassey), Sir Charles Adderley, now Lord Norton, in the course of the discussion, speaking as President of the Board of Trade, said that—

> "He took a deep interest in the subject of marine insurance, because he believed it lay at the foundation of the amendment of the law which he had in hand at that moment, relating to the safety of our merchant ships and the prevention of recklessness in our Mercantile Marine. . . . Unless it was desired to postpone a settlement of the matter, there was no need for another Royal Commission. The evidence of the men best acquainted with the subject in this country had been obtained. It was no longer a question of facts, but a question of policy; and, that being the case, he thought the Government ought to take it up themselves. . . . He did not propose, however, to wait for an International measure. . . . He did not fear legislating separately for this country as likely to drive men to foreign insurance. . . . The fear that they would was only a bugbear in the discussion, for Englishmen knew their advantages in insuring here, and how difficult it was in some cases to recover foreign insurances."—(3 *Hansard,* [222] 1753-5-6.)

That was the opinion of the late Government in 1875. It was their opinion in 1876, when they introduced the Maritime Contracts Bill; and I shall be much surprised to hear that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Benches opposite have changed their opinions during the interval. It would be a pitiable thing if that which they thought right and proper in 1876 they should now consider improper, because it is introduced by a Liberal Government, instead of a Conservative. I may just refer very briefly to some of the authorities on this question. There is a well-known authority, Arnould, the recognized authority in matters affecting marine insurance. He says—

> "The very essence of the contract of marine insurance is that it is a contract of indemnity, . . . and its whole spirit is violated if the insurer can make the occurrence of such casualties the means of gain; for this would give him an interest in procuring sea losses, which would be opposed to every principle of commercial policy."

Then Benecke says—

> "Every contract of insurance is, in its nature, a contract of indemnity. The consequences of this kind of over-valuation are so great that they deserve the attention, not only of the underwriters, but of the Legislature."

The present Mr. Justice Butt, examined on this question before the Royal Commission, stated that—

> "Over-insurance produces loss and unseaworthiness."

And Mr. Walton, the well-known solicitor, connected with Lloyd's, who has also had great experience in regard to maritime insurance, says—

> "Over-insurance is lowering the seaworthiness of ships."

All this took place in 1874, and yet, owing partly, perhaps, to causes over which neither the House nor the Government had any control, the matter has been postponed until the present day, and nothing has been done. Now, I do not think the House will have any doubt as to the evil effects of over-insurance; but I am going to test that by some practical illustrations. We are able, by one or two cases, to establish a sort of comparison between the results of a system of insurance and a system of either no insurance or limited insurance. In 1869, Mr. Gray, the present Assistant Secretary to the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, made a Report, which was presented to Parliament, upon the loss of life in the Baltic; and, among other things, he pointed out these facts. There were 220 Swedish steamers engaged in the coasting trade, which, owing to the custom of the trade, were uninsured, and only three had been lost in 10 years. He also pointed out that there were 215 English steamers engaged in the English coasting trade, which were presumably insured, and 17 had been lost in 10 years under circumstances necessitating a Board of Trade inquiry—that is to say, a loss of nearly six times as many insured ships as uninsured ships. Then I have seen a letter addressed to the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Samuel Smith) by Mr. Davidson, of Valparaiso, who says that, some years ago, the losses sustained by the underwriters at Valparaiso were so great that they combined and agreed that in future they would not take any insurance, unless the owners would take a liability of 25 per cent. Mr. Davidson also says that the effect was marvellous, and that an immense amount of money was spent on equipments and repairs of steamers, and the losses had now become as rare and infrequent as they previously were common. I have here also a letter from the Secretary of the Humber Mutual Marine Insurance Company, who says—

> "Honest shipowners cannot but coincide with you in your endeavours to deal with the above question in a fair and legitimate manner, as you propose doing. My Company has, at the present time, 60 vessels on its books, all engaged in the home or coasting trade, running equal, if not greater, risk than the long sea traders. Before admitting a vessel, competent Surveyors inspect her thoroughly and value the ship. We then underwrite two-thirds only, the owner risking one-third; and he is not allowed to cover elsewhere, under penalty of forfeiture of all benefits. The success of the plan speaks for itself. The past three years we have only had one total loss, and not a single life lost. A similar Company in this port, with 100 vessels, has had about eight total losses in three years, with about six lives lost."

Mr. C. H. WILSON said, that letter was from a Club owning river craft, and he did not think much importance could be attached to it, or that it could be quoted as relevant.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I think that letter is of great service, and I cannot see how a letter of that kind can be considered irrelevant. At all events, I quote it, as I quote all these Papers, at the risk of wearying the House, because I want to put myself on one side, and I want the House to understand that all these statements are made not on my own personal responsibility. I do not make myself responsible for them, except so far as I am responsible for information supplied by my Department. My statements to-night are all supported by underwriters, shipowners, and gentlemen whose names I have given to the House, and whose authority can be weighed. Then I have tried to test the question in another way. This is a comparison made by the Board of Trade. I have selected, in the first place, 12 steam undertakings, which I know to be either self-insured, or upon which the owners are accustomed to take a portion of the risk. These steam undertakings comprise 396 vessels, manned by 18,400 men, so that we are dealing with large figures and a large average. In five years, I find that these steam undertakings have annually lost about one man in 840 by wreck alone. I am not speaking of casualties by other accidents, but by wrecks alone. I have taken from the whole steam shipping of the country these 12 selected undertakings for the purpose of comparison; and in the balance, which comprises 3,446 ships and about 70,600 men, I find that they have lost annually, during the same time, one man in 148. That is to say, the loss of the selected undertakings was only one-sixth of the loss of the whole of the rest of the trade. I only wish to quote one more authority in reference to this subject, and this is an authority to which I really attach considerable importance. I am going to quote the Duke of Argyll, and I do so, because, at least, I imagine that he will not be supposed to have any erroneous ideas as to the sacred rights of property, or the impropriety of anything like unnecessary interference with freedom of trade or freedom of contract. The Duke of Argyll, in his well-known book on *The Reign of Law*, says, at page 405—

> "There seems good reason to believe that there is a direct relation between the amount of life and property annually sacrificed by shipwrecks, and the legislation which recognizes and sanctions insurance to the full amount of the value of ships and cargo. The cause of this is obvious. Care for life is less eager and less wakeful than care for property. This is true, even when men are dealing equally with their own property and with their own lives. It is still more true when they are dealing not only with property, which is their own, but with lives which belong to others. The inevitable effect of such insurance is therefore to relax the motives of self-interest, which are the strongest incitements to precaution."

When in "another place," Lord Salisbury gets up, and makes once more his unfounded statement that I have brought a horrible and fantastic charge against the shipowners, I have no doubt the Duke of Argyll will be able to answer it. I will only say, in addition to what I have already said, that the presumption of the existing law is in favour of some such alteration as I am now proposing. What is the case with regard to one of our insurable interests? What interest can be more fitly insured than seamen's wages? If a seaman loses his wages through his ship going down, and he is cast abandoned on the shore of a foreign country, his wages stop from the moment when his ship goes down. All his claim is upon his country—it is a sort of pauper claim—and he is sent home at the expense of the nation; and, at the same time, he is prohibited by the law from insuring his wages, which he would have received if his vessel had made a successful voyage. I think that law goes too far, and is unfair to the seamen; and I should like to permit seamen to insure their wages as well as a shipowner to insure his ship. But, at all events, I may point to this fact—that it has been in the minds of legislators that, if you want to get security, you must give to all persons a direct personal and direct pecuniary interest.

Then I come to another point of great interest. It is said by the shipowners —"All you say is very true as to this matter of the law. It is a bad law; it is a law which ought to be amended; but do not think you will gain much by it, because although, under the law, it is possible to over-insure, as a matter of fact a shipowner does not do so, and it is so rare that you will find little advantage in stopping it." But is it rare? I have said that when the time came I would give the House overwhelming proof that it is not rare, but is the commonest thing in the world; and now I am about to keep my promise. In the first place, let me take a singular fact —a curious thing that occurred only the other day. The last striking loss which has occurred is the loss of *The State of Florida*, belonging to a great line of steamships against which I have nothing to say. When the news came to this country that that ship was lost, the shares of that line went up immediately on the Glasgow Exchange. That, I think, is a singular fact. At the end of April, these shares, or parts of these shares—I am not sure whether they are quoted whole or in part—were quoted at 72*s.* 6*d.* The news of the loss came to this country on the 7th or 8th; and in the course of the next few days these shares touched 90*s.* Since then they have gone down again, and the last quotation I have had is 77*s.* 6*d.* I have asked for an explanation, and the explanation given me is this—that subsequent news showed that the loss was due to a collision; and when that became known on the Exchange it was thought possible that some liability might rise against the Company, and accordingly speculation in the shares took a different direction. At all events, this is true—that the people who knew most about the matter—the dealers in Stocks on the Glasgow Exchange, buyers and sellers, and otherwise—thought, whether they were right or wrong, that the loss of this ship was going to be a gain to her owners. Now, I have some other facts of importance. Over-insurance is possible upon ships, upon freights, upon expenses, which are a separate insurable interest, and in the shape of double insurance—that is to say, insuring the same thing twice over under different heads. What I state is that over-insurance of ships is a very common thing, and over-insurance of freights among a large number of owners is still more common. I have a list of 23 ships belonging to different owners, built in different years, from 1864 to 1883, and I find that the insurance value of these ships is stated in the Club books at £569,000. I have had them valued by three different valuers, independently—no one of the three knowing what value the others put upon them. The first of these gentlemen was Mr. White, a well-known underwriter, who is underwriter, I think, to the Marine Insurance Company, and he put their value at £428,250. Then I applied to Mr. Stringer, who is also well known, who has had great experience as a shipowner and underwriter, and who is a member of Lloyd's; and he made a calculation which he had had confirmed by a firm of brokers in the City, who are well known as engaged in a large business as valuers of ships. He put the value at £426,733; and it is a singular coincidence, tending to show the correctness of the figures, that here are two gentlemen, neither knowing what the other was doing, coming within £2,000 of each other in their estimates. Then I asked one of my own Surveyors —who was formerly employed under Lloyd's Register and the Liverpool Underwriters—and he made the value £447,500. Therefore, taking the mean of these three valuations, I find that the value of these ships in 1883 was about £434,000, and that the insurance value was about 31 per cent above the average value which these three gentlemen put upon them. The insurance valuation was £569,000, and the mean of these three valuations was about £434,000. I have taken the year 1883; but in 1884 there has been a reduction in the insurance values, and the shipowners make a great deal of this. They say that this reduction has shown that they have paid close regard to the change of value from year to year, through the depreciation in ships from time to time. But, unless I am very much mistaken, the reduction of value in 1884 has been something very exceptional indeed, and is not paralleled in any of the previous five years. The reduction in 1884 has taken place, partly because there has, no doubt, been a depression in shipping, and a great reduction in the value of ships, which everybody was bound to take notice of; and also partly because of the agitation about my Bill, upon which I will only say that if it proceeds no further, it will have done a great deal of good. In 1884, taking the same list of ships, one is now laid up; but for the remaining 22, the insurance value, after the reduction has been allowed for, is still 12 per cent above the average value as given by these three gentlemen. Then I inquired to see how far this was borne out by the valuation of another list of ships. I took another list of 14 ships belonging also to separate owners—and I may say that the names of these ships are at the service of hon. Members, and, if it is desired, may be given in a Parliamentary Paper—built between 1862 and 1883. I treated them in the same way, and I found that they came out at an insurance value in 1883 of 28 per cent above the real value as fixed upon the mean of the Reports of the three gentlemen I have named. I was not able in this case to test the result in 1884, because I am told that six of these 14 ships that I took for comparison have been lost. Then I have another calculation of the same sort. I have taken six ships which were lost or missing in 1883, and I find that their value, on the average of the valuations made by the three gentlemen I have mentioned, is 101,000; but the actual sum for which they were insured was £129,000, and accordingly the owners received 27 per cent above the value which these impartial gentlemen placed upon the ships. In almost every one of these cases the freight was insured. Now, I will deal with another set of calculations on the same question, but from a totally different point of view. I am now going to deal with vessels which are offered in what are known as Crosby and Co.'s lists. In Crosby and Co.'s lists there appear for sale a number of shares of ships, and I have taken 62 ships; parts of which are offered for sale in one of those lists. The price at which they are offered for sale would give £1,091,860 as the value of the ships. The insurance value of these same ships in the club books is £1,303,900, or 19 per cent above the value for which they are actually offered for sale. And remember, this is an offer; it is not the market price; it is the price at which these people are willing to sell, and is presumably, therefore, the full price put by the owners upon their property. Therefore, the price which the owners themselves put upon their property is 19 per cent less than the amount for which it is insured. Again, I have a list of 9 vessels, of the value of £144,000, shares in which are offered for sale; and I find that the insurance value in the East Coast Mutual Insurance Club of the same vessels is £172,000, so that the valuation is 19 per cent above the price at which they are offered. Some of my critics complain that I make general statements, and that they cannot examine into them; and when I make particular statements, then they say—"Oh! these are exceptional cases." I try to meet them in both ways. I have made general statements, now I will make particular statements, and I select from a very large list to illustrate what I have said. Here is the case of the *Mangerton*, which was lost the other day with all hands through being overladen, according to the finding of the

Court of Inquiry. It appeared that she cost £28,500; but it was estimated that she had depreciated in value by £6,000, and was, therefore, worth £22,500, if tested in the way in which we test property in land. She was insured for £32,000—that is to say, for £3,500 above her cost, and £10,000 above her then actual value; and the managing owner, when asked why he insured her for this amount, very candidly said, in reply, that the shares were selling for a price equivalent to that. What did that mean? That he was running her at a great risk in order to make a better dividend, and that he then regulated his insurance according to the value which the payment of this dividend gave to the shares in the market. Then there was the case of the *Derbyshire*, in which one life was lost. The Court of Inquiry condemned the ship as unseaworthy, as not well-found, and as overladen. The result of that was that the sea broke over her, swept her from end to end, and washed two men from the wheel, one of whom afterwards died from his injuries. The cost of that vessel in 1875 was £16,000, and she was insured for the same amount for seven years up to 1882, without any deduction for depreciation. She was then reduced in value to £12,000, and £12,000 was the sum at which she was insured when she was lost. In June, 1882, one of the shareholders in that ship wanted to sell, and application was made to Messrs. Kellock, the valuers, who were asked to value the ship, in order that he might know what price to ask for his share. The valuers valued her, at the time when she was insured for £12,000, as worth between £9,500 and £9,600; and after she was lost the managing owner, in giving evidence, said he considered that she was not worth more than £7,000 or £8,000 in the market, and yet he had insured her for 50 per cent above that sum. Then there is the *Said*, which was missing in 1883, and 18 hands went to the bottom with her. She was insured for £16,000; but, on being valued by my orders by Messrs. Bayley & Ridley, a firm of valuers in the City, she was found to be worth only £11,000. The *West Ridge* was missing in 1883, and 28 hands perished. An inquiry was held before Mr. Raffles, at Liverpool, and the Court found that she was fully laden. She was insured for £15,000, but only valued at £13,000 by Messrs. Bayley & Ridley. Then there is the case of the *Consolation* in 1883. She was insured for £17,000; I have been informed on good authority that her cost was £17,000; she was 10 years old, and she was valued by Bayley & Ridley at £11,500 at the time of her loss. In the case of the *Sybil Wynn*, an inquiry was also held; and the managing owner, who gave his evidence very fairly, said he always insured her for the same amount—namely, £2,550; and he did not, beyond a small reduction of £50, seem to have had any doubt that he was right in doing so. The ship was valued by Bayley & Ridley at £1,100; and the Court, which consisted of Mr. Raffles and two Assessors, found that the vessel was very fully laden and insured much beyond her value. They did not think, however, that there was any indifference on the part of the managing owner or the master to the safety of the ship. The *Aberaman* was lost in coming home from San Francisco; 20 hands were lost with her. She was insured in 1883 for £14,500, although her cost in 1881, with the cost of repairs added, was only £13,261. Her estimated value was £12,000. The Court found that she was too deeply laden. Her gross freight was insured. The owner was examined as to how he came to insure her at £14,500, and he admitted that he had added 10 per cent to cost, that being, he said, a usual mercantile transaction. Then we have another case—that of the *Emily*. That was a most unfortunate vessel—or, perhaps, I ought to say she belonged to a most fortunate owner. Her owner, when he was examined, would not say how often she had been stranded, though he admitted that she had been stranded twice in the preceding year, and that, on one occasion, he had received £4,500 for one of these strandings. She was a vessel of 787 tons burden, and was worth, according to the Assessors, about £10 a-ton, which would make her worth altogether about £8,000. She was valued by Bayley & Ridley at £9,000; but she was insured for £14,000. She was stranded. Fortunately no lives were lost; but the owner made, as far as I can make out, from £5,000 to £6,000 on the loss of his vessel, besides £200 on freight.

But these are by no means the worst cases—the worst cases are those of what are called "single ship Companies," which have sprung into existence only during the last few years. Originally established by a most respectable firm in Liverpool, for a very reasonable purpose, and found advantageous for speculation, they have since been established by other persons, who had much better have had nothing whatever to do with them. What happens is that a man who calls himself managing owner, and who is in some cases merely a financial speculator, starts the single ship Company. In some cases these managing owners are broken-down tradesmen, linen drapers' assistants, waiters, or other people in similar walks of life. These people make a contract for a ship, and then they spread broadcast throughout the country their prospectuses, promising 20, 30, and even 40 per cent dividend, and assuring everybody that under no conceivable circumstances can there be any risk, inasmuch as if the vessel is lost they will recover her full value by insurance; and in this way there has been a tremendous development of shipping speculation throughout the country, and, to a large extent, among classes who ought to have had nothing whatever to do with such matters—women, Dissenting ministers, working people, especially in Yorkshire and Lancashire, have been tempted to invest their money in these Companies, with which they ought to have had no connection whatever. These are the people who have made the progress of this Bill so difficult. They are the people who have flooded the House of Commons with letters complaining of the losses which the Bill will compel them to sustain. The managing owners have sent out their circulars, full of the most extravagant misrepresentations as to the object of the Bill, and the intentions of the Government, and declaring that these people who have invested their money will be absolutely ruined if the Members of this House do not stop the Bill—and these poor people, who are merely dupes, and who are not to be blamed, except for want of care in making their investments, have sent letters to Members all over the place, and urged them on no account to allow the Bill to proceed. I have here two instances of the way in which the system works, and I take the first case from the circular of the gentleman who acts as managing owner to one of these Companies. It is the case of the *Coldra.* She was insured for £9,000, has been valued at £6,000, and was lost; and the managing owner paid the shareholders 24 per cent per annum as a profit on the ship, as well as returned to them the entire original capital. Twenty-four per cent profit! How is it made? It is made by allowing nothing for depreciation—allowing nothing for one of the first expenses of any ordinary business. The depreciation is to be got from the underwriters when the vessel goes to the bottom; and the entire original cost is returned to the shareholders. The other case is the case of the *Verdi,* which was insured for £14,000, and has been valued at £11,500. According to the circular to which I refer, she made 30 per cent dividend during her career, and returned to her shareholders £232 on each £218 invested. Now, it must be remembered that, in all the cases of this sort, the liability is absolutely limited; and if the ship owned by this single ship Company does any damage to anyone else, or to another vessel by collision, or injures anybody among the passengers, or damages the cargo, and if the ship goes down and the insurance money has been paid over, there is nobody to come upon. The people injured are absolutely without remedy under the existing law. As to the remedy for such a state of things, there is a clause in the Bill which deals —though very inefficiently, I am afraid —with this question. It does not go nearly far enough; but it has been greatly misapprehended, and has created no end of difficulty and a sort of panic among people not engaged in shipping, but holding shares in Limited Companies. It has been said that, by Clause 33, I was doing away, once for all, with the whole principle of limited liability, and that no man's capital would be safe under it. But, Sir, the principle of a Limited Liability Company—the ordinary principle and intention of limited liability is, that the creditors of the Company, who have due notice of its position and of the way its funds are invested and of the amount of its assets and of the extent of the uncalled capital, are to be debarred from having any claim on anything beyond those uncalled assets. That is quite fair. The creditors are parties to the transaction, and are fully aware of the position of the Company. But it is quite a different thing when you seek to bind by this limited liability people who are not parties to it in any way—people who are injured by the negligence and fault of the Company. When a ship is run down by the gross negligence of the captain of one of these Limited Companies you may not get any remedy. I wish the House to understand—what, perhaps, it does not know at present—that shipowners have an immense advantage over all other people, because they have a permanent statutory limited liability quite apart from, and independent of, all other law. For all the damages to goods which their ships may cause, their liability cannot be greater than £8 per ton; and for all injury to life, or to goods and life combined, their liability cannot be greater than £15 per ton, though, in all other trades, the liability is unlimited. I do not propose to alter this in the Bill; but I wish to point out that if these Companies have no uncalled capital, if they have distributed their assets, then the liability of the shareholders ought, at least, to reach to the £8 and £15 limit, in case they do damage. That is one of the proposals I make, and I think it will meet with the approval of the House.

Another question that we must consider is the over-insurance of freight. It is usual to insure the gross freight without deduction for expenses. It is also usual—no; I will not say usual, but it is not an uncommon thing, to make a double insurance for outfit and expenses, and it is not at all an uncommon thing to insure both the homeward and the outward freight, and to recover the whole amount of the freight without any deduction for the expense incurred. I will give only two or three instances of how this works in practice, in order that the House may see that I do not speak altogether without book. In the case of the *Matilda Hilyard*, the vessel was valued at £2,000, and was insured for £4,750. The freight, homewards and outwards, was insured for £4,000, and the disbursements were insured for £2,680, and I calculate that the owner will make a profit of £2,750 on the ship, and about £3,000 on the freight, if the insurances are all recovered. Now, I say that a case like that can only be described in one way—it is a case where the owner makes a bet against the safe arrival of his own ship. Then there is the case of the *Triumph*, which went to Auckland with her homeward freight insured for £10,000. She was wrecked a few days after her arrival—I believe soon after leaving the harbour—and before a single ounce of homeward cargo was on board, and while she still had a considerable part of her outward cargo on board. Yet the charterers will recover the whole of the £10,000 for which the homeward freight was insured. Then there is the case of the *Dunstaffnage*, which was wrecked between Dundee and Liverpool, with a loss of 23 lives. She was insured for full value, and her outward freight and her homeward freight from Calcutta were also insured, though not quite to the full amount. In that case, what happened when the ship went down? Why, the owner recovered the whole of his insured outward freight, although he had saved all the wages and expenses due on the outward voyage from Liverpool to Calcutta; and, so far as the homeward voyage was concerned, he was saved every possible kind of expense, and yet recovered the full amount of insured gross freight.

Well, Sir, I ask the House, after the statement I have made, and I hope I have not overburdened the case—I ask the House whether I have not done what I undertook to do—whether I have not given overwhelming proof that this practice does prevail to a very considerable extent? There can be no doubt—and I do not attempt to deny it for a moment—that legislation may cause inconvenience, but no greater inconvenience and no greater sacrifices than the respectable members of the trade may reasonably and fairly be called upon to bear. Our legislation, the other day, against dynamite, no doubt, put the manufacturers of dynamite to great inconvenience; and, possibly, if they had had the power, they would have protested against and prevented that legislation. In regard to this matter of over-insurance, I point it out to the House as a dangerous practice, and I say that you ought to put a stop to it, even though the change may cause some inconvenience. I must ask the House now to allow me, as shortly as I can, to explain the main provisions of the Bill; and, in doing that, I have to ask attention also to the Amendments to the Bill which have been agreed upon in communication with the shipowners with whom I have been in conference, and which Amendments—though I do not pretend that I altogether like them —I am, nevertheless, willing to accept if the House will be pleased to allow this Bill to be read a second time. In that case, I should propose to commit the measure at once, *pro formâ*, in order to insert the Amendments, so that the House may have an opportunity of estimating their effect. I will not ask the House to proceed with the remission of the Bill to the Grand Committee until after Whitsuntide, at a time when I hope the whole subject will have been before the country and the interests concerned, and when, I trust, there may be a generally favourable opinion of the measure, without which, I admit, it would be very difficult for me to proceed. Well, Sir, what the Bill proposes is this—that the insured person shall not gain by the loss of the thing insured. The principle of the Bill is that a contract of insurance is a contract of indemnity. I know that that is not the opinion of the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay), who, in the debate in 1875, said he thought that every owner ought to bear at least one-fourth or one-third of the risk. That is also the opinion expressed in this House by a Gentleman who used to be very much listened to in this House on shipping matters—I mean Mr. Samuda. Well, Mr. Samuda has written to me to say that the evidence before the Royal Commission showed that, unless there was some risk to the owner in this matter, there would be no satisfactory diminution in the loss of life at sea, and that it was absolutely incumbent on every shipowner that he should have some pecuniary risk in his venture, whenever he risked the lives of others. I have got a paragraph here to the same effect from a speech by Colonel Hill, the well-known shipowner of Cardiff; and I quote him, because his testimony proves that the better class of shipowners have given a deal of attention to this subject, and are not disinclined to give it favourable consideration. He says—

> "If the underwriters were to insist upon the shipowners taking a solid portion of their risk, or, in other words, were to decline to insure for full value, we should hear much less of overladen and unseaworthy vessels."

Well, I confess that I agree with this view; but I have not thought it wise to attempt to go beyond what I believe is the state of public opinion in this matter at the present time; and, therefore, the clause in the Bill which deals with insurance permits insurance in every case to the extent of a full indemnity. Practically, the Bill deals with insurance on ships in Clause 6, and that clause provides that all policies in excess of value shall be void as to such excess value; and the result of that would be that, no doubt, in every case of valuation the policy would be liable to be opened. It is said that this would not only interfere with the security which the shipowner ought to enjoy in this matter, but also that it would prevent the common practice of bankers to advance money on these policies which, at the present time, are incontestable. I do not know that that is a convincing argument against the proposal. I have said all along that you cannot touch this question without causing some inconvenience to trade; but consider what may happen under the present system. You may have a managing owner, who is really only a financial speculator, and who knows very little of the details of this business, which, as my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood), who thoroughly understands the whole of it, has pointed out, is a business of the most intricate and difficult nature. You may have the owners of a ship who are mere shareholders in a Company with limited liability, and who hardly know the stem from the stern, and behind them you may have the capitalists—the banker finding money for this great speculation, never having seen the ship, knowing nothing of her capacity, or her character, nothing of her quality, nothing of the men whom she carries, and quite unable to influence in any way the conduct of the parties who are managing the undertaking. Well, I say, Sir, that as a speculation that may be all very well if it merely concerned property. It is a kind of gambling, I believe; but I do not know that the State need go much further than it has done in preventing it. But what I object to is gambling in human life. I have said already, and I say again, that in these cases the counters are the lives of the men who are carried in these vessels. All these people I have supposed to be ignorant—I have not supposed them to be conscious of the wrong they are doing—but it is not right that the lives of our sailors should be at the mercy of ignorance, any more than they should be at the mercy of negligence. Well, Sir, my own feeling, I confess, is that the proposal to open valued policies is one which might be defended—one which, if we had time to carry this matter through the hostile discussion it would have to meet, we might hope to have settled by the present Parliament. But we have not time for the lengthened discussion of these matters; and my endeavour has been, in concert with the gentlemen who offered me their advice and suggestions, to see whether we cannot find a *modus vivendi*—a compromise which, although not giving me all that I want, still gives me a good deal that I want, and would meet all that is reasonable in the objections made to my proposal. Well, Sir, under this Bill, as I propose to amend it, and as it has been agreed upon in conference with the gentlemen I have referred to, there will be two limitations put upon that power to open valued policies. In the first place, the policy will only be liable to be opened on proof that the excess of valuation is an unreasonable excess over the true value. It will have to be shown that the valuation put on the ship is such as no reasonable man could be expected to put on it. The second limitation is that the application to open the policy must come from 50 per cent of the insurers. There will, therefore, be no possibility of a single litigious underwriter questioning the matter; and this has been a point about which the shipowners appear to have been very much afraid, though, I think, without reason. Fifty per cent of the underwriters must concur in applying to have the policy opened.

MR. WHITLEY: Fifty per cent in number, or in the value of the insurance?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, of course, 50 per cent of the value. I was going on to say that, comparing the Bill as it will be amended with the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull, and with the Maritime Contracts Bill brought in by the late Government, I have to admit that, to my very great regret, my Bill will be less stringent than either of those two. In both of those measures, although the valuation was to be binding, except in the case of insurance in excess of real value, there was no provision such as I have been describing, and which confines the power of opening a policy to a number of not less than 50 per cent in value of all the underwriters insuring. Well, then, Sir, comes the question of constructive total loss; and with regard to that legal fiction, I must say that it is the most tremendous practical joke that anybody has ever heard of. For what does the law of constructive loss say? It says that when a man has insured a vessel and she has become damaged, that if the cost of repair is greater than her value when repaired, he may recover the whole of the sum insured. But the whole of the sum insured may be greatly in excess of the real value; and therefore the law gives a man an interest to swear down the value of the ship to the lowest possible point, in order to obtain for her the highest possible amount. Here is a case which puts the whole matter in a nutshell—it is a case which actually occurred. There was a ship insured for £36,000, and she was abandoned. The underwriters salved her and brought her home, and tendered her to the shipowner; but the shipowner said—"The cost of salvage, plus the cost of repairs, would be £16,000; and the total value of my ship, when made as good as new by repairs, would be only £15,000. I therefore claim £36,000 from you." And he actually got it! Well, that appears to be a most preposterous state of things. The Courts have spoken of it in the very strongest terms of disapproval, and I am quite convinced that no one can agree with it. What we propose to do is important in two senses. We propose to say that the insurance value of the ship shall be the absolute value for the purposes of constructive total loss, and that will have two effects. A man will not be able to recover for his ship more than the sum which he can show to be her true value—he will not be able to prove that her actual value was only £15,000, and yet so to insure her as to recover twice or three times as much for her. In the second place, it will be a sort of self-working clause, which will tend to keep down the insurance value to the true value. It will be to the interest of the shipowner not to put an exorbitant value on the ship, or it would have to be estimated for constructive total loss in the event of damage.

Then there is the question of the insurance of freight; and as to that, all I can say is that the Bill proposes that the net freight only shall be recovered, and that there shall be a deduction from the gross freight of the expenses still to be incurred. That, as a matter of fact, stood in the original Bill; and although I have some verbal Amendments to make to it, they will not in the least touch the effect of the clause, which will be exactly the same in practical working when I shall have inserted the Amendments as it is in the present Bill. Comparing it with the Maritime Contracts Bill of the late Government, and with the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull, I find that both those Bills are identical in this respect with the Bill now before the House. Then there is the question of the insurance of premiums. In the Bill, as it stands, it is declared that a premium of insurance shall not be an insurable risk; but that is an evident mistake, which is inconsistent with the description of the Bill as given in the accompanying Memorandum. It is clear that there may be cases in which the premium of insurance extends beyond the voyage on which the loss occurs, and in which, therefore, so much of it as is at risk ought to be recoverable. Well, Sir, we now propose to correct that mistake, so that a premium of insurance may be insurable; but only the actual value of the risk is to be recovered. That removes all the objections which have been taken, and justly taken, to the clause as it stands. It was really a slip in the drafting that I am glad to correct. Then there are provisions in the Bill, which will not be practically altered, against double insurance. Some change will be made in the form of these clauses, but not in their practical effect. The whole object in this matter is to prevent insurances under two names, or by means of two policies for the same thing; and I may say that clauses similar to these, and attempting to carry out the same object, appear both in the Maritime Contracts Bill and in the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull, to both of which measures I have already referred. The only alteration that we make in the clauses is that we propose to alter the penalties—I think this is in connection with Clause 6 of the old Bill. In the Bill, as originally presented to the House, the penalty was to be a penalty equal to the excess of the insurance over the real value; but in the amended Bill I propose to reduce that to a penalty not exceeding one-half of the excess.

Now, it is said that the law will be evaded if this Bill comes into operation; but, even so, it will be much better than that the law should give its sanction to a bad practice. I think, however, we have prevented anything of the sort by the clause which will remain practically unaltered—Clause 12—in which we give underwriters power to treat all honour policies as double insurance; we give them power to recover double insurance, both against the person who underwrites honour policies and also against the insured; and, at the same time, we impose a heavy penalty which may be recoverable by the Crown; and we require, in all cases of loss, a disclosure of the policy before the owner can recover the insurance.

Then there is the most important question of unseaworthiness. With respect to it, the Bill makes a great change upon the present law. The present law implies an absolute warranty of seaworthiness in a voyage policy at starting; but there is no warranty in a time policy; and neither in a voyage policy nor a time policy is there any warranty to keep the vessel seaworthy during the voyage. The Bill proposes to assimilate the time and the voyage policy; and it proposes, further, that there shall be a warranty that the owner, by himself, by his agents, or by his servants, shall use all reasonable means to keep his vessel seaworthy. There have been great objections taken to that, which, certainly, is a great and sweeping change, and I must say I think some of the objections are reasonable. The shipowners object to be made liable for unseaworthiness, when it arises from latent defect. Take, for instance, the case of the breaking of a shaft. In many cases it would be impossible to say, with absolute certainty, that a shaft was quite sound, so that it would be unfair that a shipowner should be made liable because a latent defect in a shaft might be discovered which made the ship absolutely unseaworthy. Then, again, the shipowner objects to be made liable for not using reasonable means, through his agent or his servants, to keep his vessel seaworthy; he says that is too high a liability to impose upon him. I will not argue the point; but merely acquaint the House with the result of the conference we have had. I have agreed, providing the Bill proceeds further, to propose, as an Amendment, that the shipowner be exonerated from all liability for unseaworthiness caused by latent defects, such as the breaking of a shaft from a flaw which could not have been detected by the exercise of reasonable care; and I also propose to omit the words which would have made the owner directly liable for unseaworthiness arising from the acts of his servants or agents after the commencement of the voyage.

Now we come to the contracts for the carriage of goods and persons. The present law is, that the shipowner is absolutely liable if the loss is due to unseaworthiness at the commencement of the voyage, or to the negligence of himself or servants, and that is very good so far as it goes. But it is alleged that, in almost every case, the shipowner contracts himself out of liability—out of the Common Law—by means of bills of lading, and in some cases out of all liability. Clauses 27 to 29 of the Bill which is presented to the House void all contracts in relief of liability for unseaworthiness, however arising. Therefore, the Bill, as it stands, establishes an unimpeachable warranty of seaworthiness. That is a provision which interests a great number of people besides shipowners and underwriters, and I am sorry they have not been represented in this conference. It interests the mercantile classes generally, and there have been occasions in which the mercantile classes in the City of London have made the strongest protests against the present condition of the law, and in favour of sweeping changes, going at least as far as any proposed in my Bill. The matter is still under consideration by commercial authorities. For instance, I have received from the Foreign Office a communication from the Chamber of Commerce of New York. They are considering this matter, and a Report is forwarded in which they protest against the present forms of bills of lading, by which—

> "Owners seem to seek to avoid every liability and responsibility, and even the performance of the plainest, most obvious, and natural duties devolving on them as carriers."

They propose legislation, in the American States, to make void all conditions exempting owners from liability for their own neglect, or for any improper condition of the vessel. Well, then, I have received a communication from the London Corn Trade Association, who strongly desire that the clauses should be maintained in the original Bill. They

> "Consider it most important that the arbitrary and, in the opinion of some, unfair clauses which have been introduced into bills of lading, and which limit the liability of shipowners, shall be rendered void, so that the said owners shall not be able to contract themselves out of such liability as arises from unseaworthiness or negligence."

The Committee of this Association are convinced that the irresponsibility which shipowners have claimed has resulted oftentimes in carelessness and consequent disaster; and they think that if the carriage of goods be made safer the loss of life will be lessened. There is another great Association which has brought a "fantastic and horrible charge" against shipowners. The Australian and New Zealand Underwriters' Association have written, urging that the clauses should be extended to negligence of servants and agents. The Committee of Lloyd's

> "Think it expedient to provide that the shipowner should not be enabled to contract out of liabilities imposed on him through the Common Law by any special clauses in his bill of lading."

Well, now, in view of all these opinions, I have given the best consideration I can to the matter, and I have endeavoured to steer a middle course, which I hope will not be open to very great objection on the part of the mercantile classes, inasmuch as, at all events, it will put the law on a better footing than it stands at present, while it will remove some objections taken by shipowners. I propose, in effect, to put the warranty of seaworthiness, in all cases, on the same footing as it is in contracts of insurance. It will be the same in the contract of goods, of passengers, and of seamen; and, accordingly, I shall begin by excluding from the warranty reference to latent defects, and by confining it to the warranty of seaworthiness when leaving the port, the shipowner being understood to use all reasonable means to keep the vessel seaworthy during the voyage, and to be liable for his own personal negligence and default; and I shall void contracts of any kind which are in contradiction of these provisions. I do not think that, with the changes made, there will really be found to be anything which could possibly give rise to difference of opinion between either me and my hon. Friend the Member for Hull or the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Maritime Contracts Bill.

I now come to what I consider an extremely important part of the present proposal, and that is the proposed application of the Employers' Liability Act to seamen. Let us remember, Sir, what the Employers' Liability Act did for persons on land. In the first place, it gave *employés* compensation, under certain limitations, for all damage, or injury, or loss of life arising from the negligence of the employer, or defective equipment of his works, or the defective condition of his machinery. In the second place, it prevents the employer from pleading the doctrine of common employment, under limitations, where the accident arises from the negligence of some person in authority, who might be called a servant. By my clauses, 22 to 26, we apply to the sea service precisely the law, with one exception, which I will mention shortly, as it is applied on the land; or, at all events, with such modifications as are absolutely necessary to meet the difference in the circumstances. I say, with one exception, because, in looking closely into the matter, I have to acknowledge a mistake in the proposal as it stands in the Bill. I have applied the Employers' Liability Act to officers as well as seamen—that is to say, I have given officers, as well as seamen, the benefit of the Act. But when I came to look into the law as applied to cases on land, I found that persons in authority are expressly excluded. I confess I see no reason for the exclusion. It seems illogical, and not to be defended; but, at the same time, there it is. We thought it right not to go any further when we were dealing with accidents as they affect employers on land; and, under the circumstances, it is impossible to apply the law with greater stringency to the sea service. Therefore, in the amended Bill, I shall propose to strike out "officers" as entitled to the benefits of the Bill. My intention in this respect has been misunderstood by a portion of the Press; and, therefore, I want to caution the House against any misapprehension on the subject. It has been said I intend to relieve shipowners from liability for the acts of their officers. Not at all. I relieve them from liability to their officers, which is a very different thing. There is another qualification to which I think shipowners are entitled. They point out the difficulties under which they conduct their business as compared with employers on land. They point out that their supervision is less direct, and they urge that in particular classes of cases, as, for instance, stranding, or collision which arise from errors of navigation on the part of officers or seamen, that they ought not to be held liable; and I have undertaken, therefore, to add a Proviso to the clause which will exempt the cases of error of navigation from the causes of accidents which are to involve liability. Well, that will leave absolutely intact what I believe has been found to be the most useful provision of the Employers' Liability Act on land, and that is that the employer is answerable for any defects in his machinery or equipment. It was supposed that the Act might result in very heavy damages being given against mine owners and others; but that has proved quite fallacious. I believe that, under the Act, not more than a few thousand pounds have been awarded. The Act has had a most material effect in causing owners on land to take precautions which previously they did not take. The other day I received a deputation of railway servants upon quite a different matter. I must say I never received a deputation of men who struck me more by their intelligence and knowledge of the subject about which they were speaking. Before they left me, I asked if they would give me their opinion with reference to the working of the Employers' Liability Act; and as it has a distinct bearing on this matter, I should like to quote a letter I have received from Mr. Harford, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. He says—

"As your Merchant Shipping Bill provides for the extension of the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, to shipowners, I trust you will excuse my presuming to give some idea of the value attached to that Act by the members of this society, seeing that railway servants are given special advantages under it by sub-section 5, section 1, while all other portions of the Act apply to them equally with other workmen. As a means of litigation we attach very little value to the Act; indeed, we endeavour as much as possible to avoid having recourse to it. It is, then, as a preventive of accidents that it has proved to be the greater service to us, for it has stimulated to action the Companies to surround many of the commonest acts of the workmen with precautions for their safety that a few years ago would never have been thought of. For instance, in the simple matter of coaling engines iron guards have in numerous instances been so placed as to prevent the possibility of the tubs being overrun into the tenders, and so pulling the men with them. Foot-bridges over the lines of railway have been erected to obviate the necessity of engine-drivers, firemen, and others crossing the railway on the way to or from the engine-shed. Parapets of bridges that were so low as to afford no protection to persons employed on the line from walking or falling over on to highways passing underneath have had rail fences erected on them, and in many other ways have more protection from accident been afforded, and a more genuine regard for the safety of workmen in these respects been engendered."

There are two other points to which I would call attention, and then I think I shall be in sight of the end of my task. The one is this—that with regard to this question of the Employers' Liability Act, it was not clear in the Bill, as it has been drawn, that owners would be able to insure against liability. Employers on land have power to insure against liability, and I will make it clear that employers on sea can also have the same power, and that their liability under the Act will be an insurable risk. Then there is another point which, perhaps, is not quite clear. It has been said that as the Bill is drawn it will apply to cargoes as well as to ships. Well, I think that is true; but it certainly was not intended. It was a matter of serious importance, and it was under the consideration of those who assisted me at the Board of Trade, and of the draftsman of the Bill. Now, I admit there is a great deal to be said about the inclusion of cargo; but my principle has been not to cause inconvenience, not to cause disturbance to trade, unless it is absolutely necessary. My hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) goes much beyond me, because he puts in his Bill cargoes in a most definite form. In principle he is right; but, still, it would involve such a tremendous disturbance of trade that really I have not the courage of my hon. Friend, I have not the heroism to propose it. Before the Bill was brought into the House I came to this decision, and it is entirely an oversight in drafting if the reference to cargo remains in the Bill. It is perfectly clear to the House that the case of a cargo and the case of a ship stand on a different footing. The shipowner may own the cargo, in which case I admit a difficulty arises; but if he is not the owner of the cargo, then the owner of the cargo has really no direct control over the safety of the vessel. Under these circumstances, it is not necessary to interfere with him, or put pressure upon him.

Another matter which has caused a good deal of discussion outside is, that I propose that trial by jury be abolished, so far as the trial of marine insurance cases is concerned. The shipowners contend that I have imposed upon them a most unmerited stigma, and that I am depriving them of the palladium of British liberty, and I know not what, and that I am making a perfectly unjustifiable proposal. They are much too sensitive; because, if they reflect for a moment, they will see that this clause does not apply to them particularly, but to underwriters, merchants, anybody who has occasion to go into Court upon marine insurance cases. It applies to a particular class of cases, not to persons; and it applies to this class of cases, because the cases are of a technical and complicated character. I have thought such cases would be much better decided without a jury, by a Judge sitting with Assessors—much more economically decided, much more promptly decided than they would be by a jury. Then, Sir, I would point out there are precedents for this. Cases of collision are now tried in the Admiralty Court, without a jury; and last year we passed the Patents Act, and we took cases coming under the Patents Law out of the hands of a jury, and put them into the hands of a Judge and Assessors. I hope that when shipowners see there is no offence to them intended, but that this is a real effort to secure the best possible tribunal for a particular class of cases, they will withdraw their objection to the proposal. I find also they object to the proposal that these cases should go to the Court of Admiralty, and they say they would rather have recourse to one of the Common Law Courts of the country. That is a matter on which I have no strong opinion, and I am quite prepared to meet their views. I believe that they think it would be more convenient that these cases should go to the ordinary Law Courts; and, therefore, this is another Amendment to which I wish to call the attention of the House. I shall propose to strike out that portion of Clause 20, leaving only that part which refers to trial by jury.

I am not going to weary the House with any remarks about the third part of the Bill. That part deals with local Courts and procedure for detention. It does not contain proposals which, in my opinion, would have any material influence upon the safety of life at sea. It was proposed, as a concession to shipowners, and with the intention of relieving the Board of Trade of some part of its work. Well, now I find that the principle of this part of the Bill is generally approved by shipowners, but that when we come to detail there is so much difference of opinion, that it is perfectly evident that it would be impossible to get through the discussion of this part of the measure, either in the House, or in the Grand Committee, within any reasonable time to admit of its passing this Session. Therefore, I propose to drop the third part of the Bill for the present. At the same time, I desire to assure shipowners that I am quite ready, because I think they would not like it to be understood that the matter was entirely given up, to reconsider the subject in the light of further experience, and after such an inquiry as I am now going to suggest to the House. There still remain a large number of other questions of great importance that we have to settle before we can say that the Merchant Shipping Law is on a fair and proper footing. I saw only to-day in *The Times* a letter, I think to the Prime Minister, from the shipowners of the Clyde, conveying a suggestion for the establishment of a seaman's fund, and referring to a number of things which deserve the attention of the Government. I propose that these matters should be submitted to further inquiry by a Royal Commission; and I am quite prepared to refer to that Royal Commission any point on which the shipowners have expressed a very strong opinion. They object to the administration of the Board of Trade; they criticize it; they denounce it. Well, I must say I have followed very attentively their criticisms, and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing on earth which would satisfy them, except that there should be a tribunal formed wholly of shipowners, and that they should be the sole arbiters on all questions in which they are concerned. That seems to be the tendency of the observations they have made; but, at all events, they are perfectly right in this—that if they have a grievance, let it be investigated. If they think we are doing them a wrong, we shall be the first to desire that our own defence shall be heard, as well as their attack; and I am quite ready to open the whole question of Merchant Shipping before a Royal Commission. That will enable hon. Members representing shipowners, or anybody else concerned, to attack the Board of Trade to their heart's content; and if, after the statement I have made to-night, there remains in the mind of any shipowner the idea that he has been wrongfully charged, that I have brought against his class anything which he can justly resent, let that also be brought before the Royal Commission, by whom, as I have already said, I am perfectly prepared that the whole matter shall be fully and carefully considered.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Will the right hon. Gentleman direct inquiries to be made?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly; I will direct inquiries to be made by a Royal Commission. My hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General reminds me that there are two other points in the Bill to which I have not referred. They are pilotage and tonnage. They are questions of considerable intricacy and difficulty; but they are questions which are not directly concerned with the safety of life at sea. If my proposals, as they stand, are accepted to-morrow, it would not follow that a single life would be saved by a change made as to either pilotage or tonnage. Therefore, I propose that these points should also stand over, although I believe, from a commercial point of view, and in the interest of shipowners themselves, it will be as well that these questions should be settled. I shall be content that they should be dealt with by a separate Bill, and referred, if desired, to a Select Committee—that they should be dealt with, perhaps, next Session, and dealt with on commercial principles, and with reference to commercial interests entirely, because I have no concern with them as far as relates to the matter with which I am now interested —namely, the safety of life at sea.

Now, I should like, for one moment, to anticipate an argument, that these proposals, as they have been put forward in the original Bill, or the Bill as amended, will have the effect of sending trade out of the country. I do not believe that they will send trade out of the country. It has always been contended, when proposals of this nature have been made, that they will destroy the trade of the country. You have never attempted to interfere with any trade without having it thrown in your teeth that you are driving trade out of the country. But what is the trade that is going out of the country? Is it insurance? The underwriters, who ought to know, do not think so. I have read the reports of several of the recent meetings of Marine Insurance Companies, and it does not appear to be their opinion. It is not the opinion of those whom I have consulted that they will be injured by these proposals. They do not think that changes similar to those which I have proposed will have any effect at all in sending insurance business out of the country. Why should it? Why should foreign nations be such fools as to take our bad business? Under this Bill the only thing prohibited is over-insurance. Full insurance is allowed; and it is only persons who desire to over-insure their ships who will desire to go abroad. I am quite convinced that no foreign country in the world will allow its subjects to deal with business of this kind, which, from the necessities of the case, must be unprofitable business. But I said at the commencement of my remarks that I should have to call attention to the law abroad. In every case the law is more stringent than it is in this country. Thus, as regards valued policies on ships, I find that, in Germany, France, and Sweden, any material excess over true value renders the policy liable to be opened, and the valuation is thus reduced to the true value. In Holland all policies can be opened. In Spain only four-fifths of the value can be insured. As to freight, in Germany, under a policy on freight, only the freight actually lost is recoverable; and insurance of expenses twice over, by including them once in freight and again in a separate policy, is prohibited. In France, Spain, Austria, Italy, and Belgium, freight cannot be legally insured, though it is done, to some extent, by honour policies. In Holland the net freight is recoverable after deducting expenses in earning it. As to seaworthiness, I find that, both in Germany and France, unseaworthiness may discharge underwriters in all cases. Thus, generally, the foreign law is undoubtedly more stringent than the law in our country. But it is said that British ships will be transferred to a foreign flag. I do not believe that either. The other day I heard a statement made that already this anticipation had been fulfilled, and that there had been a large transfer of English ships to foreign flags. But what are the facts? In the first three months of 1884 it appears that there were 38,417 tons sold to foreigners, and 13,756 bought from them, showing a balance of about 24,000 tons against this country. But I had the curiosity to look 12 months back, and to see what was the case then; and I find that during the first three months of 1883 48,627 tons were sold to foreigners, and 7,803 bought from them, showing a balance against this country of 40,824 as against the 24,661, after this Bill had been introduced. My hon. Friend behind me the Member for North Durham (Mr. C. M. Palmer) is much exercised in his mind about Germany. He was kind enough to show me a letter he had received, which declared that German competition was becoming very serious. Well, it is very difficult for me to meet these cases, when they are only individual cases. It may be that this gentleman who writes to my hon. Friend has found competition serious and inconvenient; but I have to meet the case as a whole. I have, however, taken the trouble to see what are the facts as to German trade; and I find that, as compared with English trade, it is actually diminishing. The tonnage with cargoes entered and cleared at the ports of the United Kingdom in 1881 were

36,000,000 tons British and 2,500,000 tons German. But, in the first quarter of 1884, there were 9,000,000 tons British, and it might be expected that Germany would show about the same proportion as in 1881. But there is a slight falling off, for the German tonnage was only 539,000. The total tonnage of the United Kingdom increased between 1878 and 1882 by 416,529 tons; whereas, during the same period, the German tonnage only increased by 97,521 tons. Under these circumstances, I think we may give up this somewhat ignoble fear of competition with terrible Germany. We may be able to hope that, in spite of everything —even in spite of the President of the Board of Trade—British trade may continue to hold up its head.

Now, Sir, let me once more state the question raised by this Bill. The question really is, whether a man ought to be able to contract himself out of all liability, and, at the same time, make a profit by the loss of his ship and the loss of lives? I say he ought not. I say that that is a thing which no honourable man would claim to do, and which no other man ought to be allowed to do. I think the importance of this matter cannot be over-estimated. Three thousand men every year are hurried to a premature death. That is, in itself, a tremendous fact; and, inseparably connected with this loss of life, there is also an enormous loss of property—a loss which has been estimated at from £10,000,000 to £20,000,000 sterling a-year. When we were discussing Bankruptcy legislation last year, it was said that there were £20,000,000 of bad debts made in the country, and that was thought a thing worthy of the most serious consideration of the House; but I would point out that that was not a loss to the country. It is only a transfer from one pocket to another—what the creditor lost the debtor gained. But in the case of losses connected with shipping such is not the case. Every penny goes to the bottom of the sea, and is taken from the available wealth and the productive capital of the country. I have shown that these losses are due to causes which may be prevented—which in their nature are preventable. I have shown that every impartial authority agrees that many of these losses could be prevented. I have shown that the law is a direct incentive to negligence; and I have shown, lastly, that these facts have been recognized by successive Governments, and that even so early as 1875, Lord Norton, then Sir Charles Adderley, President of the Board of Trade, declared that the time had come when the matter should be fully dealt with. I do implore the House to do something to remove what I believe to be a great scandal on our legislation and a great slur upon an honourable industry, of which, in all other respects, we have every reason to be proud. I am entirely in the hands of the House. I am powerless to do anything—and I admit it—without the hearty goodwill of all sections of the House. Unless I can secure the support of the shipowners and the different Parties in the House, having regard to the time of the Session, to the pressure on the time of the House—and especially on the time of the Government—it will not be possible for me to carry this matter forward with any hope of success. Unless there is a common consent, this matter must be postponed, which would be much to my regret. But the responsibility would not rest with me. I ask the House who is to be benefited by delay? Not the great Party opposite, who would be false to their professions, and to their traditions, if they allowed us to assume any monopoly of interest in this question, for which they have done so much already. Not the shipowner, who has been represented to me as only desirous of settling the matter on a fair and reasonable basis—such as that which, with common consent, we have arrived at. He does not desire that this matter should be hanging over his head, unsettling his trade. Not the underwriter, nor the merchant, who agree that the present state of the law ought not to continue; and, least of all, the sailor — the sailor, who is now forced to carry on his calling, disagreeable at all times and dangerous at most times, but made unnecessarily perilous by circumstances which it is now in the power of the House to modify. I say, for my own part, that I have done all I can. I have made great concessions. I do not say that I have liked these concessions. I do not say that they are in all respects improvements of the Bill. They are in some respects undoubtedly; but, in other respects, they weaken the Bill. I admit it with regret; but, under the pressure under which I am put, I cannot do what I would do, or all that I think it would be right to do. But I am anxious to do what I can; and I think, if I am met in anything like the spirit which I hope I have shown in introducing the subject, that it may still be possible, even having regard to the advanced period of the Session, to do something which will discourage these practices, and prevent the sanction of the law being given to an evil system; and which will provide, in some measure, at all events, for the greater security of life and property at sea. I beg now to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

MR. MAC IVER, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, remarked that he would rather not press his Amendment to a Division provided that there were any indication of an intention on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to yield to the just demands of the shipowners, and allow them to reply by evidence to the accusations made against them. It was always easy to make grave charges, which it might be impossible to refute at a moment's notice. He found himself, therefore, in a position of some difficulty, and wished to say that he was not authorized to speak on behalf of the great shipping interests of this country, or to defend the shipowners from the attacks which had been made upon them by the right hon. Gentleman; but he thought it only fair that they should be heard in answer to his statement. The right hon. Gentleman had moved the second reading of the Bill in a speech of unusual eloquence and of unusual length. In fact, he did not think it had been equalled since the famous four hours' speech of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). He did not propose at that moment to answer a speech of three hours and 47 minutes, and to criticize a Bill of 101 clauses and three Schedules; but he would touch on a few points, which he thought he had the right to do, as representing an important shipping constituency. He was bound to say that his objections to the Bill were in no way removed by the concessions the right hon. Gentleman had made—if concessions they could be called—nor by the speech in which he had made his proposals to the House. The House would be hardly prepared to believe the extent of legislation already in existence relating to merchant shipping. There were no less than 103 Statutes in existence which related either wholly or in part to this branch of commerce. Therefore, there was no lack of legislation as far as quantity was concerned. But, notwithstanding this enormous mass of legislation, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the law with regard to shipping was in a most unsatisfactory state as regarded seamen, shipowners, and the public. That was, in fact, admitted on all hands; but what appeared to him necessary was a reasonable administration of the law, and a real appreciation on the part of those in authority of the nature of the problem which they had to solve. Had the charges against shipowners made in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman been well founded, the right hon. Gentleman would have had no warmer supporter than himself; but he did not believe that those charges were well founded. If those charges were true, he (Mr. Mac Iver), during 27 years of practical experience in connection with every kind of trading steamer, had learned nothing either of shipowners or underwriters. The real question was, was the case that had been set up true, or was it without any substantial foundation? That could only be tested by inquiry by a Select Committee, with power to call witnesses and to hear evidence, which he hoped, before the debate was concluded, the right hon. Gentleman would say he was willing to agree to. If all that they had heard was true, the decisions of the Wreck Commissioners' Court were a travesty of justice, and were absurd. If reform were needed, it was not the law affecting the shipping interests that needed reform so much as the Board of Trade itself. He had opposed the Bill of 1875, which was introduced by Sir Charles Adderley, and also that which had been introduced subsequently by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench, because he believed them to have been both bad Bills which were originated by the permanent officials of the Board of Trade; and he opposed the present measure upon the same ground. That there were preventable disasters at sea he had admitted over and over again; but the remedy for these and other evils was not to be found in Bills emanating from these permanent officials who, in the present Bill, had given to the House such a monument of their incapacity. What was really required was that the greater part of the legislation on this subject of the last 14 years should be repealed as being both useless and mischievous, and that the remainder should be consolidated. He had himself proposed a measure in that direction, and now stated, without any kind of qualification, that the safety of life and property at sea depended upon three considerations alone—namely, a competent and sufficient crew, a good ship, and reasonable loading. Were the present Bill to become law actual harm would be done, because not merely were these considerations ignored, but the intention, or, at all events, the original intention, was to abolish compulsory pilotage without providing anything in its stead, and so to alter the law of tonnage measurement as would discourage the most seaworthy type of ship. These were extraordinary things to find in a measure whose declared purpose was to save life, because their direct tendency was in the contrary direction; but there was nothing else in the Bill that had any relation to the subject. There were all kinds of queer things in the Bill. The explanatory Memorandum and the contents were not in accord, and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman corresponded with neither. It was idle to talk about the principle of the Bill unless that principle were in some form or other expressed in the actual proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. That it should be made "the interest as well as the duty of every shipowner to bring his venture to a safe termination" was a proposition which no one would dispute; but that was scarcely a reason for suggesting the abolition of trial by jury or the repeal of the Limited Liability Acts. The House, perhaps, would scarcely believe that there was anything of this kind in the Bill; but if they would refer to Clause 20 they would see that the very first sentence was—"Every action on a marine insurance shall be tried without a jury." And if they would refer to Clause 33 they would there find the replacement of the burden of unlimited liability upon everyone who was unfortunate enough to hold shares in ships. Surely it was unreasonable thus, by a side wind as it were, to seek to repeal the Companies Acts. But this was not more unreasonable than Clause 47, which, taken in connection with the elaborate proposals which surrounded it, would give the Board of Trade a general power to make rules with the force of law which would alter the practical operation of the law as often as the Department might elect. He would not weary them by going through all the clauses in detail. As he had said, there were 101 of them, and three Schedules, and they dealt with every conceivable subject except that which was the declared purpose of the Bill. The Bill contained absolutely nothing that was likely to promote the security of life and property at sea. Doing away with competent pilotage and the discouragement of proper protection to engine-rooms and stokeholds would scarcely have that effect. The Bill was altogether on false pretences, and should be rejected. There were many other objections besides those which he had stated, and he had no desire to trespass unduly upon the time of the House, or to anticipate other speakers; but he felt that the clauses relating to bill of lading contracts were most dangerous, and also that they were wholly unconnected with the object which the President of the Board of Trade said he had in view. With regard to insurance, there was not a syllable of justification for the case which the President of the Board of Trade had endeavoured to set up, nor would indemnity provide a remedy if there were. Limitation of insurance was not even suggested by the Bill, although, as regarded cargo, limitation of insurance was perfectly practicable, and would supply a motive of self-interest which would operate as an encouragement to vessels that were likely to go safe, and be a deterrent as regarded overloading. The Insurance Clauses of the Bill were, like the rest of it, altogether incapable of amendment. The leading principle was in reality "uncertainty of insurance;" and, no doubt, such clauses were perfectly acceptable to that class of underwriter who were always willing to receive premiums, and not equally ready to make payments when losses occurred. Anything and everything might be disputed under the Bill as it stood; and it did not appear to him that the proposed alterations were anything better than a stratagem to divide opponents. For himself, he had no right to speak on behalf of shipowners generally, and he did not presume to do so; but he entirely repudiated the right of the gentlemen who had been in private negotiation with the President of the Board of Trade to put themselves forward as representing the shipowning community. The shipowners of this country had been grossly libelled; and he entirely sympathized with the demand for a Select Committee, which would enable them to show that the charges laid against them were without foundation. Occasional crime there might be. Fraudulent over-insurance was already punishable under the Common Law, and required no special legislation; but it was no more the practice of shipowners to over-insure their vessels, and to send them to sea for the purpose of being lost, than it was the practice of the inhabitants of Liverpool to poison their relations—as Mrs. Flannigan and Mrs. Higgins did, who were hanged the other day—for the purpose of recovering insurance, or than it was the practice of householders to over-insure their premises and then set fire to them. It could not be said that there were no alternative proposals. The Bill which he (Mr. Mac Iver) had introduced met with very general approval. He wished to put British and foreign vessels, as far as practicable, upon equal terms; but the measure now before the House, like other Board of Trade legislation, handicapped British shipowners. Its only supporters other than those interested in foreign shipping were those who knew nothing of the subject, or those who saw in this measure the means of crushing their less wealthy competitors, or those who were interested in precisely that class of inferior shipping property which could only be reached by a proper system of inspection carried out by a reasonable Board of Trade, and which, in advocating this Bill, they hoped to prevent. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Mac Iver.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CHARLES PALMER said, he thought it was to be regretted that the House was actually debating a Bill which was not before it. The speech of the President of the Board of Trade was most telling and powerful; but it was in itself a proof that this very intricate and technical question should be submitted to the consideration of a Select Committee. For his part, he wished the right hon. Gentleman had withdrawn the present Bill and introduced another in a modified form. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had proved too much, for if the allegations which he had made were true, then there was no ground for a measure so mild as the one as amended, and now introduced. The right hon. Gentleman had attacked the shipping interest that evening in a manner quite in keeping with all the attacks he had previously made. He had begun by saying that many harsh and unjust things had been said about him; but he had certainly returned the compliment with interest. In justice, however, to the shipping interest, he was bound to say that it was composed of men of the highest integrity, honour, and intelligence. They were not afraid of legislation, and they wished to do their best to assist the Government in preventing the loss of life at sea. At the same time they regarded the Bill, in the form in which it had been introduced, as tending to destroy the best interests of a great and honourable industry. In his transactions as a shipbuilder, he had always found that shipowners wanted their ships built in the strongest manner. The question of insurance was a question of bargain between two parties; and he could not understand why the State should relieve the underwriter from being compelled to make inquiries as to the risk taken by him and the premium which he ought to ask for taking that risk. If the laws of insurance were to be tampered with, and if an underwriter was to be given the opportunity of delaying a settlement in order to secure an advantage over the shipowner, the practice of making advances upon policies would be struck at, and thus the capital which ought to be invested in shipping would be diminished. The subject of insurance, of such a fundamental importance, ought to be investigated by a Royal Commission. He could not understand why the question of the insurance of cargo should be left untouched by the Bill. Moreover, the present moment seemed to be ill-chosen for the introduction of this Bill. A Committee was now considering that which was the essence of the whole question—namely, the load-line; and until they could have the Report of the Load Line Committee he thought that any proposal for legislation on the question of unseaworthiness was premature. Referring to that part of the Bill which affected the question of limited liability, he observed that millions of capital had been invested on the faith of the Limited Liability Act, and that the existence of our present Mercantile Marine was, in a great measure, due to our system of limited liability. It was said that limited liability encouraged the formation of Companies to build ships that were afterwards mismanaged; but the management of such ships was often in the hands of those who were small shareholders, and who were interested in keeping their ships seaworthy and afloat. As the right hon. Gentleman had said, the Wreck Commissioner's Court did not enjoy the confidence of the shipping interest, and when the cases that had been brought before it had been further investigated many of the most sweeping charges that had been made had been explained away. Mr. Rothery's Returns of the cases in which shipowners were distinctly blameable were capable of being very much reduced. He could not understand the new-born zeal of the President of the Board of Trade, for it was in 1880 they sat together on a Select Committee appointed on the right hon. Gentleman's Motion on Merchant Shipping and Maritime Insurance; and it was strange that he should have allowed the preventable loss of life to go on in the interval without making any effort to prevent it. A pamphlet had been issued by Mr. Thomas Gray, of the Board of Trade, in which it was said that the loss of life at sea had been greatly exaggerated, and the author supported this contention by comparing the loss of life among miners and others in dangerous occupations with the loss of life among seamen, the latter being 13·18 per 1,000 against 14·28 per 1,000 among other classes. If such a comparison could be made there could be no ground for the sweeping charges that had been made. It was an undoubted fact that the introduction of this Bill had greatly interfered with the shipbuilding trade, for its appearance was followed by the withdrawal of capital for the construction of ships. Some that had been begun were left on the builders' hands, and in the North of England thousands of workmen were thrown out of employment. The question of trial by jury was one of deep interest, both to captains and officers; they did not like their case to rest on the decision of one Judge only. In reference to insurance he would suggest also that the question of the loss of the ship was one for a jury, to whom the facts should be submitted. As far as the sailors were concerned, they were not anxious for this legislation, their chief complaint being the introduction of so many foreigners. As the right hon. Gentleman had been pleased to say that his letter was rather an ignoble mode of approaching the subject of competition with Germany, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman of some portions of that letter. In it he had stated that he knew it to be the practice of German bankers to lend a considerable sum of money, sometimes half the capital, towards building a ship, and this assistance was of the greatest benefit to the shipbuilding trade of that country. Germany had many steamers of her own now, and the comparatively unfettered state of the shipbuilding industry tended to increase that number very rapidly. In fact, the German yards had experienecd very little of the depression in trade which had been so severely felt in their own; on the contrary, when work was difficult to obtain in our yards, the German shipbuilders were well employed. He held a letter in his hand from a firm of shipowners, who, though they did not desire to come prominently before the country in this matter, were deeply interested in the Bill as clearing in and out of the Port of London 1,572,000 tons of goods. These gentlemen declared that they regarded it with apprehension, and experienced much inconvenience from foreign competition, assisted by the unrestricted character of the trade abroad, also from the deterioration in the seamen of this country. He would only add, in conclusion, that while every one deplored the loss of life at sea when they came to legislate on the lines of this Bill they found that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman were ill-judged. The fact was the loss of life at sea was due, in the main, to errors of judgment and bad navigation; insurance had very little to do with it, because many ships which were not insured at all were lost at sea, and on due consideration, he believed, the House would come to the conclusion that a searching investigation before a Select Committee or a Royal Commission would be the best way of dealing with this subject.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that he approached the consideration of this subject with some little personal reluctance at the present stage of the Bill, because, after the speech they had listened to at the earlier period of the evening, which lasted, he thought, for nearly four hours, there were a great many hon. Members in the House who, specially affected by the statements in that speech, had a just and a right claim to an opportunity to answer them if they could. But he was tempted to speak now, because he had been himself connected with the Board of Trade at the time of the shipping legislation during the occupation of Office by the late Government, and because, in the second place, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) had made a somewhat special appeal to the Front Opposition Bench for support and assistance in the great and very difficult task he had undertaken. He would like to say at the outset of his remarks that, so far as regarded any proposal made by the late Government in 1876 with regard to merchant shipping legislation, he did not wish to go back from one of them. Every statement they then made, every proposal, and every principle they entirely adhered to; and they did not, now that they were in Opposition, desire to retreat from one single observation that they then made. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted from a speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). All he (Mr. E. Stanhope) could say was that if the right hon. Gentleman had based his Bill solely on that speech and confined his remarks to what his right hon. Friend had said, he believed the trouble he would experience in passing this Bill, or any Bill of this sort, would have been enormously diminished; the fact was the difficulty of the right hon. Gentleman in this respect had been caused mainly, if not entirely, by his own conduct. The conduct of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to this question had been, he thought, almost unprecedented, and it had been a very evil augury to watch the departure of the right hon. Gentleman from the proper manner of dealing with this question—namely, by securing the concert of the two Parties in making it effective. The right hon. Gentleman talked of the pressure that had been brought to bear on him, and to which he had yielded; but what was that pressure due to? It had been entirely caused by the reckless speeches of the right hon. Gentleman himself. They had been told, and he must say that he believed the statement, that the right hon. Gentleman was a man of business—that was the special characteristic they were told he possessed, and on which they were asked to look upon him as a Member of the Cabinet; but how had he justified it? All he (Mr. E. Stanhope) could say was that if ever a speech had been made, calculated to have the worst effect in passing a Bill, that speech had been made to-night by the right hon. Gentleman; in fact, it made one almost inclined to doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman wished to pass the Bill at all, because anyone who had the smallest knowledge of the way in which business should be conducted in the House, knew that a speech less calculated to secure unity of action, and to enable all Parties to pass a good Bill for saving life at sea, was never heard in the House. The right hon. Gentleman began his campaign by denouncing the shipowners. To-night he had brought forward charges against them to which he (Mr. E. Stanhope) had no doubt, when the time came, they would endeavour to give an answer. But he did not think the shipowners would complain of the speech the right hon. Gentleman had delivered to-night to at all the same extent as they would complain of the speeches he had delivered out-of-doors. The right hon. Gentleman's speeches in the country went much further than that he had delivered to-night; and he (Mr. E. Stanhope) must say he was not surprised at the irritation that had been caused among the shipowners by the manner in which he had put forward his case. The right hon. Gentleman said that he found it was the case with shipowners that if they differed from you they were inclined to censure you and anyone connected with you. Well, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) must say from his own experience, connected as he had been with the Board of Trade, and concerned as he had been with merchant shipping legislation, that that was not the experience of the late Government. No doubt part of their legislation had been attacked, and the things they proposed to do were criticized; but he was bound to say that they had been criticized with perfect fairness, and the late Government had no reason to complain that their efforts in that direction, though they were also met with difficulties, had been received with uncompromising hostility on the part of the shipowners. It was, of course, natural that shipowners, who were affected in this matter, should desire to defend their rights. They were naturally anxious that this legislation should not interfere with what they believed to be the legitimate manner of carrying on their trade, and no one would blame them for it. Unless they carried their criticism beyond that point—and he had no reason to believe that they intended to do it—everybody would think they were entitled, to the fullest extent, to state their case in the House in opposition, or, at any rate, in modification and alteration of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman entered upon the second part of his crusade by issuing from the Board of Trade what was nothing more nor less than a Party Memorandum. That Memorandum, as the House would remember, had been published in *The Times.* He would quote from the document only one or two expressions; but he thought it was rather cool on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, after having made as distinct a Party statement as anyone could do in that Memorandum, then to appeal to the Opposition, and to be so anxious for them to give him support. The right hon. Gentleman spoke in that Memorandum of the timid manner in which this question had been approached in 1876, and went on to say that legislation would be undertaken in the future by stronger and more thorough-going hands. Well, it had been undertaken by strong and thorough-going hands, and with what result he would venture presently to point out to the House. The right hon. Gentleman brought in his Bill, and then, finding it was not received in the House with that approval that might probably have been expected, all the Party machinery was set in motion in the country, and resolutions were sent up from all the Radical Clubs in the country in support of the Bill, although he would undertake to say that not one in 500 of the people who took part in the meetings understood anything about the measure. Then they came to the next stage. The right hon. Gentleman, finding that his Bill was not well received in the House, got up certain hole-and-corner meetings of certain selected shipowners. They met, hon. Gentlemen did not know how, or where, or what they discussed; but the result of the meetings had been that, when they were called down to-day to discuss the Bill put forward by the Government, they found they were really called on to debate something totally different from the measure originally introduced—that the Bill which had been put into their hands had totally disappeared. Well, he thought that method of dealing with such a measure could not be satisfactory even to the shipowners, and he knew it would not be satisfactory to the House. It raised again, in his mind, that which he had ventured to state before to the House—namely, a doubt as to the reality of the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to deal with the question this year. He was not going to be put aside, by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. from discussing the Bill the House had before it. The Bill before them was, in fact, the only thing they had in black and white that they could discuss. It was a deliberate proposal on the part of Her Majesty's Government, after mature consideration, for dealing with this very important question, and he wished to ask the leave of the House to discuss the Bill for a short time. It was true that the Bill had now altogether disappeared. One part of it had gone to a Royal Commission; another part of it would go to a Select Committee, possibly next year; and the third part of the Bill had been so altered that its original authors could not possibly recognize it. The House was now told that if they would accept the Bill as so amended, they might pass it by common agreement, otherwise they must wait for legislation on this subject for another year. Having made these remarks as to the mode in which the Bill had been introduced, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) would now ask the House to allow him to look at the Bill fairly and dispassionately—not in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman proposed it, but in the real interests of the mercantile community, and with an earnest desire—which he had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman shared with him—if possible, to introduce such provisions into our law as would tend to increase the security of life at sea. The first question that occurred to him to ask was, had the loss of life at sea increased of recent years? Well, they had had some very important statistics from the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. E. Stanhope) did not know what effect they had produced on the House, but to his mind they entirely failed to establish the conclusion that preventable loss of life at sea had increased in proportion to the increase of tonnage, and to the amount of employment given to seamen in the course of the year. Even the right hon. Gentleman himself admitted that seamen were now so much more employed in the course of the year that naturally every individual of them was exposed to more risk than he had been before; and he (Mr. E. Stanhope) did not think he could gather from the right hon. Gentleman's statistics that anything like a conclusive proof had been put forward that loss of life at sea had been continually increasing during the last few years. He admitted that he did see in the figures a rise since 1880; but it would be just as reasonable and as fair for him to ascribe that partly to the lax method of the administration of the right hon. Gentleman and the Board of Trade, as for him to attribute the blame entirely to the shipowners. The fact was, they ought not to base a case at all on these contradictory statistics. He (Mr. E. Stanhope) did not want for a moment to contradict the main facts that were put forward by the right hon. Gentleman. The fact—the very unhappy fact—remained that there was at this moment a grievous loss of life at sea, which loss of life was undoubtedly, to a considerable extent, due to preventable causes. The best authorities told them, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that there were means by which these causes might be mitigated to a very considerable extent; and it was their duty at the present day, when proposals were brought before them, to endeavour so to amend them as really to make them valuable and efficient for the end in view. The right hon. Gentleman had made out an ample case for legislation; he had proved what he (Mr. E. Stanhope) had never doubted, that there was some over-insurance, and that in some cases that over-insurance was of a gross character. The right hon. Gentleman had argued from that that the state of our Mercantile Marine was not altogether healthy, and that it was necessary to adopt such legislation as would induce shipowners to take those precautions which, in the present state of the law, they were sometimes tempted not to take for preventing loss of life at sea. No one could say that he (Mr. E. Stanhope) did not admit, in the fullest possible way, the case the right hon. Gentleman had made out for further legislation, and for passing a Bill on this subject; but the question before them was, what that Bill was to be. To his mind, it ought to be framed with the greatest deliberation. The mere statement of the case by the right hon. Gentleman—the mere fact that since he first introduced his proposal on this subject they had undergone changes of a most radical character, proved that they ought not to legislate on this matter without the utmost care and circumspection, and he did not think a better proof could be afforded than was to be found in the one single clause relating to the Fishing Boats Act. The House would recollect that last year it was persuaded to pass a measure called the Fishing Boats Act; and although in "another place" the haste of that legislation was pointed out, and grave doubts were expressed whether they were right in pressing it forward without further inquiry, the Government succeeded in passing it, and the result was that they had a proposal this year to enable the Board of Trade to exempt a certain class of vessels from the operation of the Act of last year. He might be allowed to dwell for a moment on that part of the Bill which was altogether abandoned—namely, the proposal as to the powers of detention now vested in the Board of Trade, and as to the investigation of shipping casualties. If the proposals of the Government in these respects had been persevered with, it would have been his duty to have pointed out grave objections to the proposals now made by Her Majesty's Government. So far as he had been able to judge, the inquiries into shipping casualties, though they had been occasionally accompanied with some friction, and although in some cases the shipowners had objected to the penalties that were imposed, they had been substantially of the greatest possible advantage to the public service; and he, for one, should have been very sorry to have seen legislation carried through the House that would have abolished the present system of inquiry into these casualties, by substituting for it one that would have taken away the legal element of the Court, and have made it much less effective for its purposes. But he would not go into these points at any length now, because he understood the matter was to be referred to a Royal Commission, which to his mind was by far the wisest course for dealing with the question—far wiser than attempting to press forward proposals of which the least that could be said was that there was the greatest possible doubt about them. As to the part of the Bill which endeavoured to bring home responsibility to the shipowners, hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House were ready to co-operate in this matter with the right hon. Gentleman. There was a proposal to extend the Employers' Liability Act to seamen, and of the desirability of that he must say he entertained very grave doubts. It seemed to him especially doubtful whether it was reasonable to apply that Act, which was passed for regulating the conditions of employment on land, to shipowners and seamen. There was, no doubt, a great deal to be said theoretically in favour of equality in this matter. He thought if they came to look at it from a common-sense point of view, however, they would find that there were a great many reasons why they should hesitate before they applied it to its fullest extent to shipowners and seamen. It seemed to him to be almost impossible to hold a perfectly honest shipowner who had sent out his ship in the best possible condition, thoroughly seaworthy and well found, with excellent officers, and a perfectly sufficient and good crew in every respect, responsible for injuries sustained by seamen through negligence of servants over whom he practically had no control. The shipowner might fairly be held responsible in every respect for the seaworthiness of his vessel; he might be required to make it seaworthy and keep it seaworthy; but to go beyond that and to insist that the negligence of any man in his employ, under any circumstances, should make him responsible when he could not possibly have control over that servant, seemed to him (Mr. E. Stanhope) to be going a very great deal too far. Hon. Members might have criticized the drafting of the measure a good deal in that respect, for it seemed to him to be about as absurd as it possibly could be. There was a long clause dealing with the question of the circumstances under which damages were to be recoverable, and another long one dealing with exceptions. So far as he could understand the Bill, a seaman's representative would have a right of action against a shipowner when he was injured, if that injury resulted from a defect in one of the bye-laws framed by the shipowners; but the shipowner would not be liable if that bye-law had been approved by the Board of Trade. [Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: That is in the Employers' Liability Act.] It might be; but that was no reason why it should be adopted here. He objected in the strongest possible manner to handing over to the Board of Trade the regulation of discipline on board ship, and even as the Bill stood the regulation of minute matters of navigation, and then to say—"You cannot recover them, because the Board of Trade sitting at Whitehall in its wisdom has thought this bye-law sufficient." He did not think seamen would be satisfied with that; but, passing from that question, he came to the question of insurance. Here, again, it was not necessary for him to say that the Opposition agreed in the desire of the right hon. Gentleman to amend the law so as to secure safety of life at sea; indeed, they had given special proof of that by having introduced the Bill of 1876, which, unfortunately, they were not able to pass, for amending the law in that respect. As to two of the proposals of the right hon.

Gentleman, he had only to express complete approval of them. In the first place, the proposal that only the net freight should be insured—which was a proposal the Conservatives had made in 1876, and which he thought would commend itself to the majority of the House —and, in the second place, the proposal with regard to the warranty of seaworthiness. Both these points seemed to him to be exactly what they should be, and he was sure the House would not be surprised to hear that, because the Bill as it now stood had been amended, and the right hon. Gentleman had announced his intention of substantially accepting what the Opposition, when they were in power, had proposed in 1876. Then he came to the provision as to valued policies. The Bill proposed that a valued policy upon a ship, or upon goods, might be opened by anybody, and would be void if it could be proved that the valuation was one penny in excess of the real value. What would be the effect of any such proposal? The question had been examined into by the Royal Commission in 1875. The Government had considered it very carefully when framing their legislation in 1876, and his right hon. Friend the then President of the Board of Trade, and those associated with him, had come to the conclusion—which he believed all parties connected with shipping had also arrived at—that any such proposal, if carried into law, would utterly destroy valuation for the future. Valuation was an exceedingly convenient thing; it was in accordance with the practical usages of the trade; it avoided the necessity of a very strict inquiry into the value; and, therefore, any proposal which would destroy valued policies would, in his opinion, be injurious to all interests concerned in this matter, and presented no compensating advantage. That was the conclusion to which the Royal Commission had come—a conclusion which he had never heard anything since at all to controvert; and he would be very much surprised if the feeling of the country was not at the present time exactly to the same effect as that expressed by the Royal Commission. But when the late Government had to deal with the matter in 1876 they approached it in a very different spirit. In the first place, they did not approach it with any general attack upon the shipowners. They believed, and they expressed the belief, that the really criminal cases where a ship was sent to sea with the intention of her being lost and the insurance being recovered were very rare. But they did believe, and he still believed, that over-insurance did exist, and that to a considerable extent, and that it most undoubtedly led to very considerable carelessness on the part of the shipowners. But then the House would recollect that all marine insurance necessarily to a greater or less extent had that effect; and they only thought, and they thought still, that such checks should be imposed upon marine insurance as would tend to promote caution without destroying the principle of valuation. They believed that the evils that existed could in that way be dealt with. The precaution which they laid down was that, in the first place, the policy should not be opened unless the valuation were very much in excess of the real value, and then that it should only be opened by the Judge trying the case. The one proposal would have the advantage of bringing our law into harmony with the law of most foreign countries on the subject; and the other was based on the belief that the Judge, as guardian of the public interest, was the best person qualified to say whether the policy ought to be opened, or that it was not right to disturb it. The late Government had thought that the effect of the proposal they made would be that the shipowners would be deterred from over-insurance because of the probability of exposure. The right hon. Gentleman had announced to-day the changes in his proposal, and he (Mr. E. Stanhope) had only one observation to make in regard to it. The right hon. Gentleman had told them it was necessary this question of marine insurance should be grasped with a strong hand. Well, a strong hand had grasped it, and the strong hand had been stung by the nettle; and the result was that the thorough-going and resolute proposals that the "strong hand" was going to introduce turned out to be less stringent than the timid proposals that were put forward by the late Government. He (Mr. E. Stanhope) did not think the proposals put forward by the late Government deserved the description of half-hearted or timid; he thought they would have been sufficient to deal with the evil; and he was certainly of opinion that they ought to be tried before the House was asked to go further, and put an end to the practices that were adopted now in the shipping trade, and which would inflict great injury to the trade. He was anxious to vote for the second reading of the Bill. When the right hon. Gentleman said he would cast on his opponents the responsibility of its not proceeding, he must say he did not think that was fair. Out of the six and a-half hours that they had this subject before them, the right hon. Gentleman had spoken nearly four hours; therefore he could not say, unless he was prepared to find more time for the discussion, that the Opposition were responsible if the Bill was not carried any further this Session. He (Mr. E. Stanhope) must say how strongly he objected to the proposal to refer the Bill to a Standing Committee. Could anyone doubt, having heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, or anyone who knew anything at all about the subject, that large principles were involved in this Bill which were absolutely new to the House. They had always understood, on both sides of the House, that the object of Grand Committees was not to take into consideration Bills involving new principles of great importance, but rather to thresh out questions of detail when the House had had an opportunity of settling the questions of principle. The case, he must say, was made much worse by the sort of bargain the right hon. Gentleman had entered into outside the House. The case now was that they had no Bill before them. They had a Bill that had been brought in by the Government, but which had been practically withdrawn. They had a new Bill, but that was not yet printed, and therefore they could not adequately appreciate it, and if the present Bill was to be read a second time, and then they were going to have it committed *pro formâ*, in order to insert the changes the right hon. Gentleman proposed, the effect, as he understood it, would be that they would be entirely precluded from discussing the amended Bill at all, or expressing in this House their view of what the nature of the change was. Therefore he ventured to say there were only two courses that the Government could adopt with regard to this Bill—either that they should withdraw it and introduce their new Bill at once; or else they should agree to-night to an adjournment of the debate, in order that they might have an opportunity of fairly considering the statement the right hon. Gentleman had made. He was quite sure the House would act very wrongly if, at this stage, it parted with complete control over the Bill, and that if it sent it to a Grand Committee and received it back again, probably some time in August, it would be depriving itself of a discussion on the measure which it was necessary it should have. To his mind, if the House allowed the Bill to go to a Grand Committee, they would be acting unjustly to the great interests affected, and detrimentally to the great object they all had in view—namely, the saving of life at sea.

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, the impression made on his mind by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was very different from that which appeared to have been made on the mind of the hon. Member who had just sat down. It had carried the conviction to his mind—and he spoke as a shipowner—that there were a large number of bad shipowners, that there was a large amount of over-insurance, and that the evils of over-insurance and the malpractices of the bad shipowners could only be get rid of by the clauses of this Bill, modified, as he was glad to see they had been, because he believed that in their original shape they would not have been acceptable either to that or the other side of the House. Modified as the clauses had been, modified as the whole Bill had been, he believed it would be acceptable to the country, and he trusted it would be well received in the House, and that it would be referred to a Committee. Whether it should be referred to a Select Committee or a Grand Committee was not now the time to say, although, for his own part, he could see no reason in the world why the details of the measure should not be considered by 60 or 80 impartial men. He had chanced to be in the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce when Captain Hadfield made his memorable speech upon the Bill, throwing it on the floor of the Chamber. That gentleman had gone to advocate that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, and he (Mr. Williamson) had, at the time, turned round to his friends, and said—"This is the kind of evidence we shall get if the House refuses to send the Bill to the Grand Committee, and sends it to a Select Committee instead." They did not want evidence. They knew the facts perfectly well, and he should be contented that the Bill, as modified, should be referred to the Grand Committee to be dealt with. He did not know what the reason might be, but he rather regretted the attitude taken up by the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver). It might, perhaps, be some explanation that the Captain Hadfield referred to was one of the hon. Member's most stalwart supporters. He hoped that did not form part of the hon. Member's motive; but he narrated it as a fact. The hon. Gentleman who had last spoken had referred to the Indemnity Clause of the Bill, and he (Mr. Williamson) agreed with him that Clauses 5 and 6 were capable of further improvement. It would have to be determined whether the insurance value was to be taken as the insurance value at the time of the issue of the policy or at the time of the loss. He might mention to the House—it was only fair that this matter should be discussed in a free and open way—the case of young men, friends of his in Liverpool, respectable young men at the head of a shipowning concern, who contracted for two fine ships in 1882, and which cost £12 13*s.* 9*d.* per ton. They had not yet returned from their first voyage. Now, suppose they were lost coming into the Channel, would it be fair if the underwriters said—"We can replace these vessels for £10 13*s.* 9*d.* per ton, and we claim, therefore, only to give you a mere indemnity?" It would entail a very heavy loss upon the shipowners. There would have been a loss not only in respect of the skill and time spent on the vessel and her navigation, but also in respect of the use of the money invested in her, and in respect of the natural gains shipowners expected. Time would have been lost in getting ships built to replace those which had gone, money would have been lying idle, and a mere indemnity, he was sure, would not satisfy the demands of justice in adjusting this case. No doubt, Amendments and alterations would be proposed in Committee, whether it were a Select or a Grand Committee to which the Bill was referred. He did not say that the Bill, even as explained and modified by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, was in every particular a perfect Bill, but he was sure it would very largely meet the evils from which the mercantile men of the country were suffering owing to the misconduct of certain members of the shipowning class. He sincerely hoped it would be accepted to-night by being read a second time, and that in Committee it would be dealt with so as to make it a perfect measure. He was very glad indeed that the right hon. Gentleman had excluded Part III., and by so doing the labours of the Committee would now be very much simplified. He should like to point out that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had indicated that not only would he submit Part III. to adjustment by a Royal Commission, but that the whole of the management of shipping affairs by the Board of Trade would be brought under the notice of that Body. A few years ago they passed a Rating of Seamen Bill, by which they agreed to give a rating to duly qualified seamen who had been not less than four years at sea. Now, he (Mr. Williamson), as a shipowner, had imagined that the Board of Trade would establish the necessary Registration Office for the purpose of making the measure effective; but nothing had been done, and the consequence was that the Bill had been a dead letter. The condition and qualifications of our seamen were known no better now than they were before, and that, to his mind, was very much the fault of the Board of Trade. Probably the Government would say that the House should have remedied the defect in the law, and seen that the necessary clauses were introduced at the time; but he, for one, believed it fell within the functions of the Board of Trade to do it. However, as matters stood, nothing had been done, and the shipowners had gained nothing by the Rating of Seamen Act. All he had now to say was that he hoped the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would be read a second time to-night.

MR. GORST said, that all the Members of the House who were present in the early part of the evening must have been very much distressed by the facts which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had brought before them as a justification for his Bill. He could understand that there were some persons who were extremely anxious to turn this important public question into a personal quarrel between the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade and the shipowners. Perhaps he ought to apologize for not having been a very diligent reader of the speeches the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had made in the country. He could not say anything with regard to those speeches; but, certainly, the speech the right hon. Gentleman had made to-night did not appear to him at all to deserve the character of a personal attack on the shipowners. Certainly, he should never have thought, at all, of regarding it as a "monstrous and fantastic" charge. Nor could he agree with hon. Members who declared that the difficulties in the way of passing the Bill were created by the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman. The facts the right hon. Gentleman had put before them to-night having come to his knowledge in his official capacity, it was clearly his duty to lay them before the House and the public. He (Mr. Gorst) did not understand that the right hon. Gentleman brought these facts before the public on his own responsibility. He had brought them up in his official capacity as relating to his Departmant, and he (Mr. Gorst) was sure that any Minister who had had brought to his mind the state of things which the right hon. Gentleman had described to-night and had abstained, from delicacy to the shipowners or from any other feeling, from laying those facts before the House of Commons and the country, would have been guilty of a very gross dereliction of duty. But, whilst listening to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and whilst feeling deeply impressed with the important facts he had disclosed, he (Mr. Gorst) could not help thinking—and no doubt that feeling was shared by many hon. Members —that if these things really were true the Government had shown a very culpable remissness in not pressing this measure on the attention of the House of Commons at a much earlier period. As hon. Members were aware, the right hon. Gentleman told them there was a very great and grievous loss of life at sea, which was, at least, due to preventible causes, and that one of these causes was an improper state of the law. Well, that improper state of the law existed last November, and when Parliament met in February last he should have thought that of all the measures which the Government had to bring before the House of Commons there was none more urgently needed than that which was to save this lamentable loss of life; and he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade acquitted himself, but, at any rate, the country would hardly acqui him, of being somewhat supine in pressing on the House of Commons the necessity of taking immediate steps to remedy the existing unhappy state of things. They were, many of them, on both sides of the House, zealously in favour of the passing of the present Bill. It seemed to him that the Franchise Bill, or any other Bill, was less urgently required at the present moment than this Merchant Shipping Bill. The people they proposed to bring under the franchise, at any rate, might live to enjoy the boon next year; whereas these unhappy sailors who were endangered by the present state of the law might not live to see another year unless that law were amended. Instead of the facts, which had been solemnly and publicly stated, being laid before the House at the beginning of the Session as a reason for the second reading, the measure was laid on one side; and one of the most extraordinary negotiations which had ever been witnessed in our Parliamentary history took place between the authorities and the Board of Trade, assisted by the Solicitor General and the shipowners who had seats in the House, and many who had not. Lately, no one could go into the Tea Room or the Conference Room without coming across the shipowners and the Solicitor General or the President of the Board of Trade. And all these consultations were taking place whilst valuable lives were been sacrificed. Hon. Members had had the extraordinary spectacle before them of one interminable negotiation going on for the past three months. This method of legislating was hardly one to be recommended, but yet it was being adopted in regard to Railway Bills. Formerly, a responsible

Minister, on his responsibility and that of the Government, publicly adduced his reasons in the House of Commons for introducing a Bill, and invited discussion in which all interests were heard, and then took the sense of the House on his proposal. Governments should stand or fall by the success of these grave measures. It seemed to him a novel and very unsatisfactory mode of conducting the legislation of the country that things had to be—to use a vulgar word—"squared" between the Department and the people who were interested, or were supposed to be interested, in special legislation, and that hon. Members were to come down to the House to play a sort of comedy in which everything had been settled beforehand. and they had only to go through the solemn farce of ratifying the agreements come to. He wished to give every possible support to the legislation of the country on this subject; but he hoped they would forgive him for saying frankly that he would have done it with much greater satisfaction if the Government had come to them boldly with the measure they themselves thought to be sufficiently satisfactory, and had not allowed themselves to be diverted from their purpose by any factious opposition got up on either side of the House. There was in this matter no fear of the shipowners' view not being properly heard. The shipowners were represented in the House. They had advocates of the greatest ability and position, and they had, besides, through the great number of Shipping Companies in existence, the means of putting a great deal of pressure on the Members of the House. So that there was not the slightest risk of any injustice or wrong being done to the shipowning interest without the matter having been fully discussed and considered in the House, or by a Select Committee, or Grand Committee, or any other tribunal of the House to which the subject might be referred. But there was great risk of injustice being done to another class of people who were not well represented in the House—namely, the seamen. When Mr. Plimsoll was in the House, the seamen had in him a very ardent and enthusiastic advocate. But Mr. Plimsoll was here no longer, and the seamen had not much electoral influence. There were not very many boroughs in the country where they had any influence at all; and even where they had influence, from the very nature of their calling they were not often able to be present at elections. They were not a class of persons able to put much pressure on their Representatives. Therefore, the only chance they really had of their interests being attended to was through the force and power of public opinion. There were, he was thankful to say, a great many Members of the House of sufficient independence to stand up for the rights of any people who were not otherwise defended or protected; and if the case of the merchant seamen were stated in the House by any Member, he felt sure that there were a sufficient number sitting in the House who would insist on that case being properly heard. But when negotiations were carried on in the Tea Room between the Solicitor General and the shipowners, who knew whether the case of the seamen was ever considered at all? There might be an official of the Board of Trade there as well, but the officials of the Board of Trade had never been particularly distinguished as protectors of the seamen; and he thought that when legislation was carried on in that fashion, and no one was present at the conferences who was either qualified to represent the interests of the seamen, or who had the advantage of public opinion to back him, there was very great risk that the Department and the shipowners would settle the matter between them without that due regard for the interests of the seamen which the nature of the case demanded. Well, having said so much, he could not help thinking that the Bill had suffered in these negotiations, and that the measure they were really asked to give a second reading to to-night was not in as good a position for examination by a Standing Committee as the measure which the Government originally introduced. And that was proved by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade himself, because he (Mr. Gorst) had been very much struck, when the right hon. Gentleman came to describe the legislation by which he proposed to deal with the evils which he had in the course of his excellent speech shown to exist, by the insufficiency and inadequacy of the measures which he proposed to take. The right hon. Gentleman had described the provisions of the Bill as by no means sinning on the side of strength, and then he had proceeded to explain to the House that the provisions had been grievously watered down in order to get rid of the opposition with which the proposal was threatened. For example, take the case of liability. Originally it was proposed that the shipowner should be liable for unseaworthiness caused either by his own act or by the act of his servants and agents. Well, the liability for the acts of servants and agents had been, in deference to the opposition that was threatened, withdrawn. By this they were creating a different law for the shipowner from that which prevailed in reference to every other employer in the country. There was, he thought, a great deal to be said in favour of making it a general law that employers should be made liable for the acts of their servants and agents. He did not know that anyone had ever shown that an employer should be made responsible for acts of his servants or agents which he had not authorized. In many countries, as civilized as our own, there was no law to make an employer so responsible. A man was liable for his own acts and for exercising care in the choice of his servants and agents; but, if he had not failed in those points, he was not liable at all—except in the case of railways and businesses of a dangerous character. In England, roughly speaking, the law was that every man was liable for the acts of his agents, except the shipowner. Why were they to create in this way a special exemption—a single exemption in the jurisprudence of the country in favour of one particular class? He would tell them why. It was because this particularly favoured class had settled the law with the Solicitor General in the private rooms of the House of Commons. If the Government had proposed a particular privilege of that kind on the floor of the House of Commons, they would have heard what would have been said of it by Members of the House of Commons, and they would have had to defend this singular and particular privilege by such arguments as they could have produced. Then, he had been glad to hear that the Employers' Liability Act was to be extended to seamen. He had carried his memory back two or three years when that Employers' Liability Act was passed. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and he (Mr. Gorst), in their humble way, had endeavoured to persuade the Government to extend the Act to seamen. He recollected very well that they were told by the President of the Board of Trade and the Attorney General that such a demand was preposterous—that the nature of the sea service was such that it was quite impossible to extend the measure to it.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: That does not refer to me—I never said so.

Mr. GORST said, he could not at this distance of time remember whether it was the right hon. Gentleman or the Attorney General; but they were certainly told so by the Government, and being extremely modest in those days, and quite unconscious of any power to influence Her Majesty's Government or the House of Commons, the mouths of himself and his noble Friend were closed, and they were induced to yield to the superior wisdom of Ministers. Now, three years had passed, and the Government had found it quite possible to extend the measure to seamen. He (Mr. Gorst) was very glad of it. But while they were extending it to seamen why did they not improve it? It did not extend to foremen and to officers of the Mercantile Marine. Why did it not? If necessary, why not amend the original Act by extending it to foremen? Why not? There, again, because the whole question was settled in secret conclave. In the original Bill it was proposed that the Act should extend to officers of the Mercantile Marine. Why did they withdraw that privilege? Why, because it had been settled secretly between the Government and the shipowners not to include these officers. He should like to ask the President of the Board of Trade even at the eleventh hour to pluck up heart and ask the House of Commons to pass the Bill in the generous form in which it was introduced by the Government, or, at all events, that he would consent to introduce into it such Amendments as he himself thought would improve the measure. If the right hon. Gentleman would, as he suggested, appeal to public opinion and to the opinion of the House, he believed he would find many more supporters than he at present supposed he would have. He had never found the shipowners in the House of Commons to be an illiberal body, nor did he for a moment believe that the interests of seamen and shipowners were really antagonistic. In the last Parliament, when discussions took place in consequence of the agitation initiated by Mr. Plimsoll, he remembered that some of the foremost advocates of the interests of seamen were amongst the shipowners in that House; and he believed, if the case were put in the eloquent language of the President of the Board of Trade to the shipowners in the House of Commons, that the opposition which seemed so much to have frightened the right hon. Gentleman and the Solicitor General would disappear. The Bill, he supposed, would be read a second time, and he did not know why there should be any long delay in bringing it under the consideration of the Standing Committee; but if it was to be passed that Session they must set to work upon it in a business-like fashion. He was, therefore, sorry to hear and to read in the public Press that the Standing Committee was to begin its labours on Friday next, and that there was no intention to proceed further with the Bill until after the Whitsuntide Recess. He trusted, however, that an immediate beginning would then be made, and that the Standing Committee would earnestly address itself to the Bill with the intention of passing it. He did not agree with the opinion which many persons entertained with reference to the Bill going to the Standing Committee. There would be men on the Committee possessing technical knowledge and representing the various interests supposed to be affected by the Bill, and there would be, no doubt, a considerable number of gentlemen of the Long Robe to answer all legal questions that might arise, and there would be probably a few ordinary Members of Parliament to represent public opinion. A body of that kind would, in his opinion, be eminently qualified to deal with the measure. He would, therefore, confidently appeal to any sensible and reasonable shipowner in the House of Commons to assist in passing the Bill. A measure of this kind ought not to be a matter for contention; and he said that everyone who sat upon the Standing Committee ought to be guided by the one object of making it efficient and workable, and then there would be no difficulty whatever about the matter. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be encouraged by the response with which his speech had been met, and that immediately after Whitsuntide he would address himself to the Bill with the earnest and serious intention of passing it into law this Session; and he was confident, that if the right hon. Gentleman took that course, he would find an amount of support both within the House and out-of-doors which would, perhaps, astonish him.

MR. E. SMITH said, he should occupy the time of the House very briefly. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had, to a certain extent, expressed disappointment at not having met with that assistance and support from the shipowners of the United Kingdom to which his good intentions, in his opinion, entitled him. But he ventured to tell the House and the right hon. Gentleman that there was no unwillingness whatever on the part of the shipowners of the country to assist him to attain the two objects he had in view. One object, as he (Mr. E. Smith) understood, was to secure that no man should recover, by means of insurance, more than the actual value of his vessel. The other object was to extend the Employers' Liability Act to shipowners. He knew a great many shipowners throughout the country, and he could only say with respect to the Bill that he had never heard a word spoken against it by them. They found no fault with the objects which the right hon. Gentleman had in view, but with the manner in which he attempted to attain them, and the way in which he had indirectly mixed up with the subject a number of charges against the shipowners of the country — a course that had led to a considerable amount of strong feeling on their part; and the consequence was that they thought they had the right to demand that the whole subject should be investigated before a Select Committee of that House, before which evidence might be taken and the whole subject thoroughly sifted out. He believed that it was unexampled that charges such as had been made by the right hon. Gentleman against shipowners in the United Kingdom should be put forward in Parliament without their having an opportunity of meeting them. Intending, as he did, to vote for the Bill going to a

Select Committee, whatever alterations might be proposed, he should only vote for the second reading with the object of getting one step nearer the object which, in his opinion, the shipowners of the country had a right to demand. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded, in the first place, to the increased loss of life which had occurred at sea. Now, he was going to make a statement on that subject which he believed many Members of the House might think rather strange. But his contention was, that the increase was due very much to the legislation of a former Parliament, into which they had been hurried through the enthusiasm of a Gentleman who was unfortunately not very well acquainted with the subject. The House would be aware that a very considerable amount of popular feeling had been raised by the eloquence and enthusiasm of Mr. Plimsoll. That Gentleman, however, had become possessed of one idea, a very good one in itself, but which was only one amongst many others; he ran away with the idea that the remedy for the prevention of loss of life at sea was to be procured by vessels having a good freeboard—a very important thing, of course, but, as he had said before, not the only element in the case that had to be considered. He had some experience as a shipowner and shipbuilder, and he hoped he might express an opinion upon this matter. The result of that legislation was, that ships were not built upon exactly the same proportions and dimensions as formerly; at the same time, in order to make them marketable, it was absolutely necessary that they should carry the same amount of coal that was carried by other vessels, and that they should not be liable to the interference of the Board of Trade. Ships were made flatter in the bottom, and, although they had more freeboard, they were not such good sea-boats—they behaved worse in heavy weather—and to that, in his opinion, a considerable amount of the increased loss of life was due. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House a good deal about insurance, and had brought forward various instances in which ships had been over-insured. It was extremely possible that there might be cases in which the amount of insurance effected on ships was rather higher than what was called their market value; and the statistics, as far as he could follow them, appeared to show that there was something like an average of 20 per cent insured above what dispassionate valuers considered the market value of the ships. Well, it was a very natural thing for a man to value his own property at more than it was valued at by other people, and, therefore, a slight excess in the amount assured was not to be wondered at. But there was one point which the right hon. Gentleman appeared not to be aware of — namely, that members of Mutual Assurance Associations in the North of England and elsewhere had, in the event of their ships being lost, to pay for a considerable time what was called back average. That charge, which in any case amounted to about 10 per cent, had to be settled by the shipowner; that was to say, if a man had insured his ship for £20,000, and the ship was lost, he would have to pay, in the shape of calls made upon him during the next 12 or 18 months, no less than 10 per cent on the amount insured, or, in other words, £2,000. That, at least, accounted for one-half of the over-insurance of which the right hon. Gentleman complained. Then, again, the right hon. Gentleman spoke as if this apparently excessive insurance was due entirely to the inordinate greed of the shipowners. But there were two other parties concerned in that matter, one of whom was the underwriter. As everyone knew who was acquainted with the matter, it was a very common thing for shipowners who did not want to over-insure their vessels to consider, not only the actual value of their ships, but at what valuation the underwriters would take them. For instance, a man might wish to place the value of his ship at £10,000; but the underwriter might say—"I will not accept that valuation, if you will value her at £15,000 I will take her." The reason for this was, that in the case of a particular average the underwriter would have to contribute much less upon a ship valued at £15,000 than he would upon a ship valued at £10,000. Then there was another class of people concerned in this matter, not the shipowners, but the shareholders in the ship. By shipowner, he meant the man who had a practical interest in, and a practical share in the working of the ship; but, unfortunately, there were a number of other persons interested in ships who were not shipowners. Those persons found it convenient to invest their money in ships, and one condition they made with the managing owner was that he should take care that, whatever happened, they got their money back again, the consequence being, that the managing owner had great difficulty in reducing the valuation. Managing owners constantly said that the valuation of ships ought from time to time to be reduced, and asked whether individual owners would consent to the reduction, because it was not to the interest of the managing owner to keep up the high valuation. In the first place, the higher the valuation the greater the amount of premium and the smaller the amount of dividend, and it was upon the amount of dividend that the managing owners were paid. Again, it was no interest to the managing owner that the ship should be lost, because, as everyone acquainted with the subject would know, that for the next 12 months after the ship was lost, at least, the managing owner would lose his commission. Moreover, when the co-owners had received their money in case of loss, it was very difficult to get them to invest it again in ships. He was certain that at the present time no owner who had got his money out of a ship would want to put it into a new one. He mentioned these circumstances to show that it was not to the interest of the managing owner that ships should be highly insured. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made an appeal on behalf of the seamen. In that appeal he strongly concurred, because he believed that the claims of seamen in this matter were such as the House could not overlook. The hon. and learned Gentleman said they were not represented in that House, and, to a certain extent, he agreed with him. He (Mr. E. Smith) sat for a constituency containing as large a percentage of seamen as any in the Kingdom, and he knew that many seamen were abroad at election time, and did not make their opinions fully known, and he, therefore, agreed that the case of the seamen ought to be thoroughly investigated. But this could only be done by the Bill going before a Select Committee. They were told that the seaman was not represented; but he would be no more represented on a Grand Committee which was composed of Members of that House. There were in every part of the country Seamen and Masters' Associations, and if the Bill were referred to a Select Committee they would be able to get an amount of evidence from them which would be extremely valuable in enabling them to deal with this branch of the subject. He would not detain the House further than to say that he should endeavour to assist the right hon. Gentleman in forwarding the Bill until they arrived at the time for it to be referred to a Committee; but when that point was reached, his efforts would be directed towards its being referred to a Select Committee rather than to the Standing Committee, because he believed that upon the former the shipowners and seamen would be more fairly represented.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. E. Clarke.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had hoped it would be possible to obtain a decision on the Motion for the second reading at that Sitting; but, at the same time, he was equally desirous that hon. Gentlemen who wished it should have the fullest opportunity of addressing the House upon the subject, and he could not, therefore, oppose the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. In view of the various difficulties involved in the question, he had been considering whether, during the time that would elapse before the resumption of the debate, he could assist hon. Members in the matter, and he would endeavour to prepare something in the form of a Memorandum which, he hoped, would be useful for the purpose.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he thought the course which was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would be a very convenient one. It was very desirable that ample opportunity should be given to hon. Gentlemen to take part in the debate which had been begun to-night. The right hon. Gentleman made an exceedingly able speech, one of very considerable length, and one raising not only a good many points in itself, but suggesting a good deal more to be considered on account of the Amendments and alterations which he proposed in the Bill. As far as he understood the matter, if they passed the second reading of the Bill now, they would not have an opportunity of discussing the Bill, with the Amendments of the right hon. Gentleman, upon its principle. If the question of the second reading were adjourned for some little time, and a Memoranda of the proposed Amendments were submitted to the House, they would resume the debate with greater facility.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MIDDLESEX REGISTRY OF DEEDS BILL.—[Bill 91.]

(*Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Hopwood.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that, in moving the second reading of the Bill, he hoped it would not be necessary to trouble the House with any lengthy explanation. The Bill did not enter into any controversial matter; it simply took the Middlesex Registry of Deeds as it was, and proposed to initiate some reform of the machinery by enabling the present Registrar to retire from his position, and by placing the Registry under the control of the Treasury and of Her Majesty's Government. The Middlesex Registry levied fees very much at its own pleasure; but, by this Bill, the fees paid in future would be regulated.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Mr. WARTON said, he did not desire to trouble the House with any opinion of his respecting the Bill; for aught he knew the Bill might be a very good one. The point, however, to which he wished to draw attention was that, earlier in the evening, the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was informed that the Bill would not be taken to-night. On that ground, he (Mr. Warton) begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. MOLLOY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Mr ARTHUR ARNOLD asked his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) to adduce one single good reason why the House should pass this Bill. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had not heard one such reason as yet; and he should vote for the Motion for Adjournment, because he did not see any advantage in proceeding with the Bill. The Bill proposed that in future Her Majesty's Government should become responsible for the Middlesex Registry; it was, therefore, of much importance, and should not be passed without deliberation.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY hoped the Motion for Adjournment would not be pressed. The Bill was a good one in the sense that it would produce economy, and would give the Land Registry something to do. Probably the Bill did not go so far as some of them would wish. At the present time there were, he believed, two Bills relating to the Yorkshire Registry before a Select Committee; and, in his opinion, the law with regard to the Middlesex Registry ought to be assimilated to that of the Yorkshire Registry. He ventured to submit——

Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman that he must confine his remarks to the Motion for Adjournment which has been moved.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, he was just coming to that point, because he was going to suggest to the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) and his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) that the Bill should be read a second time this evening, but that the Committee stage should be delayed until they had received the Report of the Select Committee on the Yorkshire Registry. He made this suggestion in the hope that the law of the Middlesex Registry might be assimilated to the law of the Yorkshire Registry.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, a Question was asked by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in regard to the Bill, and he (Sir Henry James) stated, in reply, that it was a Treasury Bill, but he understood it would not be taken at an unreasonable hour. The second reading was moved at 20 minutes to 1, and, therefore, he hoped it would not be considered that any pledge had been broken. There was no desire to press on unduly the Committee stage, so that he hoped the House would allow the second reading to be taken to-night.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 14; Noes 107: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 95.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MOLLOY said, that before the Bill was read a second time he desired——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in speaking.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was very glad indeed to take up the part which his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) was unable to perform. At this hour (12.55), it was monstrous and absurd for the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) to endeavour to press upon the House an important Bill like the present. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), therefore, felt himself called upon to move the adjournment of the House.

MR. KENNY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

MR. MOLLOY said, he was not aware that he was precluded from making any remarks upon the general object of the Bill by having seconded the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. One of the principal reasons why he now supported the Motion for Adjournment was that his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) obtained a distinct promise this evening that the Bill was not to be brought on to-night. His hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who had given considerable attention to the matter, and who was prepared to offer some valuable observations upon the subject, left the House in the belief that the Bill was not to be brought on. The hon. Member for Queen's County represented a large number of the Legal Profession who were interested in the Bill, and therefore it was exceedingly unfair that, after such a promise was made him, although now explained away by the Attorney General, the Secretary to the Treasury should endeavour to force the measure through the House. Another reason why the adjournment ought to be agreed to was that in moving the second reading the hon. Gentleman offered no adequate explanation of the provisions of the Bill. As a matter of fact, the Bill was purely a Pensions Bill. Not one single Member had the faintest idea what this Bill was which the Secretary to the Treasury asked the House now to read a second time. He had no desire to obstruct the Bill unnecessarily; but there were matters involved which required attention, and, under the circumstances, he felt bound to support the Motion.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had heard what the Attorney General had said as to the Bill being brought on to-night, and he entirely agreed with what his hon. and learned Friend had said. The hon. Member afterwards asked the President of the Board of Trade, and then wrote to the Solicitor General.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would consent to the adjournment; but that, if he could not do that, the Motion for Adjournment would not be pressed. He would, however, appeal to the Attorney General to assent to the Motion, for it was of the greatest importance to note that by accepting the principle of the Bill they would be accepting for the first time the proposition that there should be a Government Department for the Registry of Deeds. There was no such Department in existence at the present moment, and he hoped the adjournment would be agreed to.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 21; Noes 90: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 96.)

Original Question again proposed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped the House would now allow the Bill to be read a second time. He should exceedingly regret there being any misunderstanding on the part of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor); but, if that was so, he would undertake that the Bill should not be further proceeded with except at a favourable time.

MR. HEALY said, he was extremely surprised at this proposal, for at Question time the Attorney General stated distinctly that he would not bring the Bill on to-night.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he must contradict that emphatically, for all he had said was that it would not be taken at an unusual hour.

Mr. HEALY said, he was in the House at Question time. His hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether it was his intention to take the Bill to-night, and the hon. and learned Gentlemen said it was not. Then he turned to the hon. Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), and, after a conversation with the noble Lord, he corrected himself and said it would not be taken at an unusual hour. What was an unusual hour? Was a quarter past 1 an unusual hour? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the Government would go on with the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill; but now it seemed that there had been another re-arrangement. If one portion of the Government Business was subject to revision, why should not another? If the Government did not intend to go on with that Bill, why should they go on with this Bill? On Friday night, how were Irish Members treated? The Government, having the Revision of Juries (Dublin) Bill down, got the Speaker out of the Chair, and the moment they had done so the Chief Secretary said no further progress would be made, because certain Irish Members were absent; and the Bill was postponed. What sanctity attached to the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman) that he should be entitled to that consideration, while the hon. Member for Queen's County, who certainly knew a great deal more than the hon. and gallant Member, and who attended more to his Parliamentary duties, was snubbed by the Government? If a contrast was made between the treatment of one Irish Member by the Government, because he happened to be a Home Ruler, and their treatment of another, because he was a Tory, the contrast would not be flattering as to the intentions and *bona fides* of the Government. He should persevere in opposition to this proposal, and the Government would find that this system of taking advantage of hon. Members' absence would not assist them in the passing of Bills.

Mr. SEXTON said, his impression was that this Bill would not be taken to-night, after the answer given to his hon. Friend, and the interesting statement of the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had not removed that impression, for, if that proved anything, it proved that after hearing the pledge that had been given, he found it so ambiguous—as other pledges were—that he was unsettled about the matter, and applied to one Member of the Government by word of mouth, and to another by letter, to ascertain what was intended. From the statement of the right hon. Baronet he concluded that his hon. Friend, who was one of the very few Members who had any knowledge of this subject, would not have left the House if he had thought it likely that the Bill would be brought on. The statement of the Attorney General would not satisfy the House; but the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had given a decisive reason for not proceeding with the Bill now. He had shown that its object was to confine to a Department of the State the function of the Registry of Deeds. He believed it was an unquestionable fact that never until now in the Parliamentary history of England had an attempt been made to do this. Considering all the circumstances of the case—the promise, as he took it, given at a quarter-past 4, what had happened this evening, the novel character of the Bill, the late hour, and the unsatisfactory character of the whole matter—he felt called upon and entitled to follow his hon. Friend, and oppose the Bill being taken to-night.

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 86; Noes 17: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 97.)

Bill *committed* for *Monday*, 9th June.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (REPEAL, &c.) BILL.—[Bill 55.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. HIBBERT: In accordance with the promise I made to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) on Friday, I now beg to move that the Order for Committee be discharged, in order that the Bill may be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Order for Committee be read and discharged,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*,)—put, and *agreed to.*

Order *discharged.*

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

CANAL BOATS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 111.]

(*Mr. Burt, Colonel Makins, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. BURT said, he wished to move the second reading of this Bill. The hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. A. F. Egerton) had a Motion on the Paper to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. Under the circumstances, he (Mr. Burt) was prepared to accept that Motion, and he proposed that the House should allow the measure to be read a second time, in order that it might be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Mr. A. F. EGERTON said, that, for his part, he should be willing to assent to the proposed reference, on the understanding that this principle was approved by the Government.

Mr. HEALY said, he did not oppose the Bill, and trusted that it would pass; but, as a point of Order, he wished to know whether the hon. Member (Mr. A. F. Egerton) was right in putting down—"After the Second Reading of the Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill, to refer the Bill to a Select Committee?" It did not seem to him to be in Order for an hon. Member to put down such an Amendment—"After the Second Reading." If it was in Order for the hon. Member to do that, that was to say, to propose an Amendment which would only take effect in a hypothetical case, such a proceeding would surely also be in Order with regard to Amendments in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a Notice in the nature of an Amendment, and, therefore, it was perfectly in Order.

Mr. HEALY said, his point was that the Motion should not be allowed to appear on the Paper. He had always thought that no Amendment could appear on the Paper relating to a particular stage, until that stage had been obtained. How did the hon. Member for Wigan know that the second reading stage would be taken? On the Committee stage of Bills hon. Members could not put down Amendments until the House was in Committee. He had seen Amendments put down to refer Bills to Select Committees, but it had always been after the second reading; but on the present occasion the hon. Member proposed that after the second reading the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. He challenged any hon. Member to say that he had seen any such thing before.

Mr. COURTNEY: If the hon. Member will refer to Orders Nos. 17 and 18, he will find his own name put down to similar Motions.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is perfectly in Order. It is the usual practice for the Motion to be put down in this way.

Mr. A. F. EGERTON: That is not the Notice I originally gave. I have no doubt it was altered, and put in that form, by the Clerk at the Table, in accordance with the ordinary practice.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC PETITIONS.

RESOLUTION.

Colonel NOLAN said, he wished to move—

> "That the Order with regard to Petitions be amended, by substituting six for five o'clock as the latest hour for presenting Petitions."

As his Motion was for the convenience of Members, he would not inconvenience them at that period by making a long speech with regard to it. Some hon. Members who had Petitions to present sometimes found it very inconvenient to have to present them at 5 o'clock. He himself had brought up Petitions more than three times without being able to put them in the bag in consequence of the limited time allowed to hon. Members for the operation. The hon. Baronet who had charge of the Petition arrangements was always very courteous, and, no doubt, would do what he could to meet the wishes of hon. Members, and would, if the House were agreeable, allow Petitions to be put in the bag up to 6 o'clock. He hoped the hon. Baronet (Sir Charles Forster) would find some means to enable those hon. Members who might be busy elsewhere at the time at which Petitions were now presented, to submit those Petitions to the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order with regard to Petitions be amended, by substituting six for five o'clock as the latest hour for presenting Petitions."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Sir CHARLES FORSTER said, the Government could not agree to the Motion in its present form. The present rule had been laid down by the Speaker in order to save great inconvenience; but he quite agreed with hon. Members that the present method required some modification to prevent them, on their part, being put to inconvenience. He was anxious to meet the wishes of the hon. and gallant Member as far as he could. He would, therefore, suggest that the hon. and gallant Member should withdraw his Motion, and leave the matter in his (Sir Charles Forster's) hands. He would confer with the Speaker, and see what could be done for extending the time at which Petitions could be presented.

Colonel NOLAN said, the hon. Baronet's promise was perfectly satisfactory, and he would, therefore, withdraw his Motion.

Mr. WARTON said, that a quarter to 6 o'clock would be better than 6, particularly on Wednesdays.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

YORKSHIRE LAND REGISTRIES AND YORKSHIRE REGISTRIES BILLS.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Yorkshire Land Registries Bill and Yorkshire Registries Bill do consist of seventeen Members:—The Judge Advocate General and Mr. Stuart-Wortley *nominated* Members of the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Dodds be one other Member of the said Committee."—(*Mr. Dundas.*)

Mr. SHEIL: Has the hon. Member, who is moving this, complied with the Standing Order of the House with reference to Notice?

Mr. DUNDAS: The Motion appears on the Paper. Notice of it was given on Thursday, and it appeared for the first time on Friday.

Mr. SPEAKER: One day's Notice is all that is required in this matter.

Mr. SHEIL said, that one of the Standing Orders stated that no Committee should be moved for without Notice.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he should take a Division on the name of Mr. Dodds, as he wished to substitute the name of Mr. Arthur O'Connor for that of the hon Member for Stockton.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give Notice of his desire to substitute a new name.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 46; Noes 15: Majority 31.—(Div. List, No. 98.)

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Is it competent to the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Dodds) to vote on the question of his own exclusion?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was perfectly in Order.

Mr. Thomas Collins, Mr. Pease, Mr. L. Dawnay, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. Elton, Mr. Gregory, Sir Charles Mills, Mr. Isaac Wilson, Mr. Hinde Palmer, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Marum, Mr. Barran, and Mr. Asher *nominated* other Members of the said Committee; power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) (LOWER THAMES VALLEY MAIN SEWERAGE DISTRICT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm two Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage District, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 211.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 4) (DISTRICT OF ARLECDON AND FRIZINGTON, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Local Government District of Arlecdon and Frizington, the Borough of Bradford (Yorks), the Falmouth United Sewerage District, the Special Drainage District of Flaxley, the Local Government Districts of Holmfirth and Lindfield, the Borough of Over Darwen, the Local Government Districts of Rothwell and Saint Mary Church, and the Warwick Joint Hospital District, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 212.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 11) (PARISHES OF BISLEY, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board, under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," and "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1882," relating to the Parishes of Bisley, Bratton Clovelly, Broadwood Widger, Chittlehampton, Cranham, East Worlington (two), Haresfield, Hay, Lapford, Llowes, Meshaw, Miserdine, Randwick (two), Standish, Stonehouse, Thelbridge, West Worlington, Witheridge (two), Woolfardisworthy, and Yspytty Ystwith, and to the Township of Lower Gwnnws, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 213.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 12) (PARISHES OF BARNWOOD, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board, under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," and "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1882," relating to the Parishes of Barnwood, Brockthrop (two), Churchdown, Down Hatherly, Harescomb (two), Haresfield (two), Hempstead, Maismore, Matson, North Hamlet, Quedgley (two), Saint Catherine's with Kingsholm Saint Catherine's, Saint John Baptist, Saint Mary-de-Lode with Kingsholm Saint Mary, Saint Nicholas, Sandhurst, South Hamlet, Upton Saint Leonards, Ville of Wotton, and Whaddon (two), to the Township of Over Higham and Linton, and to the Hamlets of Barton Saint Mary, Barton Saint Michael, Longford Saint Catherine's, Longford Saint Mary, Tuffley, Twigworth, and Wootton Saint Mary, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 214.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 13) CITY OF OXFORD, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1867," as amended by "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868," and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the City of Oxford, and the parish of Saint Mary, Whitechapel, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 215.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (SALT WORKS AND CEMENT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Alkali, &c. Works Regulation Act, 1881," relating to Salt Works and Cement Works, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Sir Charles Dilke.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 216.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 6) (UNIONS OF DELVIN, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Unions of Delvin, Fermoy, and Newcastle, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 210.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 20*th May*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) * (103).

Second Reading—Water Provisional Orders * (92); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) * (84); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (Alton-Barnes, &c.) * (85); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) (Bovey-Tracey, &c.) * (86); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) (Ashill, &c.) * (87); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) (Acton, &c.) * (88); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) (Ashen, &c.) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) (Abberley, &c.) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) (Abergwilly, &c.) * (91); Secretary for Scotland (79); Great Seal (83); Colonial Prisoners Removal (44).

Committee—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (The Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * (64); Greek Marriages * (96).

Committee—Report—Gas Provisional Orders * (81); Land Drainage Provisional Orders * (82); Public Libraries Acts Amendment (95).

Third Reading—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (68), and *passed*.

NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, having been created Viscount Hampden of Glynde in the county of Sussex—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION AND FRANCE.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF FIFE: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the paragraph in *The Times* of this morning as to the negotiations between France and the International African Association comes from any official source; and whether the noble Earl will, before the Whitsuntide Recess, make a statement on the subject?

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Earl asked me a Question on this subject the other evening. Since that time I have applied for permission to publish documents which are at present of a confidential character, and I hope I shall be able to answer the noble Earl in a few days.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 79.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he did not rise to offer any objection to the second reading of the Bill, because he believed, on the whole, its effect on the country would be very good; but the objections he had to the measure were rather in respect of sins of omission than of sins of commission. He intended, if the Bill passed the second reading, and he should vote for its doing so, to move certain Amendments when it got into Committee for the purpose of extending its scope, and he now wished to say a few words as to what the effect of those Amendments would be. Their effect would be in the direction of placing the elementary education of Scotland in the hands of the new Secretary. Most of their Lordships were aware that the system of education in Scotland had been, for more than 300 years, a universal and successful one. They had boasted frequently of that system of education, and he thought justly; but it had lately been changed, and for the last 12 years there had been in operation a measure under which school boards had been universally established, the object generally of the Act being levelling up, so as to bring primary education to every child in Scotland. It was generally felt throughout Scotland that there was now great need to supplement that measure, so as to give an improved system of secondary education, and there was also a very strong opinion throughout Scotland that they should never get a satisfactory system of secondary education except through the means of a Scottish Department, specially exercising the control of Scottish education. It was, therefore, with that object that he should move to bring the whole system of Scottish education under the control of the Office of the Secretary for Scotland. He did not wish to say a word against those who in London managed the Scottish Education Department. He believed that Department was managed by the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, and those who with him were responsible for Scottish education, as well as it was possible for them to manage it, with the limited knowledge they had of the system of Scottish education. The chief objection, however, he had to the London administration was this—that those who had to administer the Education Acts in England were not really acquainted with the system which had been practised in Scotland for so many centuries, and which was still being practised; and, also, that they were not aware of the necessities that existed for the further extension of that system. Their Lordships would notice that the Bill proposed to transfer to the new Secretary the powers and duties vested in one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State in reference to Universities in Scotland, and also the powers of the Privy Council in reference to educational endowments. It, therefore, gave the Secretary for Scotland entire control over the higher branches of education; and if they gave him the control over higher education, why did they not also give him control over the system of primary or elementary education? It might be said that the expense which the change would incur would be excessive; but when they came to Committee, he hoped to be able to show that, instead of creating additional expense, the change would tend to increased economy. It might also be said that if Scottish education was entirely administered by a Secretary for Scotland, why did they not propose also that the police, industrial schools, reformatories, factories and workshops, the Agricultural Holdings Act, and the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, should be placed under his control? His answer was, that each one of those Acts was bound up with Imperial interests, and ought to be administered by a Central Authority as pertaining to the community as a whole. But that argument did not hold good in regard to primary education in Scotland. He had just touched briefly upon the main points, which he should go more largely into in Committee. He consented to the second reading of the Bill; but he thought it would be of advantage to Scotland that the entire system of education should be placed in the hands of the new Secretary.

LORD BALFOUR said, he did not rise to object to the policy of the Bill. He regarded that matter as practically settled, aud as settled in accordance with what he believed to be the wishes of the vast majority of the people of Scotland; but he should like to take that opportunity of saying that he had been requested by his noble Friend (the Marquess of Lothian) to express to the House his great regret on account of his not being able to be present on this occasion in order to commend this Bill to their Lordships' notice. His noble Friend had presided over a large meeting held in Edinburgh in support of this proposal, and he (Lord Balfour) knew from himself that he was most anxious to be present there that day, but he was unavoidably absent. His noble Friend, however, hoped to be there when the Bill reached Committee, and in the meantime he had asked him (Lord Balfour) to make that apology to their Lordships for his absence. There were one or two points in regard to the Bill which he (Lord Balfour) hoped Her Majesty's Government would consider before that time arrived. For example, he should like to have some explanation as to why the salary to be paid to the new Secretary was to be paid out of the moneys provided by Parliament. It might be that that was the regular form, but as to that he had not been able to thoroughly inform himself whether it was so or not; but if the Bill were to stand in that form, would it not give the power to one House to abolish the Office which the passing of a Bill through both Houses of Parliament was necessary to create? He felt that there might be more to be said in favour of the clause as it stood than he was aware of, and he should therefore be glad if the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie), who was in charge of the Bill that day, would give some explanation as to the precise position in which the matter stood. He should also like to know why a large and important Department like the Register House in Edinburgh had been excluded from the scope of the Bill? He ventured to think that if there was one Department more than another which required to be thoroughly looked into, and placed under a responsible head, it was that Department, and although he was not, as at present informed, prepared to move that it be placed under the control of the new Secretary, he should be glad if the noble Earl could give the House some explanation on that point also. Again, he should like to know whether it was possible for any Return to be given to the House of the rights of patronage which were to be transferred to the new Secretary under the Bill? The powers and the duties which he would have to perform were very fully set forth in the Schedule; but no list was given of the patronage, or offices and appointments which the new Secretary would have under his control; and he did not know of any source from which it was possible to inform oneself as to what those were. Therefore, he hoped they should have some explanation from the noble Earl on the point. Before he sat down he found it necessary to say a word also as to the proposal of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly). The noble Marquess had correctly stated the result of this Bill if it passed in its present shape—namely, that the responsibility of the Home Secretary in reference to Scottish Universities would be transferred to the new Secretary, and also that the administration of the Educational Endowments Act would be vested in him. Now, he (Lord Balfour) thought it was quite right that the powers and duties and privileges of the Home Secretary in regard to the Universities should be so transferred; but he had very grave doubts as to the propriety of transferring the administration of the Educational Endowments Act, especially at the present time, to the new Secretary. There were three ways in which Parliament could deal with education in Scotland in regard to the new Office. In the first place, the administration of the whole system of primary education might be transferred to the new Office, as well as the administration of the Educational Endowments Act; or, in the second place, the administration of the Educational Endowments Act alone could be transferred, as was now proposed; or, in the third place, as he ventured to think would be the better course, at any rate for the present, the administration of none of those Acts might be transferred. He could quite conceive something being said—in fact, the noble Marquess opposite had very well put the arguments on his side of the question, and he (Lord Balfour) could imagine their having some weight in favour of inducing Parliament to transfer the administration of both the Educational Endowments Act and the Elementary Education Act to the new Office. But there was also, as he thought, a great deal to be said in favour of retaining the administration of education, as at present, in the Education Department in London. What he did not think was advisable was to transfer the administration of the Educational Endowments Act alone, and leave the administration of the Elementary Education Act to be done from London. With regard to a very large number of the schools in Scotland with which the Commission appointed under the Educational Endowments Act had to deal, they were very little removed, if anything, from being elementary schools; and he thought it would lead to dual government of the worst form and of the most disadvantageous character if the administration of the public schools —which was the Scottish expression for schools coming under the Elementary Education Act — should be retained under the Privy Council, while the administration of the Educational Endowments Act was transferred to Edinburgh. That, he thought, would be indefensible, and he sincerely hoped that proposal would not be persevered in. But he would deal with it in exactly the opposite way from the noble Marquess opposite, and, if no one else did so, he should certainly propose an Amendment in Committee in the direction he had indicated—not that the administration of the public schools in Scotland, the whole educational system of Scotland, should be transferred to the new Office, but that the work of the Privy Council in regard to the administration of the Educational Endowments Act should not be transferred. His reasons for that were briefly these. There was no provision whatsoever in this Bill for any staff that would be required for the administration of the Elementary Education Act under the new Secretary, and he thought it would add very greatly to the expense of such administration if they were to have an Education Office in Whitehall and another in Edinburgh. Besides, he had very great doubts whether it was desirable for the Government to allow such a large spending Department, such as the Education Department was becoming -- indeed, had become — to have an Office away from London. He did not see how that could ever be seriously proposed. That was one reason why, in his opinion, the administration of the Elementary Education Act should not be transferred; and, further, he thought the present time would be a singularly ill-chosen one for making that transfer. He therefore hoped—indeed, he thought he might be sure—that their Lordships would not consent to it without full consideration, because there was, at the present moment, a most influential Committee of the House of Commons considering what should be the future administration of Education as a whole. The Reference to that Committee was in the following words:—

> "That a Select Committee should be appointed to consider how the Ministerial responsibility under which the Votes for Education, Science, and Art are administered can be best secured."

He thought it would be a most unusual proceeding if, when one House of Parliament was considering what was best to be done, the other House of Parliament should make a proposal which might, or might not, be in accordance with the Report of that Committee when it was presented. There was not much use in appointing a Committee, if they were going to deal with the very subject which it was appointed to inquire into before the Committee had presented its Report. The noble Marquess opposite had said the whole system of elementary education in Scotland was different from that which obtained in England. There was, no doubt, a great deal of truth in that statement; but he (Lord Balfour) doubted whether that fact, properly considered, was a reason for the separation of the administration, because he ventured to think that, in the matter of education, England might learn something from Scotland, and Scotland from England, and each country might profit from the experience of the other. Upon that ground, also, he should be sorry to see the administration of the two systems separated. He did not wish to conceal from the House the fact that opinion in Scotland was divided on the subject; but he sincerely hoped that full time for consideration of the matter would be given; and he ventured to think that if full time for consideration was given, it would be found to be by no means certain that the majority of those interested in educated would desire to see the administration of it transferred from London to Edinburgh. Therefore, his advice, if he might venture to offer it, would be that, at any rate in the meantime, education should not be one of the matters transferred to the new Department. It might be that opinion would mature in the direction indicated by the noble Marquess opposite, and it might be that they should ultimately have to transfer education, at any rate in part, to the new Office; but he sincerely hoped that in this matter nothing would be done in a hurry, and that full consideration would be given to the arguments on both sides. He should, therefore, when they reached the Committee stage, propose that the part of the Schedule which dealt with the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act should be omitted from the Bill. Meantime, he sincerely hoped their Lordships would give a second reading to the measure.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he also intended to support the second reading of the Bill; but, at the same time, it would require amendment, for he did not think it was altogether satisfactory, because it seemed to him that it either did too much, or did not do enough. Now, there were two ways in which they might deal with the administration of the affairs of Scotland as regarded education. Either they might consider the Home Secretary Minister for Scotland, in which case it would be sufficient to appoint an Under Secretary of State to act in co-operation with the Lord Advocate; or else they might abandon that theory, as he believed had now generally been done, in which case it would be better, and indeed almost necessary, if a new Minister were created, to appoint an Officer very much in the position of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He supposed this measure did all that was possible at the present time; but, at the same time, he thought if they were dealing with the question in a thorough and final manner, they should now be proposing the suggestion he had made to establish an Officer somewhat in the nature of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He did not know how Ministers ranked; but he understood one mode of ranking them was according to their salaries. He should be very anxious indeed to see the Minister for Scotland, whoever he might be, in the Cabinet; and in that view he should also prefer to see a Minister created holding a higher salary than £2,000 a-year. He wished entirely to endorse the remarks just made by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) in regard to that portion of the Schedule which related to educational matters; but he differed entirely from his noble Friend on that side of the House (the Marquess of Huntly). He thought it would be a most unfortunate thing if the Secretary for Scotland were to become an Educational Minister. They had just heard that the whole question of administering the Votes for Education, Science, and Art was at present under the consideration of a Select Committee of the House of Commons; and for that reason, if for no other, he thought it would be most unfortunate if they were to place the administration of one Educational Act under the Privy Council, and another, and one only, under the Secretary for Scotland. At the same time, he wished to say that he would be very sorry to see an Educational Scotch Board which would meet in Edinburgh. He thought that the Educational Committee of the Privy Council was specially well fitted to deal with all questions affecting education, whether in England or Wales or in Scotland, and therefore that it would be able to deal, from a much broader point of view, with all the questions that would arise under these Acts than would a merely National Board; and for that, if for no other reason, he would be very sorry to see the Privy Council resign any portion of its authority. Consequently, when the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) brought forward his Amendment in Committee to omit this portion of the duties of the Secretary for Scotland from the Bill, he should vote in its support.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he should be very sorry to disturb the general harmony which had prevailed so far upon both sides of the House with regard to the Bill; but, after what he had said last year, he hoped he might be pardoned if he simply expressed his regret that the Government had thought it necessary to bring it in. Reference had been made to Ireland; but Britain and Ireland were by no means at one, and, however that might be, he had always thought that Great Britain, at all events, was a United Kingdom, although it seemed that Ireland was in a great degree alienated from this country. Although he knew that he had not the support of his compatriots, remembering what he had said last year, he wished to express his regret that the Bill had been thought necessary. Of course, he should not go farther than that; he did not wish to oppose it, but rather to ask one or two questions with regard to points in the Bill on which the intentions of the Government did not seem to him to be very clearly expressed. In the first place, the question of expenses had been alluded to. Then there was the question where was this Office to be located? for, practically, the proposition contained in the Bill was to take away powers of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and to give them over, to a large extent, to another Officer to be appointed; but they had been told by the noble Earl in charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie) that the new Secretary was to be looked upon as an inferior Officer. Of course, there were two or three subjects that were excepted, and one exemption of an important nature—namely, that in regard to law and justice. He must say he was very glad of that, especially in this respect—that he thought it most essential that the powers of the Crown in regard to the Prerogative of mercy as regarded criminals should still remain in the hands of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. There was another minor point. He observed that a Permanent Assistant Secretary was to be appointed by the Secretary for Scotland. By the way the Bill was drawn, he should infer that it was intended rather to be an appointment of a political nature, so that whenever the Secretary for Scotland was changed it would be open to him to change the appointment of the gentleman who was termed in the Bill the Permanent Secretary. He hoped that that was not intended in the Bill, as he could not imagine anything more mischievous than that. If the office were to be a permanent one, as it surely ought, he thought it ought to be entirely free from everything like political bias. He did not think it was the intention of the Government to give it that character, but that was the effect of the Bill as it stood. There were other points to which he took exception. One was with regard to the Lord Advocate. There was no doubt that the position of the Lord Advocate would be greatly changed by the Bill. It was quite true that the Bill nominally provided against that, for the last clause said that—

> "Nothing in this Act contained shall prejudice or interfere with any right, powers, privileges, or duties vested in or imposed on the Lord Advocate by virtue of any Act of Parliament or custom."

He was not going through the whole clause; it was to the last two words, "or custom," he wished to draw their Lordships' attention. Their Lordships were well aware that, at the time of the Treaty of Union, the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland was reserved to that country, and that it was not until 40 years afterwards, for reasons into which he would not go, that the Office was abolished. From that time, popularly known as the "'45," there was no doubt that the Lord Advocate had practically had the whole of the functions of the Secretary of State for Scotland in his hands. ["No, no!"] He heard that was objected to. He should have said, perhaps, until within recent years—it would be more correct in that way. However, he must say that, as a Scotchman, he had some little jealousy in regard to the status of the Lord Advocate. He was not the Lord Advocate of Scotland; he was *the* Lord Advocate; there was no other Lord Advocate; and it was, he confessed, with some regret he saw that this ancient Office was becoming rather minimized with regard to its importance. He could not help thinking that some little difficulty would arise in connection with this matter, and the manner in which it had been dealt with; and this seemed evidently to have been foreseen by the draftsman who had drawn the Bill, because—under orders, no doubt, from the Government—he had appreciated the proposition he had referred to. That was shown by the insertion of the words "or custom" in the Bill. It was rather an interference with what had always until very recent years been acknowledged to be the privilege of the Lord Advocate. With regard to Acts of Parliament, there would probably be no difficulty; but in regard to custom, it would not be easy to say what had always until recent years been acknowledged to be the powers, prerogatives, and privileges of the Lord Advocate as regarded patronage and other matters. He did not wish, as he had said at the outset, to offer the slightest opposition to the second reading of the Bill; but he did hope that the position of the Lord Advocate would still be maintained as one of a proper dignity, as it had been hitherto. He congratulated the Government, notwithstanding his objection, on having brought in a very much better Bill this year than the measure of last year.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he was afraid he was almost alone in feeling that the Bill was unnecessary, and that, at all events, if they were to have a Secretary for Scotland, he ought to be a first-class, and not a second-class, Secretary. To make this Bill a truthful representation of what it was, the words "second class" ought to be introduced before the word "Secretary." His main purpose, however, in rising was to ask the noble Earl in charge of the Bill not to ask the House to go into Committee upon it until after the Whitsuntide Holidays, for there had been questions raised in the debate which ought to be fully considered in Scotland and by their Lordships.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE: My Lords, I think that Her Majesty's Government may be congratulated on the manner in which the Bill has been received by your Lordships. In so far as criticisms have been made which are not altogether in approval of the Bill, they relate to its details, and not to its principle; and I think, with your permission, I should like to say a few words upon them. I am myself, perhaps, partly answerable for the misunderstanding of the position of the Secretary for Scotland, that seems to have taken place on the part of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway) and the noble Earl who has just spoken from the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss). They both object to having what the noble Earl calls a second-class Secretary for Scotland; and my noble Friend behind me (the Earl of Camperdown), no doubt, expressed very much the same feeling, when he said it was hardly likely that a man with £2,000 a-year would find his way into the Cabinet. But when I look around me, I see several noble Lords who receive two and a-half times as much as my noble Friend the Lord President of the Council, and yet who are not in the Cabinet. The noble Earl may think the Lord President a second-class President, and if so I can offer him no consolation; but he must reconcile himself as best he can with having only a second-class Secretary for Scotland. When I recollect that the salary not merely of the Lord President, but of the President of the Local Government Board and of the Board of Trade is not more than £2,000 a-year, I can see no possible reason why the Secretary for Scotland, if he is a strong and able man—as strong and as able as these other great Officers of State—should not also find his way into the Cabinet. My noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Galloway) objected to the manner in which the Permanent Secretary was appointed, and asked whether it was to be a political appointment. If it is a permanent appointment, I fail to see how it can be a political appointment. The appointment of a Permanent Secretary is, I believe, generally made by the Parliamentary Chief of the Department in question. As to the position of the Local Advocate, and the manner in which it will be affected by this Bill, I must say the observations of the noble Earl would have had greater weight, if he had expressed, some years ago, when his Party were in power, some such views as he has now expressed, to the then Secretary of State for the Home Department. In that case, the position of the Lord Advocate at this moment would be somewhat different from what it is. I think, therefore, that the regret of my noble Friend comes somewhat too late. The judicial functions the Lord Advocate now exercises will still remain with him, and it is only the administrative functions that will be transferred to the Secretary for Scotland. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) was anxious to know how the salary was to be paid, and why the clause awarding a certain salary to the Secretary for Scotland and to the Assistant Secretary was inserted in the Bill. Well, I believe that the plan adopted is the manner in which salaries are awarded to Officers of State. I believe that, with the exception, perhaps, of the Secretary of State for India, all the great Officers of State are paid by money voted to the Treasury for the purpose. With reference to a further remark of the noble Lord, the Register House is at this moment under a great Officer of State, and is specially regulated by a Statute passed in 1879, and the Government see no reason why that particular Department should be transferred with the rest to the Department of the Secretary for Scotland. In regard to one question which justly appears to be considered the most important of all, Her Majesty's Government incline to the view expressed by the noble Lord opposite rather than to that of the noble Marquess behind me (the Marquess of Huntly). So far as regards the question of educational endowments, which the noble Lord says ought not to be transferred to the new Department, unless the whole educational machinery is transferred to that Department, that, no doubt, is a point which the Government will take into their very serious consideration; but when the noble Marquess says that he will, in Committee, move that the whole education of Scotland shall be placed under the new Officer, I have to say that, as at present advised, Her Majesty's Government cannot consent to make that change. The Government have carefully considered the question, and have come to this conclusion, to a very large degree, on the grounds put forward by the noble Lord opposite, and I cannot hold out any hope to my noble Friend that Her Majesty's Government will give way in this matter. That question, no doubt, will be discussed again when the House gets into Committee, and I will say nothing more at this moment. I will merely thank your Lordships for the reception you have given to the Bill, and say that, Her Majesty's Government's proposals having received your approval, they are sanguine that the Bill will shortly become an Act of Parliament, and that it will go a long way to meet the wishes of the people of Scotland.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

GREAT SEAL BILL.—(No. 83.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was a formal measure, having for its object the simplification of the passing of instruments under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom. It proposed to enact that a warrant under Her Majesty's Royal Sign Manual, countersigned by the Lord Chancellor, or by one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, or by the Lord High Treasurer, or two of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, should be a necessary and sufficient authority for passing any instrument under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom according to the tenour of such warrant; but it contained a Proviso that any instrument which might now be passed under the Great Seal by the fiat, or under the authority or directions, of the Lord Chancellor or otherwise without passing through any other Office, might continue to be passed as heretofore. It also proposed to give the Lord Chancellor power, from time to time, to make, revoke, or vary regulations respecting the passing of instruments under the Great Seal, and respecting the warrants for that purpose, which should be prepared by the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery. The making of any warrant for passing any instrument under the Great Seal, or the procuring any instrument to be passed under the Great Seal otherwise than in the manner provided by this Bill or by the Crown Office Act, 1877, was proposed to be made a misdemeanour. It further provided, amongst other things, that after the passing of the Act it should not be necessary that any instrument should be passed under the Privy Seal. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that he felt some difficulty in dealing with the Bill in the absence of noble and learned Lords who were qualified to discuss it; and that the more especially as it appeared to him—and he could not help having received the impression—to be of rather an insidious nature, as it seemed to be intended to effect a somewhat important Constitutional change in regard to an Office which had existed from an ancient date. The noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack had said that the measure was simply a formal measure; but he (the Marquess of Salisbury), however much he might be inclined to regard it as one of form, did not think that it was a pure matter of accident that this Bill should immediately follow the Secretary for Scotland Bill; and it appeared to him not improbable that the real object of the Bill was to create a vacancy which the Secretary for Scotland was to fill. The £2,000 which was to be given to the Secretary for Scotland was to be taken from the Lord Privy Seal, and in order to do so the noble and learned Earl practically proposed to eviscerate the Office of the Lord Privy Seal. In that case, he thought that the measure should bear upon its front the title of a Bill to abolish the Office of the Lord Privy Seal. It was, perhaps, not very easy to justify the existence of sinecures; but no one had held a Cabinet Office without being conscious that sinecures were often of very great value to the Public Service at particular conjunctures. They were not confined to the Privy Seal; their value was recognized in the other House, where there was a sinecure called the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, which no one thought of abolishing, because it was often of very great value by enabling the Ministry to fill the Office by the appointment of a man who could render great service to the country. He had heard nothing to convince him that the Office of the Lord Privy Seal should not be preserved, or that a similar value did not attach to it. The only reason given for the abolition of the Office was that his noble Friend the Duke of Northumberland, when Lord Privy Seal, could not be found by a person who was sent after him. He thought great precautions were required in regard to the issuing of warrants and the countersigning of the Sign Manual. He hoped, therefore, that, at all events, the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack would consent to put the Bill off until his noble and learned Friend (Earl Cairns) could be present, so that the House could have his opinion upon it.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that with respect to the objection of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), the signature of the Lord Privy Seal was given as a mere matter of form, and the counter signatures of those who knew what the warrants were, and on whose advice and responsibility they had received the Royal Sign Manual, would still be required. There would be ample opportunity for discussing the measure on its subsequent stages.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on the *first sitting dag after the recess at Whitsuntide.*

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 95.)

(*The Lord President.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

THE EARL OF WEMYSS asked the noble Lord the Lord President for some explanation of the meaning of the Bill?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in reply, said, that there was a doubt whether public bodies, such as Municipal Corporations, had power to execute a trust deed devoting buildings to the purposes of Art Galleries or Museums, and the measure was intended to remove that doubt.

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported* without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on *Friday* next.

votes remained unrescinded. That Resolution being unrescinded, he suggested that they could not proceed with the Motion without stultifying themselves.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he would ask their Lordships to consider the effect of such a contention as that of the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack. According to that, if their Lordships once came to a decision as to the Egyptian policy of the Government, or the foreign policy of the Government, or upon any other matter upon information in the Blue Books laid before them, from which, it subsequently turned out, important facts—say, for instance, a despatch—had been suppressed, did the noble and learned Earl contend that, under such circumstances, and upon the new circumstances which had come to light, their Lordships could not reverse their previous decision and reopen the question? It appeared to him that in consequence of the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland), the House were now in possession of fuller knowledge with reference to the sentiments and feeling of the late Duke of Wellington upon the subject of the statue, and he thought that the Motion ought to be proceeded with. This was a question which ought to be decided as a question of sentiment and not of art.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, it appeared to him that there were two reasons why they ought to enter into a discussion of this question. First, there was no Standing Order which ruled the point, but only practice; and he questioned whether precedents, if looked into, would not favour one view as well as the other. Again, they were not asking for a reversal of the Resolution of the House, but simply for delay, in order that the matter might be more fully considered. He was strongly of opinion that they should enter into such a discussion, on the ground that fresh information upon the subject had been given to their Lordships.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND said, he was also of opinion that the question should be further considered. The Government were totally and entirely unacquainted with the facts which he had stated. He was not quite sure that the Government were clear upon the point. The Vote in the House of Commons was not for the purpose of removing the Wellington statue, or for putting it on a pedestal at Aldershot when it got there. The £6,000 was simply and solely for the execution of a new statue, and he hardly thought their Lordships could be bound by that decision.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 52; Not-Contents 78: Majority 26.

Resolved in the *negative.*

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, the decision of the House engages me to go on with my Motion; but after the prelude which retarded it, and the debates which have occurred before upon this matter, I shall not detain the House for many minutes. Whoever brings the subject forward is exposed, in one quarter, to the charge of an improper pertinacity. It is invariably asked, and with a tone of reprimand, why is the controversy so frequently recurred to? My Lords, the answer is an easy one. If something which Members of the Legislature consider mischievous, uncalled for, and, in a high degree, derogatory to an illustrious name, is threatened, they are clearly bound, until it is effected, to resist it. Their pertinacity is based upon their duty. It is said they are fatiguing Parliament. Possibly, they may be. But who is responsible for the fatigue of Parliament? Unless a disturbance, almost a desecration without precedent had been conceived, the subject would not have arisen. Had the scheme been dropped, discussion would have vanished with it. The fatigue of Parliament is brought about by the abettors of the scheme, and not by its opponents. The pertinacity complained of belongs to Her Majesty's Government, who still insist upon a measure which they disavow, by throwing its whole responsibility on an illustrious Prince, while that illustrious Prince has never yet declared himself in favour of it. It has been said, indeed, that Parliament has sanctioned it. It has already been explained that, as regards "another place," the statement is entirely inaccurate. In this House, only 26—after all the efforts of the Government—could be found to vote against an Address to the Crown of a prohibitory character. Are the opinions of 26 to be accepted as the final judgment of your Lordships, who are not far from 500? But can they be accepted as the final judgment of the

Ministerial Supporters? To bring them down to 26, at least 40 must have determined to absent themselves. The 26 may all have voted upon grounds which would not now have any application. They may have thought in March the measure was not seriously imminent. But the debate we have just had anticipated that topic. It is only here essential to remark that the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) last Thursday week—a more instructive and impressive one than has been often heard in this or any House—together with its details, creates a wholly new departure on the subject. My Lords, at this time, we ought not to give up the strongest argument, because it may not be a new one. It is the right of the original subscribers. It is remarkable that Her Majesty's Government, however rich in legal subtlety and talent, have not attempted to reply to it. Would the original subscribers of 1846 have contributed £5, or even 1*s.* 6*d.*, had they been told that in less than 40 years the statue would be removed from London altogether? They even went so far as to insist on the very site which was adopted. Some years ago an incident occurred which bears on this part of the question. The statue of Mr. Canning, on a pretext which turned out to be entirely fallacious, was taken from the line of Parliament Street and Palace Yard to where it is at present. There was a general remonstrance in this House, in which the late Lord Clanricarde and the late Lord Stratford De Redcliffe, the nearest Representatives of Mr. Canning, cordially united. It was pointed out that the donors of the statue were entitled to the site the country had originally granted. But had it been proposed, not to move the statue of Mr. Canning backwards a few yards into relative obscurity, but to withdraw it 20 or 30 miles into the country, it is easy to perceive that the derangement would not have been tolerated, even with the promise of a new statue to be formed, by a precarious subscription and a foreign artist. Noble Lords should ask themselves whether that which, in the case of Mr. Canning, would have been indignantly repelled, in the case of the late Duke of Wellington, ought quietly to be accepted? It is also worth while to remark how the proceeding would affect those who might unite to raise a monument of any sort at present. Suppose all the noble Lords on this side of the House—it is no fanciful hypothesis—determined to erect a statue to the late Earl Grey, as the successor of Mr. Fox, as the Minister who carried the Reform Act, as the Leader of their Party in its darkest time, as well as the most brilliant; suppose, also, a proper and conspicuous site to have been granted, would they submit to the necessary outlay if the State reserved a latent power of withdrawing their construction where it would be utterly invisible? Whether the design was openly avowed, or cautiously suspected, it would be fatal to the project. It is, therefore, clear that the original subscribers in 1846 are going to be defrauded. It is not, as some affirm, a question of taste opposed to a question of sentiment. It is a question of contract on the one hand, and spoliation on the other. When I venture to remark that it is not a question of sentiment, I shall not be supposed to mean that there is no outrage on the distinguished character whose statue was erected in its violent removal. A noble Lord, who voted on the 24th of March, has drawn my attention to what was thought in ancient times upon the subject. There is a passage in the 10th Satire of Juvenal, on the ruin of Sejanus under the displeasure of Tiberius. The fall of the statues which had been raised in honour of the favourite is mentioned as the last indignity, by which his brief supremacy was expiated. As Dryden has endeavoured to translate it—

> "Down go the titles, and the statue crowned,
> Is by base hands in the next river drowned."

But is it not a modern principle as well that the statues of great men ought to be inviolable? In Paris, as your Lordships know, those of Henry IV. and Napoleon I. have stood through many revolutions, against both the Monarchy and Empire. In London, there is another instance more remarkable. In the short Reign of James II., a statue was erected to him. Neither his flight and abdication, nor the change of dynasty which followed, nor the struggles and rebellions which only ended at Culloden, have been permitted to disturb it. It remains in Whitehall Gardens now, where anyone may see it. It might be pointed out to foreigners as an example of the tenacity with which the British public guard the monuments they may have been too hasty in conceding. If this scheme is carried out, it will be answered that there is less tenacity of monuments which brilliant service had obtained and pious gratitude constructed. My Lords, whatever happens, the recorded judgment of this House is necessary to clear its name of all participation in the measure of the Government. That measure violates the public faith with the subscribers, reverses the decision of the Crown in 1846, and rudely takes away the monument a nation had endorsed, and which the late Duke of Wellington had watched, accepted, and appreciated. More I will not add, as the House would like to hear the noble and gallant Lord on his Amendment. It is to me indifferent which of the two Motions is adopted. They are not, as I have said before, opposed to one another; but I proceed to move the Resolution as it stands upon the Paper.

Moved to resolve—

"That in the opinion of this House it is not desirable to remove the equestrian statue of the late Duke of Wellington from London until the public have an opportunity of judging the monument by which it is intended to replace it."—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

Lord de Ros, in rising to move an Amendment to the Motion of the noble Lord, said, that he did so in consequence of the remarks made by the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) the last time the subject was before their Lordships' House, and his object was to endeavour to persuade their Lordships as to the advisability of reconsidering this matter before it was too late. He did not propose to weary them with a recapitulation of the facts brought forward by the noble Duke, as they were fully reported in the newspapers; but he would confine himself to observing that these facts were obtained from most reliable sources, and proved beyond doubt what were the views and feelings of the Great Duke himself on the subject of his statue. He ventured to think that if these facts had been more fully known by the Committee over which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales presided, and also by Her Majesty's Government, a different conclusion would have been arrived at as to the fate of the statue. There were several considerations which he desired to bring before the House. In the first place, it was well known that the Duke of Wellington refused to sit until he had the sanction of the Queen that the statue should be placed upon the Arch; secondly, the Duke saw Mr. Wyatt, and said that he should like Mr. Wyatt to see him on horseback; thirdly, that the present Duke was annoyed at the removal of the statue from Hyde Park Corner; fourthly, that the statue was a good likeness of the Duke as he appeared at Waterloo. Those, he thought, were sufficient reasons against the removal of the statue from London. He had no doubt Mr. Boehm was quite capable of executing a very admirable equestrian statue; but it could not fail from being purely ideal, because it was more than probable that Mr. Boehm never set eyes on the Duke, whereas the Duke had sat to Mr. Wyatt for the original. Since he had last addressed their Lordships on this subject a great number of persons of all shades of opinion had expressed to him the very strong public feeling that existed as to keeping the statue in London, because it belonged to the nation, and therefore should not be removed from the Metropolis. He would leave the question of site to be settled by a Committee; but he contended that the statue ought not to be allowed to be removed down to Aldershot—to a barrack-yard, as it had been called. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Sudeley) stated that two votes had already been taken on the matter; but the vote in the House of Commons was distinctly a Money Vote for a new statue, and the vote in that House was not on the point as to the removal of the statue from London. The noble Viscount (Viscount Hardinge) stated that the officers quartered at Aldershot had signified their assent to the removal of the statue to that place; but he (Lord de Ros) begged to observe that the officers at Aldershot formed a very small portion of the Army, and there were very few regimental officers serving at present who held their first commissions at the time when England had to mourn for the loss of one of her greatest heroes. There were some general officers in the Army who had served under the late Duke who always made a point of raising their hats as they passed the statue. To such men the removal of the statue would be a great blow. A letter had lately appeared in *The Times* newspaper from General Sir William Codrington on the subject, expressing a strong feeling against the removal, which he said would be regarded by old soldiers with deep regret; and that letter, he (Lord de Ros) ventured to think, illustrated the feelings of the officers who served under the Great Duke. There was also a letter from a gentleman who generally wrote pretty much to the point in *The Morning Post*, which deserved attention. He earnestly hoped that their Lordships would not allow this opportunity to pass, and that they would support the Amendment which he now ventured to move.

Moved to resolve—

"That this House, being now possessed of fuller knowledge of the views and feelings of the late Duke of Wellington as regards his statue at Hyde Park Corner, is of opinion that it ought not to be removed from London."—(*The Lord de Ros.*)

Viscount POWERSCOURT said, that, in his opinion, it was quite a mistake for the noble Lord the Mover of the Motion (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) to imagine that any slur was intended to be cast upon the memory of the late Duke by the removal of the statue, as if the statue was going to be cast into the Thames. The fact was that nothing of the kind was intended; but he thought it would be acknowledged by everyone who had studied the subject at all that the country stood higher in the way of art than in previous years; and all that was intended was that a better statue should replace the original, which had been condemned by a Committee presided over by the Prince of Wales. The noble Lord who had just sat down had said the other day that every soldier who passed the statue touched his hat.

Lord DE ROS: I said I knew several general officers who had served under the Duke, and who when they passed the statue lifted their hats.

Viscount POWERSCOURT said, that, in that case, he thought there was no reason why they might not just as suitably raise their hats to a good statue by Mr. Boehm as to the bad one which lately stood at Hyde Park Corner.

Lord DE L'ISLE and DUDLEY said, he decidedly objected to the idea of replacing the statue on the Arch, especially as the position of the Arch was now askew. Such a proceeding would be simply an intensification of the dominating ugliness of the statue. He (Lord de L'isle and Dudley) thought that Aldershot would be a good place for it, and, therefore, he should vote against the Motion. He desired to call attention to the fact that the present Duke of Wellington had expressed his willingness that the statue of his illustrious Father should be removed to Aldershot, and that another and a better one should be erected at Hyde Park Corner.

Lord MOUNT TEMPLE said, the idea of the subscribers had been to honour the Duke by the biggest statue that could be made, and to hoist it as high as possible. The question was, what would be the best form of statue to give expression to the feelings of admiration and reverence which the nation entertained for the Great Duke? The present statue had been condemned as an artistic failure by all the best authorities in Art; and the only excuse produced for keeping it was that the Duke of Wellington sat for it, and that he objected to its being taken down. But there was no reason to suppose that the Duke would not have preferred a better statue. Why should not the best statue that could be procured be placed at Hyde Park Corner? This statue was not in harmony with the character of the Duke. He was remarkable for simplicity and dignity. The statue was pretentious, exaggerated, vulgar, and even grotesque. It could do no honour to the memory of a great man.

The Duke of RUTLAND said, he must apologize to their Lordships for troubling them again upon the subject. It was said that there was to be a new statue; but how did they know that it would not be worse than the old one?

Lord MOUNT TEMPLE: Impossible.

The Duke of RUTLAND said, that for the Royal Academy to say that the old statue was a bad one was monstrous. It was a matter of history that the Duke of Wellington, writing to Mr. Croker, in 1846, said that—

"Lord Morpeth writes a circular letter to the members of the Royal Academy before the statute can be seen at all; and requires each of them to assist him with their opinions of it. What is the meaning of this? It is a Minister offering a reward for opinions against the work; which it is well known has been placed where it is, not only against, but in despite of his, the Minister's opinion. Will ever any member of the Academy, looking to the Court for favour—and which of them does not—give a fair or independent opinion upon the subject?"

Since he (the Duke of Rutland) had last addressed the House on this subject, he had received additional information as to the sentiments entertained by the late Duke with regard to the existing statue. In a letter from Lord George Bentinck to Mr. Croker, the contemporary feeling in favour of the statue being placed on the top of the Arch, as being both a suitable site and in accordance with the Duke of Wellington's sentiments, was shown conspicuously. That letter, written on the 10th of July, 1847, said—

"You will see what passed last night in the House of Commons. A private communication and negotiation had previously taken place between Lord John and me, the result of which was that Lord John engaged 'that the equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington should remain where it is unless the Duke should intimate to Lord John that its removal to some other site would give him more pleasure;' and that 'the Duke's declining to give any opinion is to be construed as dissent.' This, of course, concludes the business. I have written to the Duke of Wellington, acquainting him with this, and likewise, at the desire of my supporters in the House of Commons, telling the Duke that they all came up manfully; sixteen, I believe, who had left London for the season, came up from the country; and, from the appearance of the House, I have no doubt whatever that I should have beat them two to one, if the artistical gentlemen had persevered. My idea is that the discussion would have damaged Lord John Russell and Lord Morpeth more than anything that has occurred, either during this or any preceding Whig Government. I believe we should have raised the blood of the whole country against them. But I am a jockey, and it is the first principle of our craft to be satisfied with winning the race if it is only by a head, and never to risk losing by showing off how much further it might have been won. My people were very anxious I should wait upon the Duke and tell him how cheerfully they had responded to the call to protect him from any slight; but I hate ceremony, and never call upon anybody."

It was said by noble Lords opposite that the Duke did not care much where the statue was placed, whether it was placed on the pedestal or on Primrose Hill; but the following letter from the Duke, dated the 14th June, 1847, from Walmer Castle, would reveal that that was contrary to the fact:—

"My Dear Croker,—It has always been my practice, and is my invariable habit, to say nothing about myself or my own actions, More than 40 years ago Mr. Pitt observed that I thought as little of myself, or of my own acts, as if I had been an assistant surgeon of the Army; and from the year 1838 (when the statue was proposed to be placed on the arch) to the present moment I have considered it most becoming to avoid to interfere respecting a statue of which the professed object is to commemorate bygone transactions in which I had borne a part. I follow the habit of avoiding to talk of myself and of what I have done, with the exception only of occasions when I am urging upon modern contemporaries measures which they do not like, and when I tell them I have some experience and have had some success in these affairs. and feel that they would experience the benefit of attending to my advice. I never talk of myself. These are the reasons for which they think that I do not care what they do with the statue; but they must be idiots to suppose it possible that a man who is working day and night, without any object in view excepting the public benefit, will not be sensible of disgrace inflicted upon him by the Sovereign and Government whom he is serving if it is removed. The ridicule will be felt if nothing else is. This last would have been vastly aggravated if I had not cautiously avoided to take any part in the affair since the year 1838."

Could anything be stronger than that letter, as showing the feelings of the Duke upon the subject? With the permission of the House he would relate an anecdote concerning the Duke. A few days before the late Duke's death, Mr. Croker went down to see him, and had a talk with him that occupied some hours, in the course of which they talked about every subject they could think of which had occurred during the Duke's life. In the course of their conversation Mr. Croker said—"Do you remember travelling with me down the Old North Road in a postchaise and pair?" "Yes," said the Duke; "I recollect it perfectly." Mr. Croker went on to say —"And do you recollect our trying to guess at what was on the other side of each hill we came to, and that you were always right, and I was always wrong?" To which the Duke responded—"The whole art of war consists in getting at what is on the other side of the hill; and, moreover, the whole art of life consists in guessing what is on the other side of the hill, or, in other words, in learning what we do not know from what we do." Applying the Duke's own maxim to the present case, he (the Duke of Rutland) might say, without the possibility of contradiction, that knowing what were the opinions of the Duke in his life with regard to the removal of this statue, he would, had he lived, have felt even more sensibly the disgrace of its removal, after it had rested there for 40 years, not only from the Arch, but out of London. In asking that the statue should be replaced on the Arch, or, at any rate, not removed from London, it would be said they were flying in the face of a Vote of the House of Commons, who had voted £6,000 for the purpose. But they were not asking the House of Commons for any money; on the contrary, they were asking them to save the money of the nation. He merely asked that, if thought desirable, some small portion of the amount already voted should be spent in replacing it on the Arch, or upon a pedestal in some convenient place in London, such as at the top of the Green Park, at the Horse Guards, or in Hyde Park; but he most strongly protested against it being removed to Aldershot. He was quite convinced that, if the Queen had known of these statements and of the letters he had read, Her Majesty would never have given her sanction to what the Duke would have considered an indignity; and, then, the Government would never have proposed the Vote in the other House. It was said that, whatever might be the facts of the case, it was now too late to alter the decision that had been arrived at; but it never was too late to do what was right. If the noble Lord (Lord De L'isle and Dudley) desired to have a statue of the Duke of Wellington at Aldershot, by all means let the one Mr. Boehm was to produce go there; but he hoped their Lordships would never consent to do that which must confer obloquy on the hero of Waterloo.

The Bishop of BATH and WELLS said, that he desired to join in the protest against the removal of the statue out of London. In doing so, there was one consideration which greatly weighed with him, and that was the historical incident of the old statue being placed near to Apsley House in the Duke's lifetime; and, looking at all the circumstances of the case, he hoped that their Lordships would, by a large majority, show their sense that it was not right at this time of day to undo what was then done. He well remembered that at the time the reasons which weighed with the public were the vicinity to Apsley House, and the fact that Hyde Park Corner stood at the entrance of London, so that the statue of the Great Duke would be one of the first objects seen on approaching the City. The only objection, which was felt by everybody, was that the Arch was not fitted to support such a statue. That objection was removed by the removal of the Arch. The obvious thing was to place the statue on a proper pedestal on the same site. He maintained that a new statue would not command the veneration which the old one did. If they removed the latter they entirely destroyed the old historical sentiment.

Lord SUDELEY said, that this question had been repeatedly before their Lordships. In one form or other, it had been brought forward no less than seven times in that House during the last 18 months; and, on the 24th of March, their Lordships affirmed, in a Division, the policy pursued by the Government in determining to carry out the proposal of the Committee that it should be removed to Aldershot. It was unnecessary for him, and he feared it would only weary their Lordships, were he to enter into details as to the various steps which the First Commissioner had found it necessary to take, to insure arriving at an accurate and thoroughly independent decision. Their Lordships were aware of the proceedings of the Committee which sat last year, and of the pains which were taken to have it composed of the best known authorities on such a subject; and, by having the present Duke of Wellington on that Committee, it was felt that the desires of the family would be efficiently represented. The decision at which the Committee arrived, after considering every possible site in London, was that the statue must be broken up. That step was averted by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales actively and patriotically interesting himself in the matter, and suggesting that, most likely, the removal of the statue to Aldershot would meet with general satisfaction, if combined with the construction of a new statue, and considered by the public in connection with the great improvements to be completed at Hyde Park Corner. The Vote of the Committee of Supply in the House of Commons confirmed the decision of their Lordships' House on the 24th of March, by the overwhelming majority of 111, which was no less than two to one. Several noble Lords had stated that that Vote was only a Money Vote for the new statue, and that it had nothing whatever to do with the removal of the existing one to Aldershot. That statement was, to a certain extent, true; but it must be remembered that the general question was brought before the House of Commons on that occasion by Sir Robert Peel and several other Members, and was very fully discussed before a Vote was taken. That appeared to the Government to finally dispose of the matter. The order was consequently given, and all necessary arrangements made for the removal of the statue. The noble Lord (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) was, however, still dissatisfied, and had once more returned to the charge. On the present occasion he had nominally altered the terms of his Resolution and suggested that the statue should remain until the new statue had been made. He thought it impossible not to see that that suggestion was merely designed in order to shelve the question, and to secure a reversal of the decision at which their Lordships' House had already arrived. The noble Lord who moved the Amendment (Lord de Ros) spoke of the correspondence brought forward by the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) as being an entirely new matter which entirely altered the circumstances of the case. That was not so. Most of the letters which the noble Duke had quoted last week and that night were published in a Parliamentary form; had been on the Table of the House since 1847; and everyone who had considered the subject must be well aware of their contents. The noble Duke would have the House believe that the original construction of the statue and the placing of it on the Arch met with general approval, and especially with the approval of the Duke of Wellington himself. But what were the facts? From the very day, in 1838, when the idea was started, down to the year 1847, there was one endless chorus of dispute and even bitterness. Their Lordships would remember that the selection of the sculptor, Mr. Wyatt, was vehemently opposed by a large number of the Committee, so much so that, on the 8th of August, 1838, a large proportion of that Committee wrote to Lord Melbourne asking the Government to suspend their consent, because they objected to the manner in which the sculptor had been chosen. The Members of the Committee who signed the protest were the Dukes of Northumberland, Richmond, and Buccleuch, and Lords Powys, Liverpool, Hill, Strafford, Palmerston, Anglesey, Tavistock, Dungannon, Combermere, and Craven. It was true that Lord Melbourne advised the Queen to give permission for the statue being placed on the Arch; but the Papers showed that Lord Lincoln, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Canning subsequently did their best, on the part of the Government, at different dates, to prevent it being so placed. After much correspondence on the subject, Lord Canning, in May, 1846, made a final appeal to the Duke of Rutland, explaining how much the Government disapproved of the proposed site in these words—

> "It is my duty to state to your Grace that the remonstrances which reach Her Majesty's Government against the proposed appropriation of the arch are so many and so strong, the representations of its architect, Mr. Burton, in the same sense, are so earnest, and the opinion of every other eminent architect, artist, or other competent authority who has been consulted on the subject is so decided, that Her Majesty's Government feel called upon not only to make a final effort to induce the subscribers to reconsider the project of placing the statue on the site at present proposed, but to do all that lies in their power to facilitate a change in the design."

Finally, the statue was allowed to be placed on the Arch; but only on the distinct understanding, that it should be taken down if, in the opinion of the Government, the result was unsatisfactory. A short time after it was erected, Lord Morpeth wrote to the Duke of Rutland, that the Government had decided that it must be taken down. That led to further angry controversy; and then it was said that the Duke of Wellington expressed himself strongly against the removal, and thus it was allowed to remain. What actually happened was this. The First Commissioner of Works stated the other day in the House of Commons, that he had the highest authority for saying that, after the Government had settled that the statue could not be allowed to remain on the Arch, it was suggested that the Duke of Wellington should be consulted. He was asked to go down to Windsor, and he there told the Queen and the Prince Consort that he never wished the statue to be made; that it was against his wish that it should be put on the Arch, but that, being there, and after the long controversy about it, it might be looked upon as a mark of disapprobation towards himself if it were removed. On that it was argued that the statue was liked by the Duke, and that it would be a dishonour to remove it from the vicinity of Apsley House.

He believed there was not one tittle of clear and substantial evidence in the Papers or letters quoted to show that the Duke had any such feeling in the matter. He had, for eight years, been a silent spectator of the controversy which had been raging about a statue to himself; and could it be a matter of wonder to any man that, modest and retiring as he was, and of a sensitive disposition, the Duke got heartily sick of the whole affair? It was only natural, therefore, that he should have done anything to prevent the renewal of what could not fail to have been to him a painful and irritating discussion. That, then, was how the statue was allowed to remain. No gentleman could do less than show a lively appreciation of such a costly and well-meant memorial. Which of their Lordships would not give a courteous and grateful answer to a body of gentlemen, who came to inform him that a subscription of between £30,000 and £40,000 had been got together for the erection of a monument in his honour? It was an old saying, that a man could not look a gift horse in the mouth; but, in this case, the Duke was forced not only to look the gift horse in the mouth, but to ride another man's hobby. If it were necessary, he could quote many of the articles and letters which appeared during the eight years of this controversy, to show how very painful and unpleasant it must have been for the Duke of Wellington, and how glad he must have been at the prospect of its cessation. Having been thus settled, the controversy should never have been re-opened, and no one would have thought of removing the statue; but what were the simple facts of the case as they now presented themselves? It had been found necessary, in making the great improvements at Hyde Park Corner, to move the arch. The First Commissioner of Works would have been the last man to have suggested the removal of the statue, had it been possible to avoid it; and he went a long way to see if the arch could not be bodily removed; but that had been found impossible. Now that the statue was actually on the ground, the circumstances were entirely altered; and he (Lord Sudeley) was of opinion that he would be a very bold man who would suggest that the statue should be put again on the arch. Then, the question arose as to what was to be done with the statue? Putting aside all questions of Art, the fact was that the colossal size of the statue made it dwarf all surrounding positions; and, as the Committee found by practical experience with a wooden profile, it was too large for any site which had been named. It had been argued that it was a bad precedent, and that, in the time of a Communistic Parliament, the statue of Lord Beaconsfield and other Conservative Leaders would be carted out of the town; but, surely, what was now proposed could not be looked upon in that light. All competent authorities told them that the statue was too large and too colossal to be placed in any site in London. Then let them substitute for it an equestrian statue of a fitting size which had every prospect of being suitable, and the precedent was one of which they certainly need not be ashamed. If the country was anxious to do honour to the memory of the great Duke, what could be done better than to have a fitting and really artistic statue placed near Apsley House, as now proposed, instead of one out of all proportion with its surroundings, and constantly held up to ridicule? At Aldershot, the colossal statue would be in a position where its size would be no drawback, and where it could be fittingly placed among the future soldiers of the country. It had been argued that the new sculptor, Mr. Boehm, would not have the advantages possessed by his Predecessor. The noble Duke adhered to his statement that the Duke of Wellington sat for his statue. It was hardly necessary to argue that, because it was perfectly clear, from the Papers on the Table, that he sat for the design, but did not sit for the statue. The Report of the Committee from which the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Rutland) had quoted was dated 1838, before the statue was commenced. Mr. Boehm would have for his assistance the two splendid pictures in the possession of Lord Penrhyn and Lord Bathurst, both of which were exact pictures of the Duke. He would have equally at his service the bust of Nobelli used by Mr. Wyatt, and would have a knowledge of the various criticisms on the present statue. It was a well-known fact that the great difficulty in this matter had been that everyone had his own views of what ought to be done with the statue; and, while they would not listen to any opposite view, would all combine against any particular scheme. No doubt, there was much to be said in favour of any one of the 10 sites which had been suggested; but, as reasonable men, they must see that someone would have to give way, unless this question was to be allowed to drag on, and they were to become the laughing-stock of other nations. The decision of the Government had been arrived at in no hasty manner. It was the result of great and patient inquiry; and it commanded the entire approval of the present Duke of Wellington, who had written as follows:—

> "Strathfieldsaye, April 12, 1884.
>
> "Dear Mr. Lefevre,—I am quite satisfied with the proposed arrangement, and I feel that by it full respect is paid to the memory of my father.
>
> "I have the honour to be
> "Dear Mr. Lefevre,
> "Yours faithfully,
> "WELLINGTON.
>
> "The Right Hon. G. Shaw Lefevre."

He confidently hoped that at that eleventh hour, when preparations had actually been made for the conveyance of the statue to Aldershot, when both Houses of Parliament had already sanctioned the decision of the Committee, their Lordships would not now take steps to relegate the matter to a state of hopeless confusion.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, in asking for leave to withdraw the Motion, said: My Lords, I had intended, without suggestion from the noble Viscount, to recommend the House to adopt the Motion of the noble and gallant Lord (Lord de Ros), as likely to unite the greatest number in its favour. Much has been said on the opinion of the present Duke of Wellington. In this House he has never yet declared one. The noble Lord (Lord Sudeley) has made a prolix speech against the statue being connected with the arch; but for its removal from the capital he has made no speech whatever.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Amendment again *moved.*

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 66; Not-Contents 44: Majority 22.

CONTENTS.

Rutland, D.

Bristol, M.
Hertford, M.

Ashburnham, E.
Beauchamp, E.
Belmore, E.
Bradford, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Coventry, E.
Haddington, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Harewood, E.
Leven and Melville, E.
Lovelace, E.
Manvers, E.
Milltown, E.
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Redesdale, E.
Romney, E.
Stanhope, E.
Strafford, E.
Waldegrave, E.

Hawarden, V.
Hood, V.
Sherbrooke, V.
Sidmouth, V.
Strathallan, V.

Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.

Ashford, L. (*V. Bury.*)
Auckland, L.
Bagot, L.
Beaumont, L.
Bramwell, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Calthorpe, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Chelmsford, L.
Clanbrassill, L. (*E. Roden.*)
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Colchester, L.
de Ros, L. [*Teller.*]
Dinevor, L.
Dorchester, L.
Douglas, L. (*E. Home.*)
Ellenborough, L.
Forbes, L.
Gerard, L.
Harlech, L.
Houghton, L.
Hylton, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Lyveden, L.
North, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Robartes, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Stanley of Alderley, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Stratheden and Campbell, L. [*Teller.*]
Templemore, L.
Tollemache, L.
Trevor, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)

NOT-CONTENTS.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Grafton, D.
Saint Albans, D.
Westminster, D.

Northampton, M.

Bathurst, E.
Camperdown, E.
Derby, E.
Ducie, E.
Granville, E.
Innes, E. (*D. Roxburghe.*)
Jersey, E.
Kimberley, E.
Morley, E.
Northbrook, E.
Saint Germans, E.
Sydney, E.

Hardinge, V.
Powerscourt, V.

Alcester, L.
Balfour of Burley, L.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*) [*Teller.*]
Breadalbane, L. (*E. Breadalbane.*)
Carlingford, L.
Colville of Culross, L.
Crewe, L.
De L'Isle and Dudley, L.
FitzGerald, L.
Hammond, L.
Hatherton, L.
Hothfield, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kenmare, L. (*E. Kenmare.*)
Lyttelton, L.
Meldrum, L. (*M. Huntly.*)
Mount-Temple, L.
Romilly, L.
Sandhurst, L.
Sefton, L. (*E. Sefton.*)
Skene, L. (*E. Fife.*)
Somerton, L. (*E. Normanton.*)

Sudeley, L. [*Teller.*] Tweedmouth, L.
Thurlow, L.

Resolved in the *affirmative.*

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND asked the Government what course they now intended to take?

EARL GRANVILLE: I am very sorry I am not at liberty to say what course the Government will take.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

RESOLUTION.

Moved, That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to inquire into the arrangements for the distribution of Parliamentary Papers, with a view to seeing how it happens that reports of Royal Commissions are often commented upon in the newspapers before they have been distributed to Members of the House; and also why it is that papers are often distributed to Members of the House of Commons before they are distributed to Members of this House; *agreed to* (*The Lord Balfour.*)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Cruelty to Animals Acts—Was *presented* by The Earl of REDESDALE; read 1ª. (No. 103.)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 20*th May*, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — *Committee* — Representation of the People [119] [Third Night]—R.P.
Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Report—Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases * [No. 184].

QUESTIONS.

——o——

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—REVISION IN BANTRY UNION.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that the Revisor of Bantry Union refused to revise and put a valuation on a number of houses in the district after the notices required to be lodged with the clerk by 15th November had been duly served; is it the case that he actually made revisions for other persons in the same Union the previous year; what is the explanation of his conduct; and, has the result been to deprive any persons of votes for the election of guardians?

MR. COURTNEY (for Mr. TREVELYAN): Directions have been given that the revision of the houses in question should be undertaken, and this will be done before the present Session closes.

MR. HEALY said, he was obliged to the hon. Gentleman for having answered the Question; but was he aware of the refusal of the revisor referred to in the Question?

MR. COURTNEY said, he was not cognizant of it. He was informed that nothing had been done with the property which was the subject of the Question.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. THOMAS WALSH, J.P.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that Mr. Thomas Walsh, J.P. was, on 27th March at the Ballyglass Petty Sessions, convicted and fined for assaulting his herd and decreed for the wages he had refused to pay him; and, if it is true, will his conduct be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is the fact that Mr. Walsh was fined 1*s.* for an assault on his herd, Thomas Reilly, and that he was decreed for wages. The assault complained of was of a very trivial character, as Mr. Walsh merely tipped Reilly with a stick to induce him to get out of a doorway he wished to pass through, and the penalty imposed was nominal. The case is considered too trivial for reference to the Lord Chancellor.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—UNCLAIMED DIVIDENDS.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, under the 20 and 21 Vic. c. 60, the Bankruptcy Court in Ireland are directed to invest all unclaimed dividends in the Public Funds; and, if so, why they have not invested the forty thousand pounds now lying derelict in that Court?

Mr. COURTNEY: This fund, at the present time, stands at less than £10,000, and seems never to have been much in excess of that amount. The Act referred to does not direct investment of the fund, but only gives the Court power to invest.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. THOMAS DOWLING, J.P.

Mr. MAYNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a case against Mr. Thomas Dowling, J.P., Inch Home, at the Cappawhite Petty Sessions, and reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 10th May, for threatening to be revenged on Mr. Meldon, R.M., the magistrate before whom he was convicted and fined for drunkenness; and, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been called to this further charge against Mr. Dowling; and, if so, whether he has come to any decision in the case?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Before this further charge against Mr. Dowling was brought to the notice of the Lord Chancellor, his Lordship had decided that on the original case—namely, the conviction for drunkenness, there was no ground for doubting the correctness of the magistrate's decision against Mr. Dowling; and it, therefore, became the painful duty of the Lord Chancellor to supersede Mr. Dowling from further acting in the Commission of the Peace.

PUBLIC OFFICES — THE NEW ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE.

Mr. BROGDEN asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the competitive plans for the new Admiralty and War Office buildings were submitted to and reported upon by any experts or authorities; whether such reports were sent to the persons appointed to decide upon them; and, whether he will furnish the House with Copies of any such reports?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Two of the judges in that competition were architects, and it was in consultation with them that the judges unanimously arrived at their recent decisions; but no reports were made independently by them. The plans were further examined with respect to the minor conditions of the competition as regards the required accommodation by the professional officers of the Office of Works; but this did not affect the responsibility of the judges or their decisions.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—DEDUCTION FOR ATTENDING UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any deduction was made from salary of national school teachers who attended the examinations of the Royal University, Ireland, in 1883, as at previous examinations of the same University; whether any rule has been framed on the subject, by the Board, for the guidance of teachers and managers of national schools; and, whether any, and, if any, what steps have been taken by the Commissioners to bring it under the notice of the persons who are interested in its provisions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No deduction was made on the ground stated, in 1883. In 1882 the Commissioners of National Education made a Rule permitting occasional absence, without loss of salary, for reasonable cause shown; and since November, 1882, they have interpreted this Rule as covering absences for the reason mentioned in the Question. A Copy of the Rules containing this new provision was sent to all managers of National Schools.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. JOSEPH LOWRY, SUB-SHERIFF OF MEATH.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to 3 and 4 Will. 4, c. 68, s. 13, Whether Mr. Joseph Lowry, of Kells, who holds, and has held for a number of consecutive years, the office of sub-sheriff of the county of Meath, also holds and has held, during the whole of the same period, a licence "to sell beer, cider, or spirits by retail to be consumed on the premises?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Mr. Joseph Lowry does not hold such a licence, and that he has not held one since his appointment as Sub-Sheriff.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask if some considerable time before he was appointed he transferred his licence to his wife's sister?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, my information is that since he held the appointment of Sub-Sheriff he has held no such licence. A transfer of the licence which took place was, I am informed, perfectly *bonâ fide.*

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF EXPLOSIVES—CASE OF —— M'GINN.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a case in which a Dublin Police Magistrate, Mr. Byrne, has sentenced a man named M'Ginn to three months' imprisonment for being found in possession of blasting powder and fuse without a licence; whether it was proved on the hearing that M'Ginn had purchased the powder and fuse that day in a warehouse in Dublin, and had given correctly his name and address to the person who had sold the powder and fuse to him; whether the magistrate, without remanding or adjourning the case for inquiry, at once passed sentence on the prisoner, although the prisoner gave the name and address of his employer, on whose behalf he had made the purchase; whether, subsequently, the employer attended Court to prove that M'Ginn had bought the powder for his quarrying work, but the magistrate refused to hear him; and, whether M'Ginn will be released?

MR. TREVELYAN: A man named M'Ginn was arrested within the gates leading to the Castle Yard in Dublin, having in his possession, without licence, 2 lbs. of blasting powder and several yards of fuze. He represented that he was going between two places in the city, the line of route between which would not take him by the Castle. His excuse being untrue, and the magistrate having before his mind the recent attempt to fire explosives into the barracks adjoining the Castle, believed that the labourer, having no business at the Castle, entering it with blasting powder and a fuze on his person, and giving a false excuse for his presence, was there with a mischievous intent, and he sentenced him to three months' imprisonment for having the ammunition on his person without a licence. On full investigation and consideration of all the circumstances of the case, the Lords Justices, acting in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant, have since commuted the sentence, and the prisoner was discharged yesterday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE RATE COLLECTOR FOR THE CROGHAN DIVISION, BOYLE UNION.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland What decision the Local Government Board have come to with respect to the Resolution of the Boyle Board of Guardians calling for the recision of the appointment of John M'Williams, as rate collector of the Croghan Division; whether their attention has been drawn to the omission of the clerk of the Union to explain his admission that he had inserted 8*d.* in the advertisement as the poundage rate without the authority of the Board; and, whether they have also taken cognizance of the fact that M'Williams had been acting gratuitously as the deputy of the previous rate collector, Corry, and that Corry's resignation was in M'Williams's handwriting?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board have not yet come to a final decision in regard to the appointment of Mr. M'Williams. An explanation has been received from the Clerk of the Union as to the rate of poundage which he advertised. He states that he advertised for a Collector at the rate previously paid in the district, as he had not received any instructions to reduce it; and he denies that he admitted having fixed the amount without authority.

MR. O'BRIEN: In reference to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, may I ask if the Clerk draws a distinction between "authority" and "instructions?" He admits that he had no instructions from the Board, and the only order made by the Board was accepted, and he, after that order, took upon himself to insert the rate of 8*d.* in the pound.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I gather from the answer I have received that he advertised for a Collector at the rate which had been previously paid. If the hon. Member wishes to put another Question on the subject on the Paper I will answer it.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—ILLEGAL SALMON FISHING.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a gunboat has been sent to the coast of Sligo and Donegal for the protection of the Salmon Fisheries; and, if so, on what grounds and on whose application this has been done; whether the Irish Inspectors of Fisheries have made any report on this subject, and if any official Correspondence thereon will be laid on the Table; whether the Inspectors of Fisheries in their Reports to Parliament have described the population of the coast in question as peaceable, well conducted, and orderly; whether the Government deem it their duty to send a gunboat to this coast to guard the Salmon Fisheries, instead of leaving this function, as in England and Scotland, to the local conservators and owners of Salmon Fisheries; what instructions have been given to the Commander of the gunboat with respect to his special duty; from what fund the cost of using the gunboat for this purpose will be defrayed; and, whether the gunboat will be withdrawn?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Conservators of the district have represented that under the pretence of fishing for white fish illegal salmon fishing is carried on off the coast of Sligo and Donegal. The Coastguard are empowered, under the Regulations of the Commissioners of Customs, to enforce the provisions of the Fisheries Act (5 & 6 *Vict.*, c. 106, s. 86) to act as constables, &c. They confine themselves to the enforcement of the law in the sea, sea-coast, and tidal waters of rivers, examine boats, seize illegal nets, &c. It is a Coastguard cruiser that is employed on this duty; and, as it is a duty properly devolving upon the Coastguard, the Government consider it only reasonable that the law should be so enforced. The Coastguard will not interfere with the functions of the local Conservators. It is the fact that the Inspectors of Fisheries, in their Report presented last year, described the people as peaceable and orderly.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SORTERS IN TRAVELLING POST OFFICES.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Postmaster General, Whether any steps have yet been taken to carry out his promise, made on the 11th of March last, that sorters employed in the travelling Post Offices in Ireland should be placed on an equal footing with those employed in England with regard to excess payments for duty done on Sundays?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that steps have been taken in the direction indicated; but the matter is one which it is a little difficult to adjust to the varying circumstances. I can assure him, however, that there shall be no delay that can possibly be avoided.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF MURPHY AND O'CONNELL, COSTLEA, CO. LIMERICK.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the two tenants (Murphy and O'Connell) who were evicted off the property of Mr. C. John Coote, in the barony of Costlea, and county of Limerick, have proposed to Mr. Coote to pay for the farms they lately held whatever rent the Land Commissioners would fix on same, and to settle the arrears due on same terms; and, if so, why it is, under these circumstances, that six police are allowed to continue in charge of those farms, at the expense of the Country?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I understand that O'Connell made no such proposition, and that Murphy's offer was to pay one year's rent—not all arrears—and that his landlord has not replied to him. The District Inspector is satisfied that the presence of the police is necessary for the protection of the caretakers on the evicted farms.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary, if the only evicted tenants were three on the property of Mr. Coote; and if such a force of police was, under these circumstances, necessary?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I do not know, except that the hon. Member has informed me so. From what I have learned of this case, the size of the farms would appear to render this number necessary.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — DISQUALIFICATION OF PUBLICANS—MR. CHARLES O'NEILL, LONDONDERRY.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Times* of May 17th, that

Charles O'Neill, public-house keeper, has been admitted to the Commission of the Peace for Derry; and, if so, whether there is any precedent for a publican being made a magistrate?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Mr. Charles O'Neill has been appointed to the Commission of the Peace on the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant of the county. He is a gentleman of considerable position in the City of Londonderry. The description of him as a public-house keeper is misleading. He is an extensive wholesale wine and spirit merchant; he has a retail licence also; but this licence he is to make a *bonâ fide* transfer of, ceasing to have any connection therewith, according to an understanding come to with him before his recommendation by the Lord Lieutenant of the county.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask, whether the fact of a man being a publican is a conclusive bar to his holding the Commission of the Peace?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is practically a bar.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—COPYISTS.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in any contemplated reorganization of the Lower Division of the Civil Service, it is intended to place on a more satisfactory basis the position of the Civil Service Writers?

Mr. COURTNEY: We have no intention of making any alteration in the position of Civil Service Writers.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LORD ST. LEONARDS.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General, If Lord St. Leonards has claimed to be tried by his Peers; and, under what circumstances such a claim by a Peer is valid, according to Law or usage?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I have no information on the subject. It would not come before me in any way officially. I would point out, however, that there is great improbability of such an application being made, because I understand the charge is one of misdemeanour. That being so, there is no possible right of any Peer to claim trial by his Peers.

CONSOLIDATED FUND, &c. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION) ACTS, 1873 AND 1883—COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Under what Act of Parliament he has arranged for the commutation of the Marlborough and Penn pensions; and, whether Parliament will have an opportunity of discussing these commutations before they are finally agreed to?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether the Government proposed to make any distinction between those who had only life interests and those who might succeed afterwards?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, this was a totally different Question from that on the Paper. Of course, in commuting those pensions care would be taken that the interest of all concerned in them would be maintained. In the case of sale by a life-tenant, that would be done probably under the direction of Chancery, and the money vested in Trustees. As to the Question of his hon. Friend, these pensions were charged on the Consolidated Fund, and were never voted by Parliament. Under the Acts 36 & 37 *Vict.* c. 57, and 46 *Vict.* c. 1, the Treasury was empowered to commute such perpetual charges, and to transform by arrangement with the National Debt Commissioners the perpetual into a Terminable Annuity. The commuted annuities, like the original annuities, were charged on the Consolidated Fund, and did not, therefore, come before Parliament.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—DONGOLA.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is foundation for the report that the Governor of Dongola has, through terror at the abandonment of Berber, made terms with the Mahdi; and, if so, whether communications with General Gordon are now entirely cut off; and, whether Slaten Bey, the Governor of Darfour, has surrendered to the Mahdi?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No certain information as to the attitude of the Governor of Dongola has been received by Her Majesty's Government, and I cannot make any further statement at present. Communication with General Gordon is cut off. As the hon. Member will see on reference to "Egypt," No. 13, page 12, General Gordon telegraphed on the 9th of April that Slaten Bey was not a prisoner. Her Majesty's Government have received no further information since that date.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the part of the Question referring to Slaten Bey was a piece of information which had just come to this country. He should like to ask the noble Lord, whether the Government had any information that the Governor of Dongola had seized by force a quantity of arms and ammunition from Korosko?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE asked that Notice should be given of the Question, as he was exceedingly averse to replying to interrogatories on matters of details without Notice.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT gave Notice of the Question.

CENTRAL ASIA—ADVANCES OF THE RUSSIANS.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state how many miles the Russian Forces have advanced from the Caspian towards India since Her Majesty's present Ministers came into Office?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the hon. Member would see that the Question as it stood was of rather a vague character; but he would be glad to give all the information he could if the hon. Member would put the Question in a little clearer form on Thursday.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, although he did not admit that the Question was not a perfectly plain one, gave Notice that he would on Thursday ask the noble Lord whether he could inform the House how many miles the Russian Forces had advanced from the Caspian towards the Frontier of India during the period that the present Government had been in power?

Mr. MACFARLANE gave Notice that when the hon. Member put his Question he would ask the noble Lord whether, at the same time, he could inform the House of the number of miles advanced by Russia during the period of Office of the late Government?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Not one single mile.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—CREW OF THE "NISERO."

Mr. STOREY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that about twenty hard-working British subjects have been in captivity within the territory of a friendly Power for six months; that, from climatic considerations and for other reasons, they are in daily jeopardy of their lives; that recently they had been in absolute destitution from want of provisions; that the families of some of them were compelled to ask for public charity; and, whether, in view of the ineffectual steps taken by the Foreign Office, and of the refusal of the Government to relieve the necessities of the women and children, he will be prepared, other means having failed, to detach a portion of Her Majesty's Naval Force in order to secure the release of these British subjects?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have supplied myself with all the best information at my command; but since I came into the House I have learnt from my noble Friend that he has a telegram which has recently arrived, and which brings down the matter to a later point than the information I have. I think it would be better and more satisfactory to my hon. Friend that he should hear the telegram read by my noble Friend.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the following telegram was received at the Admiralty to-day, and sent to him just before he came to the House, from Commander Bickford, of H.M.S. *Pegasus*, dated Penang, May 20—

> "Provisions supplied to the crew of the *Nisero*. Receipts from Rajah. All well. Rajah will not allow letters to pass from the crew to the shore."

The telegram so far was satisfactory.

Mr. STOREY pointed out that on a former occasion the noble Lord had taken care to insist that the crew themselves had sent a letter as to their condition. He should like to know if the present report came from the Rajah?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had given the exact words. It was a matter of opinion; but he did not take these words to mean that the report depended on the statement of the

Rajah, because the provisions were sent up in charge of the crew of the *Pegasus*, and he imagined that the report would depend on them.

Mr. STOREY said, he must really apologize to the House; but he felt bound to press his Question. He, therefore, must ask the Prime Minister, whether he was aware that these men had been in captivity for a period of six or seven months in a territory under the control of a friendly Government, and that at the present time they were in jeopardy of their lives, and that while they were there their wives and families were suffering here and dependent upon public charity; and whether he did not think it was a case for strenuous efforts to be made?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would not now discuss the position of the Dutch Government, because he was not fully aware of what they had to say. What he understood to be the case was, that certain persons not under the control of the Dutch Government had, unfortunately, got these unhappy persons into their hands, and that a Dutch military expedition was sent out in January, 1884; that the Rajah who possessed himself of these persons decamped into the interior with his captives, and that there was very great apprehension, he was given to understand, prevailing that any measures taken in a summary manner for the liberation of those people might result in their being put to death. It became a very nice question, indeed; but he assured the hon. Gentleman that the Government recognized their obligation to give the matter their best consideration, and to take every step they could to effect the release of these men.

Sir JOHN HAY asked if any ransom had been offered?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the demands of the Rajah were far beyond a mere ransom. He had undertaken to lay Papers on the Table showing what had been done, and they would be in the hands of hon. Members on Saturday.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR inquired whether any provision would be made for the wives and children of these men?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied that no funds were at the disposal of the Foreign Office which would enable it to make any allowance to the relatives of these men in England; but he had been in communication with several Members of that House upon the subject of the condition of these unfortunate persons, for whom the deepest sympathy had been expressed; and he believed that some steps were being taken, or were likely to be taken, which would tend to the immediate relief of the families.

Mr. STOREY gave Notice that on going into Committee of Supply he would take the opportunity of drawing attention to this matter.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the proposed Conference was convened on the suggestion of the Russian Government?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. It is quite evident that the hon. Member's ingenuousness has been the victim of some gross fabrication.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, however much his ingenuousness might have been imposed upon, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether his attention had been called to a Report in the Blue Book of an interview between Lord Granville and Baron Mohrenheim, the Russian Ambassador, on February 28, in which Baron Mohrenheim said—

> "It cannot be denied that up till now the re-establishing of order in Egypt by Her Majesty's Government seems to retreat rather than to advance. Difficulties are increasing and extending every day. The Russian Cabinet have looked upon it from the outset as essentially a European question. The Russian Government are of opinion, in view of the increase of the present difficulties, that the moment has arrived when the question may again become the subject of a general understanding. The Russian Government are of opinion that the proposals of Her Majesty's Government for the re-organization of Egypt should be submitted to a collective examination of the Powers."

At this awkward stage in the Russian Ambassador's communication Lord Granville said—

> "The hour of meeting of the House of Lords obliged me to interrupt the interview."

He wished to ask whether this was not a distinct invitation on the part of the Russian Government for the approaching Conference?

Mr. GLADSTONE: My attention was, of course, called to this statement at the time it was made; and I beg to say that it has nothing whatever to do with the Question of the hon. Member which is on the Paper, or with the Conference which is about to meet.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the debate on the Merchant Shipping Bill having occupied the whole of Monday's Sitting of the House, he will name an early day after the Whitsuntide holidays for the second reading of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill, and give it such a position on the Orders as shall insure its discussion?

Mr. GLADSTONE: We have done what we could to secure an opportunity for discussing the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill, and when there is an opening we shall be desirous of taking further steps in the same direction; but, in the present state of Business, the importance of making progress with the Representation of the People Bill is such that I could not possibly think of putting it aside. Nor would the hon. Member, I am sure, recommend that. Of course, there may be considerations of Supply that would not yield to the Representation of the People Bill or to anything else. But, so far as the discretion of the Government is concerned, we will give first place to the Representation of the People Bill.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should like to ask the Government, Whether it is in their power to give any information to the House as to the position of Admiral Sir William Hewett, as there is considerable anxiety as to his position?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The right hon. Gentleman has given me no Notice of this Question; but I can state that there is no cause for any feeling of anxiety as to the position of Admiral Sir William Hewett. News of him has been received at the Admiralty; and if the right hon. Gentleman will put a Question down I dare say I shall be able to answer it to-morrow.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. GIBSON remarked that the Chief Secretary had promised to introduce the Government measure for the amendment of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act before Whitsuntide. Could the right hon. Gentleman state on what night, and what hour, he would be in a position to introduce it?

Mr. TREVELYAN replied, that on Thursday he should be in a position to state when he proposed to introduce the measure, which was complicated, and of a large nature. He was fully in mind of the pledge that had been given.

STATE-AIDED EMIGRATION (IRELAND).

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has yet received the Report as to the present condition of State-aided Emigrants from Ireland to Canada who were in a state of distress in Toronto in February last?

Mr. TREVELYAN: A telegram has been received from the Governor General, stating that the agent at Toronto reports the departure of all the immigrants who arrived there this year, all having found places. The telegram goes on to say that agricultural labour to any extent is in demand, and also that there is a large demand for navvies on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and that the prospects generally are satisfactory.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDERS OF THE DAY.

In reply to Mr. Newdegate,

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was undoubtedly desirable that each important Order, such as the Representation of the People Bill, should, in the weekly Orders, be set down for the day on which it was intended to next take it; but it was sometimes necessary to put it down for an intermediate day, in the hope that it might then possibly be taken. Thus it was that in the weekly Orders issued on Saturday the Representation of the People Bill was set down for yesterday.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress* 16*th May.*]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Extension of the Household and Lodger Franchise.

Clause 2 (Uniform household and lodger franchise).

Amendment again proposed, in page 1, line 10, to leave out the words "the United Kingdom," and insert the words "Great Britain,"—(*Mr. Brodrick,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'the United Kingdom' stand part of the Clause."

LORD **RANDOLPH CHURCHILL**: Sir Arthur Otway, it was not my intention to offer any further remarks upon this Bill during its passage through the House in addition to those which I made upon the first reading. I thought it a very little Bill; perhaps I might call it a trumpery little Bill, and certainly one that was not worthy of the designation of a great Reform Bill. I therefore imagined it might be allowed to take its passage, not without rapidity through the House of Commons, and go up to the House of Lords, where, no doubt, it will receive all the consideration to which its merits entitle it. But I must own, with some regret, that the question of the inclusion of Ireland in, or its exclusion from, the Bill has been brought again before the House; because I think that matter was fully gone into by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) on the first reading, and again upon the second reading; and it was also debated by itself on a separate Motion before going into Committee upon the measure. I regret that it has been brought up again; and all the more, because I am obliged to differ from my hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) on the Amendment which he has moved. I differ from him so strongly on the matter that if he presses his Amendment I shall be obliged to vote against him. I wish to assure him that I have arrived at this decision with the deepest possible regret and concern. I have given much anxious thought to this question of including Ireland in the Reform Bill; and I frankly admit that my mind has undergone a change—a change, I venture to say, coming from the most legitimate source whence such a change can arise—namely, from the progress of the debates in this House. ["Oh!"] Surely, the debates in the House of Commons are supposed occasionally to bring about a change in the minds of hon. Members. If it were otherwise, the sooner we adopt the Radical programme, and abolish debates altogether, the better. Like everyone else, I was startled when it was mooted in the Autumn that a Reform Bill was to be brought in for Ireland on the same basis as the Reform Bill for Great Britain; and I imagine that even the Government themselves felt great hesitation on the point, and did not arrive at the conclusion without much consideration. But, no doubt, so far as being startled at this proposal was concerned, I was in good company, because the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War informed the country that he himself had been startled at the proposal to include Ireland in the Reform Bill; and, therefore, I think I was startled in good company. But, as the debates have proceeded, I have genuinely come to the conclusion, after balancing all the arguments for and against—and there are many on both sides—in regard to this question of Ireland whether it should be included or excluded, quite apart from the merits of the Bill in its present form, that the position which Her Majesty's Government have taken up on this particular question is, on the whole, a wise and statesmanlike position. I should be sorry, therefore, to see any strong Party opposition to their proposals on the matter. I cannot forget that the state of Ireland has very much altered within the last two years. A very remarkable decrease of disorder has taken place—a decrease which appears to be still going on—and we could not be in a better position to settle this question. More than that, I think that on this side of the House we should recognize with great satisfaction that a great change has come over the mind of Her Majesty's Government with respect to Ireland, and we may feel some confidence that the Government have learnt a great lesson from the events of 1880, 1881, and 1882, and that they have recognized more fully and completely than they had done before what the duties of the Irish Government are towards the Irish people. I think it may be said that the land agitation is dying out, and that the principal features of that agitation have disappeared as far as we can judge. Just as, in physical life, men do not take vigorous exercise on a full stomach, so in the same way the Irish farmers, who may be described as replete with gain, are disposed to settle down in the enjoyment of that gain, and, at any rate for a time, to abandon those methods of violent agitation with which the House is only too familiar. In these circumstances it appears to me that the era of crime—or, at any rate, of abnormal crime—being at an end, and violent land agitation having also disappeared, the time has come for England to hold out to Ireland the generous hand of fellowship, and to sow the seeds of conciliation. I do not know that there is any better method of sowing the seeds of conciliation than by sowing the seeds of complete political equality. I should like to be allowed to look at this matter more in detail. What is it that this Bill proposes to do? What is the chief feature of it as regards Ireland? It proposes to confer the Parliamentary franchise on the Irish peasantry. To a certain extent, no doubt, it enlarges the constituencies in the towns, and that is a feature which I must frankly confess I do not like in the Bill. So long as the extension of the franchise was confined to the Bill for the assimilation of the borough suffrage in Ireland and England, which has come so often before the House, I invariably, except on one occasion, opposed it; but the chief feature of this Bill is undoubtedly to enfranchise the Irish agricultural labourer. On the whole, therefore, I do not, from what knowledge of the people which I have been enabled to gain, fear the effect of that enfranchisement. I hold that the sympathizers with Fenianism and conspiracies are to be found in the towns, and that they are chiefly confined to the lower classes of the town population. I do not think these ideas have taken much root in the country population, and as a general proposition the incidents of agricultural life are not at all favourable to revolutionary movements. The agricultural peasant is much more under the proper and legitimate influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood than the lower classes in the Irish towns; and, at any rate on the subject of these Fenian and treasonable societies, for a long time past the attitude of the Roman Catholic priesthood has been one that must be most satisfactory to the Home Government. Nobody can have set his face more strongly against these movements than did the late Cardinal Cullen, and as long as Cardinal Cullen was alive he repressed to the utmost this movement with a strong hand. The course which he adopted appears to have been followed with great success and determination by Cardinal MacCabe. That being so, the strong influx of the country element—which I hold is not given to those treasonable aspirations—the sounder influences of the country element will altogether counterbalance the town feeling, which is more or less given to these enterprizes, and will be a guarantee, to some extent, against any danger the House might reasonably expect from the extension of the franchise. On the question of the land agitation I think it would not be uninteresting to the Committee to consider what would be the effect of the extension of the franchise to the peasantry of Ireland. I think, on the whole, it would not be unfavourable to the landlord interest. The Committee will recollect that during the time of the land agitation there was a great diversity of opinion between the labourers and the farmers, which gave great anxiety to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and great satisfaction to those who represented the landlord interest in this House. It therefore does occur to me that if at that time the Irish labourer, whose interest was so totally neglected during the land agitation, had been armed with electoral power, and had been able to influence the Parliamentary representation of Ireland—it does appear to me that it was eminently within the bounds of possibility that the position of the landlords might have been considerably improved. It is quite clear that in the condition of Ireland now the interests of the farmers and of the labourers are essentially diverse, and from that diversity will arise strong class differences, which we may fairly look upon as a guarantee for the safety of the State at large. We have heard a great deal of the mud-cabin argument. For the mud-cabin argument we are indebted to the brilliant, ingenious, and fertile mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). I suppose that in the minds of the lords of suburban villas, or in the minds of the owners of pineries and vineries, a mud-cabin represents the climax of physical and mental degradation. But I must observe that the franchise, as far as I know, in England has never been determined by Parliament with respect to the character of the dwelling-house. After all, the difference between the mud-cabin of the Irish peasant and the cottage of the English agricultural labourer is not nearly so great as is the difference between the palaces which are the abode of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the modest dwelling which shelters from the storm and the tempest the humble individual who is now addressing the Committee. I can truly say—

> "Non ebur, neque aurenne,
> Meâ reuidet in domo lacunar :
> Non trabes Hymettiæ,
> Premunt columnas ultimâ recisas
> Africâ."

But if, upon a distinction such as that—a distinction so arrogant, so plutocratic—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster were to propose to the Committee that he himself should have a vote at Parliamentary elections and that I should have none, I feel sure the House of Commons would repudiate the idea with indignation and disgust. On these general grounds I dispose of the mud-cabin argument. But it should also be recollected by the Committee that the fact of a man living in a mud-cabin in Ireland is not the slightest proof that he is an incapable citizen. Very often the man who lives in a mud-cabin has a very decent small holding, and has money in the savings' bank besides. Intellectually, I am prepared to contend that the Irish peasant, though living in a mud-cabin, is often more suited to take an interest in and a sound view of political questions than the English agricultural labourer. And, further, the sort of mud-cabins which fills the right hon. Member for Westminster with so much alarm are chiefly confined, I imagine, to the West Coast of Ireland, where, undoubtedly, the class of dwellings appear to the English mind to be very miserable. But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster has been misinformed when he is led to believe that the population of the West Coast of Ireland, which live in these dwellings, represents the whole population of the country; and even if it did I may further point out that the population all round the coast from Kerry to Donegal form, perhaps, the most peaceful and law-abiding part of the whole population in that country. Then we are told of the ignorance of the Irish people, and I think it was in a statement of the Vice President of the Council that we were informed that 40 per cent of the Irish population are ignorant and illiterate. I do not know whether that is an accurate statement or not. I think the right hon. Gentleman put it forward in a guarded manner; but even if it were accurate the evil is eminently curable. The Irish people, it should be remembered, have never yet had a complete system of compulsory education such as exists in England. Moreover, that 40 per cent is made up, to a great extent, of a generation that has very nearly passed away, and in the course of a few years it will not be surprising to learn that it has diminished by one-half or two-thirds, or even more. Again, that percentage is composed, to a large extent, of the population on the West Coast, where, until very recently, nothing but Gaelic was spoken—where Gaelic is the popular tongue, and where, in many places at the present moment, the English tongue is almost unknown to the people. Then we are told that the Protestant minority in Ireland will be overwhelmed by the Bill. If that argument were well founded it would deserve the serious attention of the House; but I do not see why the Protestant minority should be placed in a worse position by this Bill than they occupy at the present moment. Outside of Ulster there is a Protestant minority which has no political power at present, except in so far as they are represented in the House of Peers. Generally speaking, the representation of Ireland in this House, with the exception of Ulster, the University of Dublin, the county of Dublin, Portarlington, and the happy accident of Leitrim, is almost wholly in the hands of the Catholic Party. But inside Ulster, undoubtedly, the Catholics are not over-represented, and the Protestants are in the majority, and are represented. I do not see why they should be put in a worse position after this Bill passes than they are in now; because the Protestant population in Ulster, which has political power now, and the Catholic population, 95 per cent of which has no political power, are almost exactly equal. Roughly speaking, 800,000 represents the numbers of each Party. And where there is an equality of numbers, I do not see why the Protestant Party, with superior wealth, superior enterprize, superior learning, and superior intelligence to the Catholics, should not, with all those great advantages, obtain their full share of the representation which belongs to them. Balancing, then, all the arguments for and against the extension of the Bill to Ireland, I have arrived at the conclusion that we may with safety agree with the Government in this extension. After all, I think hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Tory Party may recollect that equality of political rights between Ireland and England has been, for the last 100 years, the principle of our legislation. It was undoubtedly the principle of Mr. Pitt at the time of the Union, and Mr. Pitt would have established complete equality of rights between Ireland and England if it had not been for the prejudices of the Court and the baneful influence of a too powerful Monarch. It was the principle of the Reform Act of 1832, the great feature of which was the £10 borough franchise. Again, it was the principle of the Reform Bill of 1867; and Mr. Disraeli, in proposing the £4 rating franchise for Ireland, did so on the ground that that exactly represented the same class as were then enfranchised in England. Therefore, in 1832 and 1867, Parliament recognized the principle of equality of treatment between Ireland and England; and it was always the argument of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House that, as regarded the lowering of the borough franchise, a £4 franchise represented the same kind of persons as those enfranchised in England under a £10 franchise. Therefore, at the time of the Union, and also in 1832 and in 1867, Parliament did recognize the principle of equality of treatment. Now comes the question of the state of Ireland, and that bears out the view I am endeavouring to put before the Committee. At the time of the Union Ireland had just emerged, by a little more than a year, from a fearful rebellion; and it would have been in the power of the Parliament then to have disfranchised that country altogether, and governed it as a Crown Colony. But Parliament adopted the principle of Parliamentary and Constitutional Government for Ireland. In 1832, again, when you extended the £10 franchise to Ireland, the state of Ireland was frightful—far different from anything ever known before or since. Disorder, outrage, and crime in the country rose to a height that was unparalleled; so much so, that in the year after that large concession Lord Grey brought in the severest Coercion Bill ever known, by which the whole of the civil tribunals were entirely superseded, and drumhead courts martial took their place. Yet that did not deter Parliament from extending the £10 franchise to Ireland. In 1867, again, Ireland had just emerged from a Fenian movement of certainly little less dangerous a nature than the Rebellion of 1798; and it was only just put down when the Reform Bill was introduced by Mr. Disraeli in this House, on the distinct understanding that it was to be extended to Ireland. Parliament was not then deterred from extending equal rights to Ireland. Under all these circumstances, I may appeal to hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House not to identify themselves as a Party with the Amendment which my hon. Friend has moved. My hon. Friends on this side have constituted themselves the defenders of a great cause—a far-spreading and wide-reaching cause—the preservation of our institutions at home, the maintenance of a vigorous foreign policy abroad, and the promotion of Imperial rule and Imperial union in our Colonies and Dependencies. Well, if that is so—if the cause, of which Members on this side are the defenders, is so great—why should we, on a mere question of detail—[Mr. Newdegate: Oh!]—on what, as compared with much wider questions, is a matter of detail—why, I say, should we alienate inevitably and irretrievably an immense number of the Queen's subjects both in Ireland and in Great Britain, whom, by a wiser policy and by happier methods, we may allure to our standard and our ranks? I would appeal to my hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick), who, from the high intelligence and ability which he so constantly displays in the House, belongs, I imagine, to that more generous and advanced school of political thought which, having emancipated itself from the traditions of an antiquated past, desires to base the strength of the Tory Party upon the genuine and spontaneous affection of the people at large. I would appeal to my hon. Friend whether he will not now decline to press his Amendment to a Division, because it is, I think, a reactionary Amendment; it is an Amendment which is calculated to throw a slur and a stigma on the country with which my hon. Friend is closely and honourably connected; it is an Amendment which may have the effect of unnecessarily placing the Tory Party in pronounced opposition to the legitimate desires of an overwhelming majority of the Irish people; and it is an Amendment which would have the invidious effect of causing many who admire the position which my hon. Friend has gained, and who agree with him on almost all political points, to put themselves under the painful and disagreeable necessity of either leaving the House or being found in the Lobby opposed to that of my hon. Friend. I therefore hope that, under all the circumstances, my hon. Friend will reconsider his position, and save the Committee the inconvenience of dividing.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: Sir, it is always a great pleasure to listen to what falls from the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), although I am bound to say that on many occasions a great number of those who sit on these Benches are unable to follow him, or, indeed, to agree with the conclusions to which he has arrived. At the present moment, after listening most carefully to all that has fallen from the noble Lord, what has been passing through my mind is this—what is the noble Lord really driving at? If the noble Lord is giving us a specimen of the Democratic Toryism of the future, I, for one, respectfully decline to follow any such doctrine, or any such Leader. I believe, myself, in the principles of honesty and straightforwardness, although, perhaps, they may be somewhat old-fashioned to certain Members of this House. At the same time, on a question of this sort, on which so many of us, from a close and intimate knowledge of Ireland, have formed strong and lasting convictions, I think we should, indeed, deserve the repudiation of those who have placed confidence in us, if, after having pledged ourselves to adopt a definite course in regard to this Amendment, we were to follow the noble Lord in endeavouring, at the expense of our principles, to catch a few stray votes at the General Election. Now, Sir, I will not follow the noble Lord in all his remarks in regard to Ireland, because I think, with all respect to him, that in his remarks he has shown a most complete want of knowledge of that country. I gather from his speech that he is of opinion that Cardinal Cullen is still alive.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No; I said the "late" Cardinal Cullen.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: The noble Lord has referred to the endeavours of the leaders of the Roman Catholic priesthood to preserve order and to prevent anarchy in Ireland. We all know—or, at any rate, all who have any knowledge of Ireland know—that one man to whom the greatest praise is due in regard to this question is Cardinal MacCabe. ["Oh!"] I am aware that that is a name which is not popular with some hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway; but, at the same time, the ecclesiastical conduct of Cardinal MacCabe during the last three years has earned for him the approval of every right-minded man in the Three Kingdoms. I think that what we should do upon this question is to leave those sophistries and those abstract principles with which the Prime Minister dealt, and also the Chief Secretary, the other evening, and look the question straight in the face, dealing with facts as we find them in Ireland at the present moment; and having carefully viewed those facts, then let us consider whether, by extending the franchise in Ireland, we should include in the electorate a large number of capable citizens, and also add to the strength of the State. In the opening speech of the Prime Minister the one principle which ran through it was that the object of this reform is to enfranchise all capable citizens, and by that enfranchisement to add strength to the State; but neither in that speech nor in a single word which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman since the introduction of the Bill has he advanced a single argument or tittle of evidence whatever to show that the people of Ireland whom he proposes to enfranchise are in any respect capable citizens. Now, Sir, the noble Lord has said that the state of Ireland has shown great improvement during the last two years. I gladly admit it, and we all rejoice at it; but we and the people of Ireland are all aware of the fact that that improvement is due to the stringent powers which the Government of the present time have at their command, and to the, on the whole, efficient manner in which those stringent powers have been enforced by the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary. We know perfectly well that if the present restrictions were for a moment to relax Ireland would sink back to the state in which she was a year and a-half ago, for the improvement of Ireland is due in the main to the provisions of that Act. Yet this is the moment which the Government choose for introducing this Bill for Ireland. It is said that an improvement is visible in Ireland. Quite true; but land at this moment is unsaleable, and everything of capital that can be realized is being taken out of the country. Trade in many portions of Ireland is at a standstill; and what all the Irish people are anxious for, and asking for, is peace and quiet, and a firm administration of the law, in order that the farmers may have the full benefit of the measures which were passed three years ago. I am bound to say that, although on this side of the House we objected to those measures at the time of their passing, they are now being carried out in a loyal and impartial spirit by all for the common good of all. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Of course, that is a proposition which hon. Members below the Gangway have a perfect right to dispute, if they can give evidence in support of their contention; but I maintain that the great bulk of the landlords, although they thought they were right in objecting to the Act of 1881, are now endeavouring to carry out the provisions of that Act in a cordial and liberal spirit, feeling that the time has come when both farmers and landlords should work together for the common good of the nation. On every side there is a wish to see prosperity restored to their common country. Yet this is the moment which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister seizes for opening the floodgates of agitation in Ireland, and for bringing about such a state of things as will produce such a revolution in Ireland as we have never seen in our time. What are the grounds upon which the right hon. Gentleman does this? Have the Irish people asked for a reduction of the franchise? Can the right hon. Gentleman point to a single address or speech in which such a proposal was made at the last General Election? Can he show that any demand was made for the Bill? I watched carefully all that occurred in Ireland during the General Election; and as far as I am aware there was no declaration, or even allusion, made upon that subject, nor, as far as I know, has there been the slightest expression of opinion on the part of the Irish people since the introduction of the Bill, in any degree, in favour of the enfranchisement which the right hon. Gentleman appears to wish so much to force down their throats. The proposal is entirely due to the exigencies of Party. The Bill is only introduced at the present moment to repair the fortunes of the Liberal Party; and no body of people could have been more astonished than the Irish people themselves, and especially hon. Members below the Gangway, when they were informed, shortly before Christmas, that Ireland was to be included in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman's enfranchisement. I should like to know what the opinion of the Irish farmers is in regard to the matter. The Irish farmers have just emerged from a period of great social revolution in Ireland, and they are just beginning to settle down and work cordially with the landlords and those who have relations with the soil. I wonder what the farmers of Ireland will think when they find out what this Bill really is. I was over in Ireland during the Easter Recess, and I had an opportunity of conversing with a large number of the farmers upon this subject; but I did not find one who was really aware of the extent to which the Bill went. When they discovered that it proposed to hand them over absolutely and bodily to the tender mercy of the cottiers who work under them, their astonishment and indignation knew no bounds, and there was but one opinion expressed—that the Bill should be resisted to the uttermost. Unfortunately, there is no valuable middle class in Ireland such as exists in England. There are only three classes in Ireland—the landlords, the occupiers, and the tillers of the soil. At the present moment a large majority of those who possess votes in Ireland are the occupiers; and although I do not agree with the views of many of them who during past years have enjoyed the franchise, still I feel that, on the whole, they are a body of men who have something to lose, and who have some regard to the just rights of property. But what will the condition of things be under this Bill? It will hand over the rights of the bankers, the landlords, the shopkeepers, and the farmers, and of every single man who has any property or wealth whatever in Ireland, bodily, absolutely, and entirely to another class, who at the present moment have nothing whatsoever. What guarantee have you at all that that class will use the enormous powers you propose to intrust to them with justice, or to the benefit of the country at large? The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in his opening speech, talked of capable citizens; but he made no attempt whatever to prove that the Irish cottier is a capable citizen. He went on to say that in Ireland the peasantry whom we call cottiers were, in his opinion, skilled labourers. Now, I will tell the right hon. Gentleman that when he talks of the Irish peasantry as skilled labourers he is talking sheer nonsense. They are nothing of the kind. I myself know a large number of the labourers of Ireland, and I have a strong regard for them. They are hard-working, industrious, good-hearted, and always cheery and hospitable to those who mix with them; but, through no fault of their own, and I do not blame them for it, on the whole they are a most ignorant class. They are a class of whom 40 per cent can neither read nor write, and most of them are mere hewers of wood and carriers of water; in no sense are they educated or skilled. I may add that there are in certain parts of Ireland a proportion of labourers who are educated and highly intelligent, and who are, perhaps, more intelligent than a similar class either in England or Scotland; but, unfortunately, those to whom I allude are in a very small minority of the whole; and, therefore, I contend that those to whom it is now proposed to give votes are incapable and ignorant, and not likely to add strength to the State. Now, Sir, I wish to call attention to the fact that the Government have chosen a most unfortunate moment, on other grounds, for dealing with this question. Those who have looked below the surface in Ireland, which is a thing Her Majesty's Government do not seem inclined to do, will have seen that the power of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) is commencing to be on the wane, for several reasons, and that, like many other mock patriots, the hon. Member has had his day. That sum of £36,000 or £37,000 paid over to him has stuck fast in the throats of many Irish farmers, and many of those who were among the admirers of the hon. Gentleman are beginning to mistrust him. They cannot reconcile themselves to the fact that a man who signed the "No Rent" Manifesto can be found figuring in a Court of Law suing an unfortunate tenant for rent. Therefore, the people of Ireland, at this moment, are beginning to be in doubt as to the power and as to the honesty of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. But there is another agency at work which is a still more potent one. The Irish people, in regard to their Representatives, are beginning to ask themselves the question—"Who is to continue to pay the piper?" We know that war cannot be carried on without funds, and the Irish people are beginning to find that the support of the large number of Members who sit below the Gangway is an exceedingly expensive and burdensome duty. I heard the other day, from a town in the centre of Ireland, that when collections were being made at the chapel doors on behalf of the two Members who represent the county, great dissatisfaction was expressed by the congregation, and some of them absolutely declined to subscribe the money for which they were asked. Now, that is a movement which will be on the increase in Ireland if Her Majesty's Government would only be firm in the administration of the law, and would not indulge in fresh legislation. Whenever the next General Election takes place, they would find that, from want of funds, what are called "Home Rule candidates" of ability and power would not be forthcoming, and the Irish people would once more return to Parliament those who have been brought up and lived amongst them, devoting their lives to the interests of their country; and they would see at last the power of the hon. Member for the City of Cork broken down and a better state of things arrived at. Yet this is the moment Her Majesty's Government choose for inaugurating the measure to which I have referred. What will be the result of this legislation in a financial sense? Everybody knows that if the franchise is extended in Ireland the days of Home Rule are not far distant, and Home Rule means picking and jobbery to any extent. Those who look forward to that would be ready to make temporary sacrifices for the present, in order to come forward and stand as candidates, in the hope of receiving their reward in the future for their present services. Therefore, I say that, on every ground, the moment selected for dealing with the franchise in Ireland is most inopportune. I heard an hon. Member sitting on the other side of the House say in private—"How can things be much worse than they are at the present time?" Hon. Members forget that Parties in this House are governed by numbers, and whenever we have a contested election we must remember the cheers which greet the successful candidate as he walks up to the Table. We well know how each Party watches with great eagerness the accession of even one vote to its side. It is, therefore, sheer nonsense to say that it does not matter whether the hon. Member for the City of Cork has 40 or 80 Members at his back. If the hon. Member and his Friends have, as they wish to have, some 80 votes in another Parliament, they will hold, as the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has said, the fate of Parties in the palm of their hands to such an extent as to render all legislation in this House an absolute impossibility, unless the Government of the day are prepared to concede whatever demand is made upon them. I say that all legislation under such circumstances would be impossible. I do not suppose that hon. Members sitting below the Gangway would feel much dissatisfaction at that, for I do not imagine that they have any particular affection for Party Government, or for the Forms which regulate the procedure of this House. One or two hon. Members who sit below the Gangway have expressed in public their contempt of our Institutions, and have declared that their only object in taking their seats in this House is to achieve their desire for a National Parliament and the independence of Ireland. What said the hon. Member for the City of Cork the other day? He said that if he could only have a following of 80 Members, the renewal of a Coercion Act would become an impossibility; and he said, further, that when once the Act is no longer in force the National League would then have a career before it as glorious as that of the late Land League. Those are words which, I think, should be well weighed by every Member of this House. "The glorious history of the late Land League"—a history steeped in blood and crime to its very close; and that is what the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends wish to resuscitate when they get the powers which the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government is so eager to force upon them. They will once more raise the standard of the National League in Ireland; once more will anarchy and crime become rampant, and once more will misery, wretchedness, and poverty prevail in Ireland. In reply to all this, the right hon. Gentleman says—"Are you not going to do justice to Ireland?" Many crimes have been committed in this world before now in the name of justice. The justice which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to mete out to Ireland on this occasion is nothing short of a national crime in regard to the loyal portion of the community of that country. What does the right hon. Gentleman say? He says he would never consent to divide the people of Ireland into two camps, with a loyal minority and a disloyal majority. The right hon. Gentleman has said a good many things which he declines to do in regard to Egypt. Unfortunately, he cannot look things in the face and see them as other people see them; but he looks at them through a pair of spectacles only suited to his own mind, and he ignores that which is patent to every man, woman, and child of ordinary intelligence. What did the right hon. Gentleman say at Leeds? He always speaks according to what suits his own purpose. He declines to recognize a loyal and a disloyal Party in Ireland; but how did he characterize the hon. Member for the City of Cork? He spoke of him as the great Leader of the anti-British Party in Ireland. What does that mean? Does not "anti-British" mean that there is both a loyal and a disloyal Party, and that the hon. Member for the City of Cork belongs to that which is disloyal? Then, what did the right hon. Gentleman say at Knowsley? A short time afterwards, he turned round to a deputation at Liverpool—a few days after the Corporation had declined to confer its freedom on the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)—with an air which seemed to say—"What a clever man I am; all this is my doing;" and he said—

> "The Corporation of Dublin have been and are the focus of political life in Ireland, and the conduct of national political life in Ireland has been regulated by the condition of that Municipality."

Sir, there never was a day since the Municipality of Dublin has been established that it was as disloyal or as anti-British as it is at the present moment. Then, again, we find the Chief Secretary for Ireland speaking at Galashiels. What did my right hon. Friend say when he went there, not from the toils of the right hon. Gentleman, nor from the purlieus of Downing Street, but fresh from Dublin Castle? What did he say? He said it was only the British Government which stood at that moment between Ireland and civil war. Surely, in a civil war there must be two Parties. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that, if all the people thought alike, there was likely to be civil war between one another? The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that what was then in the mind of the Chief Secretary was this—that if it had not been for the British Government, and the troops at their command, there would have been open civil war between those who were loyal to the British Constitution and those who were disloyal to it. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman declines to admit the existence of these two rival Parties, he declines to acknowledge that which is patent to everybody. I do not believe that the majority of the Irish people are at heart disloyal to the connection with this country; but I believe that what has been passing in Ireland for the last three years has produced a tendency in the Irish people to be hostile to England in the connection with this country; but I also firmly believe that that feeling is only transitory, and that it is only by the action of Her Majesty's Government, by their administration of the law with firmness, by supporting those who are loyal, whatever may be their religious belief, and by encouraging those who are still on the side of order, instead of deluging Ireland with a new class of voters and creating all the excitement which will follow a large enfranchisement, that the people of Ireland are to be won over to the British connection. The right hon. Gentleman said he had no fear of this loyal minority in Ireland. He acknowledged, then, that there was a loyal minority. What is the use of allowing the people to express their wishes and then refusing to carry out those wishes? If by giving the franchise to the cottiers you enable them, as you would under the present state of affairs, to return 80 Members pledged to support the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the Government of the two Kingdoms, how can you venture to say that the English and Scotch Members can recognize any other opinion than that of those who represent the great majority of the Irish people; and how can you do otherwise than give effect to their wishes? If you do not give effect to their wishes, what is the use of giving them votes at all? How are you to give them votes and say at the same time—"If you ask for anything we do not like, we will take care of the interests of the loyal minority and decline to concede what you ask." That is all nonsense. We know what the exigencies of Party are. If the right hon. Gentleman is in power to-morrow, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had a following of 80 Members, the Prime Minister would lose no opportunity of angling for their votes. That has been his settled course ever since he came into power in 1880.

On the whole, the principle which has actuated his policy has been an endeavour to gain the support of hon. Members below the Gangway, and what he has done in the past we may be perfectly convinced he will continue to do in the future. Therefore, I say that when he speaks of a minority in Ireland having the support of the Scotch and English Members, he is speaking behind the question, and is indicating a policy that can never be carried out. Then the right hon. Gentleman talks of equality. You say you are going to put Ireland on perfectly equal terms with England and Scotland; and he commences to produce the equality by taking away a certain number of Members from England, to which England is entitled both by population and taxation, and to confer those Members on Ireland. Has the right hon. Gentleman considered that England, Wales, and Scotland pay taxes from which Ireland is exempt? Are hon. Members aware that there is no Land Tax and no Inhabited House Duty in Ireland, and that there are other taxes which Irishmen do not pay, but which Englishmen and Scotchmen have to pay? If, therefore, you are going to carry into effect the strict equality about which you talk and boast so much, are you prepared to levy the taxes in Ireland which you now demand from the Scotch and English people? If you are not prepared to do so, the equality you desire to have will not exist. I am bound to say that if any Minister were to attempt to raise fresh taxes in Ireland—taxes which were remitted on account of the peculiar circumstances of Ireland—he would be a bold man, and would defeat the very object he had in view. I protest, on the part both of English and Scotch Members, against this kind of equality. We gave a Land Bill to Ireland because the Irish farmer was supposed not to be able to protect his own interests. Everybody that knows the Irish farmer knows that he is a much sharper fellow than the English or Scotch farmer; but these were the grounds on which we passed these Land Bills—namely, that the Irish farmer, owing to circumstances, was unable to take care of himself. And yet what you propose to do is this—you propose to give those people, who you yourselves acknowledge are incapable of taking care of themselves, more Members than their taxation and population deserve. You are going to give them a larger number of votes in order to return an increased number of Members to legislate on English and Scotch affairs, and all this time their country will be under terms of taxation more favourable than either England or Scotland. You cannot, by adding any large number of illiterate men to the electorate of a country, add strength to the Constitution. When I remember the promises and allegations of the Prime Minister in the past, I am almost tempted to ask how his legislation has borne fruit. In his speech on the Motion for leave to bring in the Land Bill of 1870 the Prime Minister said—

> "And my hope, at least, is high and ardent that we shall live to see our work prosper in our hand, and that in that Ireland which we desire to unite to England and Scotland by the only enduring ties, those of free will and free affection, peace, order, and a settled and cheerful industry, will diffuse their blessings from year to year, and from day to day, over a smiling land."—(3 *Hansard*, [199] 387.)

And what did the right hon. Gentleman's Colleague (Mr. John Bright) say on the Motion for the second reading of the Irish Church Bill in 1869? These were his words—

> "I say when I look on this measure I look on it as tending to a more true and solid union between Ireland and Great Britain; I see it giving tranquillity to our people.... I say I see this measure giving tranquillity to our people, greater strength to the realm, and adding a new lustre and a new dignity to the Crown. I dare claim, then, for this Bill the support of all thoughtful and good people within the bounds of the British Empire, and I cannot doubt that in its early and great results it will have the blessing of the Supreme; for I believe it to be founded on those principles of justice and mercy which are the glorious attributes of his eternal reign."—(3 *Hansard*, [194] 1894.)

That is very beautiful language; but when we come to measure it with the actual results of Irish legislation, what empty and frothy verbiage it becomes. Therefore, I say, that in this great question we should be careful how we allow the enthusiasm of the right hon. Gentleman to guide our steps. Now, what did the right hon. Gentleman say in Mid Lothian when he was warned in regard to the condition of Ireland? What did he say with regard to Lord Grey, when Lord Grey foretold exactly what has since happened? The right hon. Gentleman said—"The apprehensions of Lord Grey were the apprehensions of an old woman." I should like to ask this question of the House, who is the old woman now? Certainly it is not Lord Grey. What did the right hon. Gentleman say in his Mid Lothian speeches in regard to the encroachments of Russia towards India? He said—

> "Those who indulge in predictions regarding the encroachments of Russia upon India are simply indulging in the fears of old women."

Who were right? Those who indulged in the predictions of old women, or the right hon. Gentleman? When we, in regard to these great and important matters, have been so wofully and grossly misled by the right hon. Gentleman in the past, I think we should, indeed, hesitate before we follow him into those paths upon which he now invites us to enter. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock has appealed to hon. Members. I appeal also to hon. Members on both sides of the House, having regard to the condition of Ireland and its history during the past six years—a history for which the Liberal Party and Liberal measures have been responsible —I ask them to pause before they embark upon this course. I ask them whether they cannot hold themselves aloof, and use their common sense and pause before they follow the infatuated man who leads them into disgrace abroad and anarchy at home? If they do not do so, and they vote for this Bill, I venture to predict that before five years are past they will bitterly repent the vote they have given; and the people of England will then arrive at the true meaning of the error they committed in 1880, when they declined to listen to the warning of Lord Beaconsfield with regard to Ireland, but once more returned to power the Member for Mid Lothian to complete his work of the disruption of the Union.

Lord EDWARD CAVENDISH said, the noble Lord who had just sat down had told the Committee of the feelings with which he and hon. Members on the opposite side of the House listened to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). He did not know whether he had given a full interpretation of that speech, or whether he reserved a certain portion of it for prudential reasons. On that side of the House there were some who interpreted the meaning of that speech to be that the vote of hon. Members below the Gangway the other night, which, till the last moment, had been kept a secret from the rest of the House, was no secret to the noble Lord and those who sat near him. [An Irish Member: It is utterly untrue.] However that might be, he did not wish to press the argument further, and would only say that they were glad to count the noble Lord on that occasion amongst the adherents and supporters of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. With the permission of the Committee, he wished to express the pleasure he felt that the noble Lord who had just spoken had sufficiently recovered from his indisposition to allow him to take part in the debate. At the same time, he was of opinion that the noble Lord's speech would do no good to the cause they all had at heart—namely, the future peace and prosperity of Ireland. There was much in that speech of the tone of the old ascendancy, and which would do nothing to reconcile the differences existing between the two countries. He felt, as an English Member, that perhaps he ought to apologize to the Committee for taking part in this discussion, which might be regarded as an Irish question; but his excuse must be that he looked upon it as an Imperial question; and he believed that many of the misunderstandings which existed between the two countries were due to the fact that English and Scotch Members had been too much inclined to regard Irish questions from their own point of view, and not as Imperial questions. The principal argument used in the course of the debate against including Ireland in the extension of the franchise was that it would largely add to the number of those Gentlemen who followed the lead of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and thereby enable him to turn the balance of Parties in that House in any way he pleased. The second reason was that the passing of this measure would act as a grave and serious discouragement to the loyal portion of the community in Ireland—to those who remained true to the English connection. On this last point he might say that in every part of England there had been the deepest sympathy with the loyal classes in Ireland; but it was felt that the difficulties in which those classes were placed were due mainly to the hostility of those amongst whom they lived, and that their difficulties would be diminished rather than increased by conferring upon the classes who were not enfranchised the benefits which they themselves enjoyed. With regard to what had been said about increasing the following of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, the real danger and difficulty was not that the hon. Member should have 40, 50, or 100 followers, but the fact that his large majority might not disclose the actual feelings of the Irish people; and therefore he thought the question was one which deserved most serious consideration on the part of every Member of that House. At the same time too much weight ought not to be attributed to considerations of the kind, although it was impossible not to feel that in the next Parliament Parties in the House were likely to be more evenly balanced than they were at that moment. He held that they ought to endeavour to convince the Irish people that there was an honest, sincere, and heartfelt intention on the part of everyone in this country to treat them with perfect justice. The former action on our part had undoubtedly led to a sense of grievance and injustice amongst the Irish people. Unless they gave men what was right and just, they could expect from them nothing but hostility and ingratitude; but he honestly believed that, by making this concession to the Irish people willingly and cheerfully, we might be brought nearer to a happy future. The past had been dark and dismal, but he trusted brighter days were in store; and, these being his views, no power on earth would induce him to give his vote in favour of an Amendment which, if agreed to, would shut out the Irish people from the privileges we were about to confer upon ourselves.

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, he was sorry that the happy accident referred to by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had enabled him to hear a speech from him (Lord Randolph Churchill), which, considering the favourable position he occupied with reference to the obtaining of information on affairs in Ireland, nevertheless contained more inaccuracies, fallacies, and antiquated theories than had often before been uttered by a Member of that House. The noble Lord had adverted to many topics which might as well have been left out of the discussion; for instance, he referred to the action of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and to the difference between the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions. No one more than he (Mr. Tottenham) gave greater credit to the heads of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland for the manner in which they had endeavoured to put down everything in the nature of agitation and outrage; but the noble Lord must remember, or if he did not he ought to be perfectly well aware, that amongst the junior members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy there was not the same spirit which reigned amongst their superiors. He might, at all events, have known that there were Parties other than those in that House in which insubordination existed. Now the noble Lord, amongst other things, had stated as one of the reasons for the illiteracy which prevailed in the lower stratum of society in Ireland that the Irish language was principally spoken in the West. His recollection, however, went back further than the noble Lord's, and certainly that was not his experience. Again, the noble Lord had questioned the figures which had been quoted on this subject; but he believed he should be able to convince him that those figures were absolutely correet. Then the noble Lord went on to say, because Lord Grey passed one of the strongest Coercion Acts ever passed in the country the year after the passing of the Reform Bill that it was a reason why they should follow his example. Passing from the speech of the noble Lord to that of the Prime Minister upon this question, which the right hon. Gentleman said was made out of courtesy to the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket), and not because it was necessary to reply to his arguments—the right hon. Gentleman stated that he could not consider that Ireland was divided into two Parties—namely, a loyal minority and a disloyal majority. Now, the right hon. Gentleman could generally persuade most people to take his view of most things; but he very much doubted whether he could persuade the English people that there were not two Parties in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was a better feeling in Ireland than formerly; but if that were so, what was the reason for these repeated Coercion Acts which had culminated in that Act the most drastic and severe that ever passed the House of

Commons? Again, the right hon. Gentleman argued that because there were 500 or 600 English and Scotch Members of that House they were not likely to be dictated to by the Irish Members who would be returned under the Bill. But that was a false issue to put before the country; the right hon. Gentleman knew well that it was not a question of 70 or 80 Members dictating to 500 others, but of their dictating to the balance between Parties on a Division; he knew what the effect of that must be upon any Party in power; and he knew, further, that either on the old field of Kilmainham or elsewhere it would be necessary to make fresh concessions to that Party to whom he had already so often given way. He (Mr. Tottenham) asked whether it was just to the people of England and to the loyal minority in Ireland that they should be placed in that position, and that instead of endeavouring to curb the power for mischief, which the Party to whom he alluded undoubtedly possessed, the right hon. Gentleman should deliberately place in their hands a weapon which would increase their present power four-fold? As the right hon. Gentleman had said, "It is equal justice which will determine the issue of the conflict," he would draw the attention of the Committee to a few of the component parts of that equality. The present value of rateable agricultural property in Ireland was £11,021,000; it was represented by 166,000 electors, and the Government were about to hand it over to an entirely new class—the 662,000 electors who would be created by the Bill. He failed to see any justice in that proceeding, which entirely obliterated all the capital, intelligence, and property in the Irish counties. These 662,000 electors did not contribute 1*s*. to the rates and taxes of the country, which were paid for them by a section of the existing 166,000 electors, it having been considered in previous legislation that persons in so low a position should not be called upon to pay their quota of public burdens. Yet these were the men that were to be allowed to swallow up the existing electorate by the means he had described. With the single exception of County Dublin, in which the addition to the roll of electors would be two-and-a-half times the existing number, there was no county in Ireland in which the electorate would not be trebled, while in Donegal and in Mayo it would be respectively eight and 12 times what it was at present; or, otherwise expressed, the electorate of Mayo, which was now only 3,080, would be raised by the Bill to 37,660, and that of Donegal, at present numbering 4,484, would be raised to 37,779, a state of things for which no parallel was to be found in any English county that would be brought within the scope of the measure. Looking at this matter from an educational point of view, he asked what was the condition of the citizens whom it was proposed to enfranchise; and whether the Government, or any Member of it who had considered this matter, would lay before the country and the House the real facts of the case? He thought the Committee would be astounded by some of the figures which he proposed to give from the Return of the Registrar General, and which he believed the Committee would think constituted an unanswerable argument against the extension of the franchise in Ireland in the manner proposed. It would be found that the average for the whole of Ireland of those who could read and write was only 59·3. In the counties where the additions to the existing electorate would be specially large the average was lower. Thus it was only 31·8 in Galway, 42 in Donegal, and 30·8 in Mayo, while the Province of Connaught, taken altogether, had only 47·2 who could read and write. Again, how would the matter stand in relation to the supposed secrecy of the Ballot? Why, the figures meant that out of every 100 votes for these counties, 60 per cent would be known to all the persons in the polling-booth, and the same would be the case with regard to Connaught and the whole of Ireland, to the extent of 53 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. He asked those who were responsible for the secrecy of the Ballot whether they were not stultifying themselves by supporting this measure? Then there were 64,000 persons who could only speak the Irish language, and who would further require an interpreter between them and the presiding officer. The Returns showed that at the Election of 1880 there were 5,312 illiterate votes recorded; but the Government were now going to take in the whole class in which illiteracy existed. The result would be that, instead of 1 in 47, there would be 40 in every 100 whose votes would be known in every polling booth. Was there any justice in that—taking the voting power away from the educated people, and giving it to people who could not read the names of those they were taken to support? Now, what were the class, and the residences, and the surroundings of these people? The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had already adverted to this subject, and he agreed with the noble Lord entirely in the sentiment that it did not follow that because a man lived in a mud cabin, or in one or two rooms, he should therefore invariably be unfit to exercise the franchise; but when they found such an enormous preponderance of those who were the lowest in the social scale, they were bound to come to the conclusion that they should not be allowed entirely to swamp those who were educated and were in a higher social position. He did not think they were aware of the extent to which houses or cabins of this sort existed in Ireland. From the Registrar General's Returns it would be found that no less than 40,665 of the proposed electors lived in mud cabins of one room, and that 376,165 lived in cabins of the same sort, but of more than one room. He maintained that these were hardly the circumstances and social surroundings which capable and independent citizens who were to be intrusted with the franchise should have. In 1867, on the 1st of August, when the Reform Bill was introduced, or when the second reading came on in the Upper House, the late Lord Derby used these words—

> "In considering the wants of enfranchisement, we took into consideration, not only great counties and great towns, but the due distribution of representation among the manufacturing, commercial, and landed interests."—(3 *Hansard*, [189] 540.)

That was an intelligible principle; but what was there analogous to that in the proposal now before Parliament? They were sweeping away the whole of those interests by the predominating power which they proposed to place entirely in the hands of one class, and that class the one which had, in many instances, proved itself the least competent to possess it. He wished he could close the list of electoral disabilities here; but there was another element to be considered even if any justification had been shown for this total and entirely arbitrary transfer of power. Given on both sides of the Channel equal conditions, he would admit that it would be hard to justify the proposition that Ireland should be denied what was given to England; but, given on one side loyalty and attachment to the Queen and the country, and given on the other side disloyalty and intended dismemberment of the Empire, little short of absolute recklessness and insanity could possibly prompt a policy of aiding and abetting this disloyalty, and making these people the sole depositories of political power. In this case the loyal minority would be reduced to absolute silence, and the disloyal majority would be invested with undisputed sway. Was it necessary to recall to the recollection of the Committee the state of two of the counties to which he had already referred, and which had been more or less distinguished for outrages during the past two years? The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had referred to them as being among the most peaceable and well-behaved counties in Ireland; but after the Papers presented and the statements made in that House, he should really think the noble Lord must have been wilfully deaf to all he had heard, or had shut his eyes to the facts presented to that House. One of those counties in particular was the hot-bed and birth-place of the crime and outrages which had disgraced the country; and to this it was now proposed to give a greater extension of electoral privileges than to any other district—and for what? To enable them with redoubled force to prosecute that agitation which their experience of the present Government had taught them could only be too successful in the hands of unscrupulous men. The Prime Minister had stated that he was not a flatterer of Gentlemen from Ireland below the Gangway, and he accused the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) of being their flatterer. Why? Because he called a spade a spade, and unmasked the fallacies and false issues put before the House and the country by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and other Members of the Government, by which they endeavoured to mislead both the House and the country. His right hon. and learned Friend showed up the naked facts in an unanswerable manner; and he would ask any unprejudiced listener who heard the speech of the Prime Minister, and saw the glances and blandishments he lavished upon that quarter of the House, and particularly when he stated that Ireland was fairly entitled to more than her numerical proportion of representation, and that she should gain it at the expense of this country, to say who was the flatterer. The Prime Minister, in a sketch of redistribution which he laid before the House, informed Members from Ireland that the number of Members from Ireland ought not, in any case, to be reduced, but that the number of Members for the Southern boroughs of England ought to be reduced and made use of for the benefit of Scotland and the North of England. If that was not practically telling Ireland that she was to obtain more than her proper numerical representation at the expense of England, he failed to understand the English language. Who was the flatterer then? Was a more undisguised or more unblushing attempt to gain the vote of a particular section of the House ever made by the right hon. Gentleman, or by anyone else, during his long career? The Chief Secretary had compared the present proposal with the principal feature of the Bill of 1868, which reduced the borough franchise from £8 to £4; and he argued that because that was done during the existence of a Coercion Act, the same thing might be safely and fairly done now. But what was the effect of that Bill? It had the effect of adding 15,000 electors to the whole electorate of Ireland, or about 10 per cent. Surely that was a very different proposal from that now before the House, by which they were about to add 300 per cent of the class who had principally brought about the necessity for a Coercion Act? The Chief Secretary further said that those people had yet to be proved to be bad citizens. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in his experience, they had proved themselves to be good citizens? He had also said a large class would be won over to the side of the law who were at that moment outside the law. If the right hon. Gentleman seriously believed that that would be the case, all he could say was that his credulity had been more imposed upon than he could ever have believed possible during his tenure of Office for two years in Ireland. In his opinion, the sum of the whole matter was this—the proposition was to transfer the representation of Ireland from those who had a stake in the country to those who had none—to the poverty-stricken; from those who had education and intelligence to those who were illiterate and ignorant; from those who had some little social status to those who were in the lowest scale in that respect; from the remnant of those who had been loyal to their Queen and their country to the disloyal and the turbulent. He would not be misunderstood by the loyal people of Ireland in regard to his opposition to the Bill and his support of the Amendment. There would, no doubt, be a small proportion of loyal men who would not be enfranchised if the Amendment was carried; but they would know that it was in their interest that it should be so, and that what had been done was solely to prevent their coming under the domination of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his following. There was a view of the question touched upon by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket), and that was, the possible relations between this proposed change and the hoped-for change in the relations between England and Ireland which underlay every act and motion of the Party who called themselves the National Party. The Prime Minister had been well reminded that he could persuade himself of almost anything. Had he persuaded himself that he was not placing the trump card in his adversaries' hands, and, in fact, saving them the trouble of playing the game? To anyone who knew anything about the country, and was not blindly reckless of the consequences, a more disastrous policy than this could not be conceived. He could not attempt to emulate the eloquent language of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket) in the way in which he put the issue before the Committee; but he implored the Committee to pause before they gave their assent to a proposition fraught with the most grave and perilous consequences to the honour and dignity of Parliament, and to such a vital blow as this must necessarily be to the integrity and unity of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he was anxious, as one of the loyal Irish Members, to say a few words, before the debate closed, upon the speech of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Claud Hamilton). He would say, as one of the loyal minority, that they would be able, in Ulster, to take care of themselves in the future as they had in the past; and he believed that when the crisis came in Ireland, under this Franchise Bill they would not be without their fair representation in that House. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had spoken of the Government angling for the Irish vote. If his recollection served him aright, he was not aware that the Government during the last three or four years had ever received the Irish vote on any crucial occasion, when their existence was at stake; and he thought that angling for the Irish vote might be very well left to hon. Gentlemen opposite. With regard to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the Committee had had an opportunity of comparing the broad and generous sentiments uttered byan English Conservative with the narrow and bigoted speeches of Irish Tories, who, with the exception of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket), never in that House uttered one generous sentiment with regard to their fellow-countrymen. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock said he objected to an extension of the franchise principally on account of the danger of increasing the electorate in towns in Ireland. What were the facts? In Ulster, every borough but one—namely, that represented by his (Mr. Dickson's) son (Dungannon), was in the hands of the Tory Party; so that in that Province a £4 franchise returned all Tory Members, while the Liberal representation was confined to the counties upon a £12 franchise. Why should Ulster Conservatives, therefore, object to a reduction of the franchise? The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had effectually disposed of the cry about mud cabins; and he hoped it would not again be referred to in that House. The mud cabins in Ireland were in many cases very comfortable dwellings, and the occupants were not less qualified to exercise the franchise than the dwellers in the foul slums of Liverpool, Birmingham, and London. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had asked the Committee to look at this question of the extension of the franchise straight in the face. He would ask the Committee to do the same thing, and to consider for a moment the disastrous results that would follow upon refusing to Ireland equality with England and Scotland. That was a refusal which would scatter broadcast in Ireland the seeds of discontent, and which would yield in the future, as in the past, a harvest of disaffection and crime. He was anxious to see the Union between the two countries continued and more firmly established; but the enemies of the Union in that House were the men who would seek to deprive Ireland of the franchise and place her in a position of inequality to England. After the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, he had every confidence that the opposition of the Conservatives would cease; for he believed that in the country the Conservative Party would endorse the policy announced by the noble Lord, that Ireland should be placed in a position of political equality with England and Scotland.

MR. CHAPLIN: The hon. Member who has just spoken drew a comparison between what he called the conduct of a bigoted Irish Tory on the one hand, and a generous English Conservative on the other. I am not able altogether to share the hon. Member's estimate of the generous English Conservative in this case; and I desire to make one or two comments upon the speech which was delivered by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) this afternoon. Unfortunately, I was not in the House when the opening of that speech was made; but I listened with the closest attention to the greater part, which was remarkable in itself, and will, I think, be known hereafter as memorable in the extreme. The noble Lord has recently achieved, by the display of rare political qualities, a very considerable, and even a great position among the statesmen and politicians of this country; but there is one quality—namely, that of political consistency, for which I cannot help thinking the noble Lord, in his speech he has made this afternoon, will not have much enhanced his reputation. The noble Lord dealt with the question of mud cabins at considerable length; and, passing from that, he alluded to the charges of ignorance made against the Irish people; and then he proceeded to give his reasons in answer to the argument which had been used with respect to Protestant minorities; and he finally arrived at the conclusion that it would be his duty on this occasion to press Conservative Members on this side of the House not to persevere with their opposition to the extension of the suffrage in Ireland. But there was one question with which the noble Lord did not deal at all, and that is the question which has been pointed out over and over again in this House, and also by the noble Lord himself, as constituting the great danger we have to deal with in connection with this question, and it is a danger which I venture to think has occupied the attention of hon. Members on both sides of the House, and of a vast number not only of Conservatives, but of Liberals, for months past—namely, the enormous addition to the force of the Separatist Party which will be made by this Bill. That, I think, is the real danger we have to deal with and to face; and so strongly is it felt, that not only was it spoken of by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War during the Recess, but his noble Relative (Lord Edward Cavendish), this afternoon, has also alluded to the question, although he came to a different conclusion. But I must say I am not altogether surprised at the entire and complete avoidance of this subject in the noble Lord's speech, because I recollect being amazingly struck by one of the most able speeches I ever read, and which was delivered by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock during the Recess on this particular question. Well, recollecting some of the sentiments which fell from him on that occasion, I was greatly surprised at the speech he has now delivered; and I have taken an opportunity of refreshing my memory in the Library with regard to the contents of that speech during the Recess. I am sure the noble Lord will excuse me if I mention the statements he made at that time. He had been speaking of the probable number of adherents with which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would return to Parliament under any circumstances after a General Election. He put the number at 60 or 70; and he said—

> "If you lower the franchise in Ireland to the same level as the Government propose for England and Scotland, if you establish household suffrage in town and country all over Ireland, Mr. Parnell will have a working Party in the House of 100 Members; and this Party, be it 70, be it 100, will continue to proclaim, with increasing and resounding chorus, that the first and the last, the greatest and the least, of their demands is the repeal of the Union. Now, I say that is a serious state of things in time of peace; it would be a perilous state of things in time of war."

I am reading exactly what the noble Lord said, and I cannot be a willing or a consenting party to this alarming and perilous state of things which he describes in these words. A little later on the noble Lord proceeds to say—

> "I do not say we are on the high road to losing Ireland; but I say this—that we are in sight of the entrance to the high road that will lead to the loss of Ireland."

And, finally, he concluded with advice to the Conservative Party, which, I must say, appeared to me to be exactly opposite to that which he has given his Conservative Friends this afternoon, for he said—

> "It is time—it is high time—to pull up. Concede nothing more to Mr. Parnell, either on the land, or on the franchise, or on local self-government."

Now, I must say I think I was justified in some of the astonishment I felt when I saw the noble Lord, with these words fresh in my recollection, turn round to my hon. Friend, and appeal to him to make the concession to the hon. Member for the City of Cork and to the House, which is demanded by the Government. I do not wish to deal with this matter in any way but a way which will be considered good-humoured. I am in some difficulty as to how to describe the matter, but I think the noble Lord himself has helped me out of the difficulty; and if I could cull a few flowers from his rhetoric I should call it "emancipation from an antiquated past." But the antiquated past in this case dates only from December last, and I hope that in the future these conversions of the noble Lord will be somewhat less sudden, and the past somewhat more antiquated than it has been in this cause. The noble Lord the Member for North Derbyshire (Lord Edward Cavendish) addressed us this afternoon—I think for the first time he has taken any part in this question. I confess I would much rather have heard the sentiments of his noble Relative who sits on the Front Treasury Bench. That noble Marquess has been repeatedly challenged in this House to explain to Parliament the statements upon this question which he has repeatedly made in the country; but upon every one of these occasions he has remained silent, and has never had the courage to get up in this House and justify his position in the House of Commons at the present time. I must say that when a distinguished statesman like the noble Marquess, who was but lately the Leader of the Liberal Party in this House, is repeatedly challenged to make good before the House of Commons statements he has made in the country—or, at all events, to explain his reasons for departing so completely from them, and remains utterly silent in respect to challenges, there is only one conclusion which the country can place upon it. It has been stated over and over again—I think even this afternoon it has been referred to—that the noble Marquess declared that the extension of the franchise—or, at all events, that was the only possible inference to be drawn from his language—to Ireland at the present time, and in the present condition of that country, would be nothing short of absolute madness. I believe in saying that the noble Marquess accurately described the position as regards the country; but what is the position as regards the House of Commons? We have all seen the effect which the determined action of 30 united Members has had in paralyzing the Business in this House. I cannot complain of the Irish Members, for they have been perfectly frank from the first, and have openly avowed that the great object and aim they have is to bring about a separation between England and Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] A declaration was made the other day by the hon. Member for the City of Cork that national independence of Ireland was the goal he had in view; and how Ireland is to have national independence without separation I am at a loss to conceive. But what would be the position of the House? When you have had difficulties from the presence of 30 determined Irish Members, when you have had your Business paralyzed, and your Rules altered, and the House of Commons rendered practically powerless to deal with manifold and important subjects put before it, what will be then your position? Will it be better, or will it be infinitely worse, when you are confronted with 100 determined men, following the same Leader, and for the same purpose and object? A great danger which the country will have to face in future, and it is the greatest danger which I foresee, is this—that the time will arrive when we shall have evenly balanced Parties sitting opposite to each other in the House of Commons, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork, with 100 men behind him, will be able to balance the scales. As illustrative of the fear which I entertain, and of the difficulties which I foresee, I would like to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, or to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Can they govern Ireland now without the Prevention of Crime Act? Will any Member of the Government get up in his place and say they are able, consistently with their duty to the country and the Queen, to govern Ireland at the present time without coercion? Have they any reasonable hope that they will be able to govern Ireland next year without coercion? In the face of all the recent dynamite discoveries, of the serious gravity and importance of which I suspect the Government are more aware than any Member of the House, they must, indeed, be sanguine, if that is their opinion. If they cannot govern Ireland without coercion, I ask them how they are going to renew the Coercion Act, supposing this Bill is passed, and the Party of the hon. Member for the City of Cork receives large additions to its strength? You remember what occurred on the last occasion, when there were only 30 Members opposed to you. Even then the passing of the Coercion Act was only effected by a *coup d'état*, which the right hon. Gentleman himself was the first to say must never occur again. Does he think that the position will be made much easier or facilitated by trebling the number of the supporters the hon. Member for the City of Cork commanded at that time? I assume that we shall be told by Her Majesty's Government that this Amendment, if carried, will be fatal to the Bill; that, I understand, is the view which the Government take on this question. I have held, from the first, that the present condition of Ireland affords a complete justification, not for separating, not for placing Ireland on a footing of inequality from England or Scotland, but for postponing the consideration of this question altogether. As I understand that this Amendment, if carried, would be fatal to the Bill, the end and object which I have in view would be accomplished by the adoption of the Amendment; and I shall, therefore, give my hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick) my most hearty support.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) had suggested that any hon. Member who took a line in favour of the view which had been expressed by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) might be wanting in honesty and straightforwardness. The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) carried the matter a little further, because he suggested that any person who took the same view as the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock would be guilty of recklessness or insanity. It was a little dangerous for hon. Members to speak so strongly upon a matter on which they could not feel that the whole of their Party were agreed; and they might well take a lesson from a very wise remark that he remembered had once been made to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), as to the course he pursued on the Irish Land Bill, that it was scarcely to be expected that he would take a very strong line when so many of his own political Friends took a directly opposite view. It would be well that those hon. Members who happened to take a strong view upon this part of the Franchise Bill should, at any rate, allow that it was possible that some persons who thought and voted with them upon most political subjects might take an opposite view. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) spoke of the Conservative Party as being pledged to a certain view upon the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). Now, whatever might have been the inconsistency of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, as put forth by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), the noble Lord was quite capable of clearing himself from any charge of inconsistency. The noble Lord made no secret of his change of opinion, as, indeed, during the autumn, he had openly put forward a different view to that which he entertained at present. He (Mr. Staveley Hill) gladly welcomed the change of view which the noble Lord had adopted. He had always said that though the state of Ireland at present might be a sufficient reason for postponing the Bill; though it might be well to wait until there was that pacific condition of Ireland to which he hoped events were leading; though it might be well to wait for a happier state of things before they gave the Irish people that right to which citizens of this country were entitled; yet if the condition of Ireland be not held to be a sufficient ground for the delay of the Franchise Bill, it could only be justice that that which Parliament gave to England they should also give to Ireland. It could be the only means which Parliament had of saying to the people of Ireland—"You may seek to separate yourselves from us if you will; you may enter into illegal combinations; but that will be no reason why we shall do anything which savours of injustice towards you or any part of your citizens." What was it that was said against the extension of the francise to Ireland? The mud-cabin argument was, to his mind, the lowest argument that could be used. Surely the majority of the House did not contend that because a man did not live in a good house he was unfit to exercise the franchise? Why, it was patent to everybody that the man who lived in a good house might be a fool, while the man who lived in a mud cabin might be just the reverse. It was said it would be dangerous to sanction the proposed extension of the franchise because the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) might have a larger following than he had at present. All he (Mr. Staveley Hill) could say was—"Be just and fear not." Let the hon. Member for the City of Cork come into the next Parliament—an event which he (Mr. Staveley Hill) hoped was not far distant—and let him come, if he could, accompanied by 80 or 100 Members. Let those Members, however, be elected by the larger constituencies; let them come to the House of Commons and be able to say—"It is not simply the vote of the farmer we represent; but it is also the vote of the labourer." If they could come to the House and say that, their opinions would be entitled to far more weight than they were at present. He, for one, did not believe any harm would result from the extension of the franchise to Ireland. He believed that when the Irish Members felt that justice had been conceded to them it would be found that they were not so obstructive in the government of the Kingdom; it would be found that they would take a far greater interest in the affairs appertaining to the welfare of the Empire. At any rate, let Parliament give them the chance of doing so; because what did such an argument amount to if it was pursued to the end? It was said they ought not to extend the franchise to Ireland, because a greater number of Members holding the views now held by the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his followers would be returned. But if that argument was good for anything they ought to go further and say—"We will disfranchise Ireland altogether." It was conceded that what was described as an equally bad result would follow an Election by the present constituencies. If they were not prepared to disfranchise Ireland, why not give her the full measure of the franchise which they claimed for England and Scotland? He had no great love for the Bill at the present time; but he felt that if they altered their electoral power in one part they must alter it in the whole. When, however, they came to the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley), or to that of the hon. Gentleman oppposite (Mr. A. Grey), it should have his (Mr. Staveley Hill's) support, because he agreed that the Bill should be delayed until the introduction of the Redistribution of Seats Bill. But the non-introduction of the Redistribution Bill was no reason why, if this Bill should be passed, an act of injustice should be done to Ireland. They must be just to the Irish people; they must give them that franchise which was claimed for English citizens; and they must trust that that franchise would be well and properly used.

Mr. EWART said, it was his intention to support the Amendment, because he did not share the optimist views which had been expressed by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. He considered that at the present time Ireland was in a state of veiled rebellion. It was true there was a large diminution in the number of outrages—the "Boycotters" and the "Invincibles" had suspended their operations—but he attributed the cause to the very extraordinary power which the Government possessed in the Coercion Act, and not to any change in the opinions or views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) or of the people of Ireland. Now, this Bill would, according to the hon. Member's (Mr. Parnell's) own admission, add very much to his power. The hon. Member had a great object in the passing of the Bill, hence the attitude towards the Bill which he had adopted. The hon. Member had not in the slightest degree modified his demand for a separate Legislature, for his latest utterances upon that question were as strong as those of any previous time. A separate Legislature for Ireland meant nothing more than a repeal of the Union; and if hon. Gentlemen opposite seriously considered the matter they must arrive at the same conclusion. If, however, they had any difficulty in arriving at that conclusion, he referred them to a recent declaration of Lord Derby's, who had said that if Ireland were granted a separate Legislature there would certainly be a repeal of the Union before many years were over. This Bill, if passed into law, would be the greatest possible discouragement to the loyal people of Ireland, while it would be the greatest possible encouragement to the disloyal portion of the community. It would practically disfranchise the loyal people of Ireland. He wished his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had given some details of the method in which the loyal people of Ireland would in future be secured in anything like a fair representation. The Return relating to the number and value of houses in Ireland threw a flood of light upon the question. In round numbers there were now 230,000 electors, but it was proposed to increase them to 730,000. The new voters would be of a class very much inferior to the old voters, in education, in intelligence, and in independence. The Irish constituencies, on the whole, would be very much inferior to those of England and Scotland. In Ireland, unfortunately, the middle class formed a very small proportion of the community, so that the whole preponderance of political power was to be given to those who were wanting in the important qualifications to which he had just referred. He should be sorry to see, even in Great Britain, supreme control in political affairs given to one class without some check or counterpoise, which this Bill did not propose. It was generally agreed that to give all the power to one class was highly dangerous to the State. If it was unwise to give unchecked power to the lower classes in Great Britain, how much more unwise would it be to give absolute power to the lower classes in Ireland, a large proportion of whom would be entirely in the hands of the demagogues? They would have no less than 80 or 90 Members following the hon. Member for the City of Cork, or if they were to take the opinion of that "eminent" Irishman and ex-head centre, Mr. Stephen, they would have returned to the House of Commons Members holding even more extravagant views than the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork held. Members would be returned who would be pledged to the dismemberment of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had spoken of the moderate views of the hon. Gentleman the Member for County Cork (Mr. Shaw); but he (Mr. Ewart) very much feared that if this Bill passed his hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw) would not be found in the next Parliament. What was it the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) said on the subject? Speaking at Manchester recently, the hon. Gentleman said—

> "His Party would come back to the House of Commons strengthened in numbers by probably 30 or 40. They would then be so strong that they would turn the balance in whichever way they thought right, and it would not be possible for any Ministry to remain long in power, unless they suited the Irish Parliamentary Party. When that time came they would hold the fate of English Ministries and political Parties in their hands."

Was that a state of things which hon. Gentlemen opposite would like to see? Was that a state of things which would tend to good, useful, and honest legislation? He fully admitted that there were great objections to omitting Ireland from the Bill; but such arguments were unanswerable against proceeding with the Bill at the present time. If the Leaders of the Irish Party laid down their arms the case might be different; but even then the Bill ought not to be passed without some good scheme for the representation of minorities. Without some such scheme the loyal people of Ireland would be practically disfranchised. Those people formed a third of the population, and they comprised the intelligence, the industry, and the wealth of the country. There were wanting in this Bill clauses dealing with the redistribution of seats in Ireland, and with the number of Members Ireland should have. He protested against the measure, because it would work nothing short of a revolution. In the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), "this Bill would be the greatest change in the law since the Revolution of 1688;" it transferred power from those who now had it to those who had it not, and it contained proposals with regard to Ireland which were received with great concern by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). The opinions of those Gentlemen were entitled to the greatest weight. The words of the noble Marquess were particularly weighty from the fact that he once held the Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland. Other opportunities would probably be afforded of speaking on this question; but he (Mr. Ewart) felt bound to protest now, in the name of the largest constituency in Ireland, against this very dangerous measure.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, that when the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) introduced his Motion some days ago, hon. Members were in great expectation that something like the opinion of the House would be taken on what was really the main principle of the Bill. Undoubtedly the main principle of the measure was the extension of the franchise to Ireland, because it was well known that if Ireland were excluded from the benefit of the Bill, the Bill must fall to the ground. But the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, notwithstanding his great gallantry in debate, declined to go to the Division which was open to him, and therefore, it was that the question was brought on again on Friday last after comparatively little notice. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had incurred the displeasure of some hon. Members because he had the courage of his opinions; although some of his opinions had been recently formed he had had the courage to express them. Many other hon. Members had changed their opinions, although they did not always make the fact known. When the Bill was introduced it was believed by some hon. Gentlemen that it would enormously magnify the power of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) believed it might increase his hon. Friend's power to some extent; but he ventured to say that nothing could be more unwise than the policy which the Irish Conservative landlords were pursuing in denying the extension of the franchise to the labouring classes, confined, as it now was, most exclusively to the tenant farmers. All that could be said against the Bill, so far as Ireland was concerned, had been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). Now, that right hon. and learned Gentleman addressed the Committee in a speech of great power; but there was this defect in that speech—that he indulged very largely in prophecy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman placed before the Committee some statistics which were taken from a Return prepared for "another place." He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) accepted those statistics as a valuable contribution to the knowledge of the House; but what did they prove? That there was a large class of householders, or, if they preferred the phrase, hovel-holders, who were without political significance and without the franchise, and who had no mode of expressing their opinions to those who had the franchise, except by outward demonstrations which did not always contribute to the maintenance of peace and order. When men were enfranchised they at once had more self-respect; each man was capable of taking care of himself, and would proceed to give judgment upon those who solicited his vote. What evidence had been adduced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, or by those who thought with him, to show that the class it was proposed to enfranchise were likely to be less safe or less appreciative of the importance of questions brought before them than the class which had now almost exclusive possession of the franchise, at least in the counties of Ireland? The right hon. and learned Gentleman said it was proposed by Her Majesty's Government to give the franchise to these people as a right, and he argued that the franchise was not a right. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) admitted that people did not possess the franchise as a right; but that admission applied equally to the franchise that already existed. The classes now enfranchised were originally unenfranchised; they had no actual right to the franchise until Parliament conferred it upon them. He did not think the Committee had anything to fear from the proposed extension of the franchise to the Irish labourers. They were the least dangerous and least criminal class in Ireland. He ventured to say that the cottiers, or hovel-occupiers, as they had been so described, contributed, in proportion to their numbers, the smallest number of criminals of any class in the country. As a matter of fact, it would be found, upon an analysis of the criminal statistics, that the criminals in the country were furnished by the classes who had no habitations of their own which would entitle them to the franchise under this Bill. Now, as to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) returning to the House after the next General Election with a greater number of followers, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) did not hesitate to say that his hon. Friend would return to the House with a maximum number of followers with no extension of the franchise. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had put forth no logical arguments against the inclusion of Ireland in this Bill; but he had drawn, from his own imagination, a series of pictures to scare them, which reminded him (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) of the shadowy Kings in Macbeth. The right hon. and learned Gentleman asked the Committee to believe that because he made prophecies they were certain to come to pass. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the main object for which those whom he called the Separatist Members would use the powers they would get under the Bill would be to break up the United Kingdom. The right hon. and learned Gentleman chose to assume the entire argument and case by speaking of Separatist Members. Now, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) knew as much about the Home Rule Members and those whom the right hon. and learned Gentleman had styled separatist Members as the right hon. and learned Gentleman could possibly do, and he could state that there was no more foundation for the use of the term Separatists than if the right hon. and learned Member were to call them Mormons. The right hon. and learned Gentleman went on to say that "they proposed to sweep away by this Bill the innocent and harmless Home Rulers, if there were any such," and thereby to increase the number of the dangerous and disloyal section which was virtually seeking for separation. This statement was one which he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) utterly and completely rejected. Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman believe that the Irish Members were fools, and that while they sought the advantages of autonomy they did not also see the further advantage that would accrue to them by being subjects on equal terms of a great Empire which had influence and power and patronage in every quarter of the globe? There was nothing which appeared to him so inconsequential as the reasons assigned by those who argued that Home Rule meant Separation. He confidently asserted that it meant nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it meant the very opposite; and he would unhesitatingly say, whatever effect the statement might produce on his constituents, that the great object he had in view in attaching himself to the Home Rule Party was that he desired sincerely the consolidation of the Empire which he believed it would be the best possible means of effecting. Hon. Members might receive this statement very coldly, and, perhaps, incredulously; but if he had time he could cite abundance of examples to show why such was really the case. He would, however, ask the Committee what accession of territory did Austria gain when there was a forced Union between Austria and Hungary? While, on the other hand, when there was Union founded since Sadowa on Home Rule for Hungary, did they not extend their influence and territory in the East? Was it not the case that when that real Union was wanting Austria lost a portion of her Dominions, because the brother-in-arms who helped her to quell or put an end to the French-Italian War robbed her, or, at any rate, dispossessed her, of the remainder of her Italian Possessions? And what, he asked, was the reason of this? Was it not because he had three or four regiments of Hungarians behind him at Sadowa? He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna), for one, was a strong Unionist in the sense of desiring to maintain the union of the various portions of this great Empire; and he believed it was as great a slander to say that the Irish Members were Separatists as it would be to say that the autonomies at the present moment enjoyed by Canada, New Zealand, and Australia were being used for the purpose of obtaining separation. He wished now to say a few words with the view of reminding the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin that assertion was not prophecy, and that he had better abandon it for the future, and forget it as regarded the past. On the 15th of January in the year 1800, an ancestor of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, speaking of the measures then taken for bringing about a Union, under the Administration of Lord Camden, used these words—and he would ask right hon. Gentlemen on both the Front Benches of that House to bear them in mind. The ancestor of the right hon. and learned Gentleman said—

> "During the Administration of that nobleman (Lord Camden), the most extensive, deep, well planned, and wicked conspiracy that ever a nation escaped was hatched, matured, and prepared to burst upon the country. It was detected in all its parts and published in all its details, and the energies of the nation called out to resist it by the vigilance, information, and resources of a resident Irish Parliament."

Then he went on to say—

> "If this wicked plot of Union (that was to say, the plot of the Union as carried out in 1800) had then been effected, our Parliament at Westminster and every vestige of British connection would have been swept off the face of the land."

And yet, in the face of these views, the grandson, or great grandson, of that noble Lord (Lord Plunket) came to that House and spoke as if Ireland had no past whatever—as if she had had no connection whatever with the past history of this Empire. The fact was that the loyalty of Ireland to the Empire had been proved on many a bloody field when the loyalty of the English was doubtful, and the loyalty of the Scotch was gone. He would also venture to say that if the present Dynasty should in any emergency require soldiers for its defence, it would be found—and not the less if Home Rule were in the meantime conceded—that, in proportion to the population of the Three Kingdoms, the best and the bravest of its upholders—or, at any rate, men equally as good and brave as any in the other portions of the Empire—would not only be found in Ireland, but in numbers relatively greater than the other countries would furnish.

Mr. MACARTNEY (who rose amid cries of "Oh, oh!") said, he did not intend to occupy the time of the Committee at any length; but notwithstanding the outcries with which his rising had been received by the Party on the Benches below him, he desired to deliver his opinion as one of the loyal Irishmen of the North. He was well aware that they were looked upon with very much of what he might term detestation by what was called the great body of the people of Ireland, and he was also conscious of the fact that they were also regarded with very great contempt by hon. Members who represented the Radical Party on the opposite side of the House. Moreover, he knew that they were looked upon with very little favour by hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Benches immediately behind Her Majesty's Government; and he was sorry also to be obliged to add that they had frequently been looked on with very little encouragement and even with a certain amount of distrust by certain Members of their own Party. Only on that very afternoon they had had two examples of the truth of what he had just asserted. He was not present in the House when the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) was delivered; but he had had the opportunity of listening to the speech recently made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), and he regretted, from what the hon. and learned Gentleman had led them to understand by that speech, that the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had seen fit to change his opinion within the last few months on the subject now being debated. He must say that he thought the opinions first expressed by the noble Lord on that subject were better than his last, and he hoped that the indications given in the speech of the noble Lord would not prove, in regard to his own career, a forecast of anything similar to that which had occurred in the career of his great ancestor who had supported one side apparently with the greatest firmness, while at the same time he was carrying on communications with and receiving encouragement from the other. He knew that the noble Lord had been on very intimate and friendly terms with Gentlemen who represented the party of disorder in Ireland; but he did not know that they had been able so far to prevail on the noble Lord's better understanding as to persuade him that it was his lot to offer a sop to Cerberus, as well as of the Prime Minister. Having said so much with regard to that particular point, he now desired to state what, in his opinion, were the facts before them at the present moment in Ireland. By "them" he meant the Loyalists. When the Loyalists were spoken of in that House, hon. Gentlemen on the Benches below him were very fond of claiming to be assumed to be counted among them. But he thought that those who were opposed to the Constitution of the country as it at present existed and to the connection which subsisted between the two countries—those who objected to the "crown" being put on the "green flag" along with the "harp," and who had recently made themselves notorious by their opposition to the name of the Monarch of the country being used in connection with the great Exhibition in Ireland, the result of which had been that in the late Exhibition at Cork those who represented the Loyalists were afraid to put forward the name of the Sovereign, and, therefore, on that occasion, for the purpose of securing unanimity, had refrained from doing so—could hardly be considered as being very ardent Loyalists. The position which they, the Loyalists, occupied was this. The proportions of the Irish population had been stated over and over again. They were represented as closely as possible by 79 as against 26—that was to say, there were in Ireland 79 Roman Catholics to every 26 Protestants. This was as close an approximation as they could make.

Well, this would give the Loyalists, if they were properly represented—and in this estimate he included Liberals as well as Conservatives—26 Members. Would anything like such a result be secured under the present Bill? Was it at all probable that under this measure they would have anything approaching to 26 Representatives? It should be remembered that these 26 Members would represent in a great measure the education and intelligence—he would not say the lower classes were not intelligent, for he knew that they were extremely so—but he meant the elevated intelligence of the Irish people—the intelligence of those engaged in matters connected with the commercial interests of the country, and who had in a great measure made Ireland what she was. He referred to those who had adhered to this country through weal and through woe—those who had shed their blood like water in defence of the connection between England and Ireland—those who had fought — though Irishmen always fought in every rank—but who had fought as leaders of the loyal Irish in the battles of byegone days. And here he would ask, had the Party below the Gangway on that side of the House ever been the leaders of the armed hosts of Great Britain in India, in America, in the Colonies, or in any part of the world? The answer was "No." The men who had been distinguished as military men on the side espoused by that Party had always been found in the Armies of France, Germany, and Spain, and among those invading forces that had made their way into Ireland when there was a disconnection of the two countries. He would not speak of the loyal Representatives of Ireland in long past times; but he would remind the Committee of the period that had elapsed from the days of Wellington to those of Roberts and Wolseley, and ask whether Ireland had not in the interval between those Generals sent forth a galaxy of heroes of whom any and every country might well be proud? Then, again, they had had in another walk of life men like Goldsmith, Burke, and Swift; while the only really illustrious author the other side could lay claim to was Moore. He put it that in such men was evidenced the intelligence of the country and its real intellectual strength. What, he asked, would be the result if that intelligence were deprived of its representation? Because such would, no doubt, be the consequence if this Bill were carried in its present form. The result would be that the only constituencies which would return Representatives like those hon. Members opposite who sat on the Benches behind Her Majesty's Government or who sat on the same Benches as himself would be such as Belfast, the University of Dublin, and the counties of Down, Antrim, and Derry; and that would be the end of it. Everywhere else there was a majority of Roman Catholics; and though he was not fond of saying anything against the Roman Catholics, he felt that in mentioning them he was speaking of a body of men who were ready to vote at the bidding either of the priests, or of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), or of any other agitator who might assume his position and who might go further than he—for the more immoderate the Leader of Irish agitation, and the more anxious he might be to upset everything, the more ready would the majority of which he was speaking be to give him their support and approval. If, therefore, another man should assume the place now occupied by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and should try even to extend the present agitation, he would have the same sympathy as was now accorded to that hon. Gentleman. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He was speaking to the Question. The hon. Member below him who had spoken a short time since (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had dilated on the extreme loyalty of the Irish people, and he (Mr. Macartney) had a right to give his opinion on that subject. What he desired to say was this—that in all probability—for it was not only possible, but he thought it very probable—out of 105 Members whom the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister thought it absolutely necessary to assign to Ireland, notwithstanding that she had no right to that number, and who exactly represented those who were either Liberals or Conservatives in that House, no fewer than 95 would be returned as the Representatives of the so-called Irish National Party in Parliament. He had called it the so-called National Party advisedly; for when it was convenient in Ireland they wanted to create a separate nation, but when they found another course convenient in England they only wanted the assistance of the English people to give them their just rights. The prospect before the loyal people of the North of Ireland was extremely black. He believed that the two great Parties in England were nearly equal in numbers; but if this Bill were passed, the enormous majority of the people of Ireland would send a greatly enlarged Representation under the Leadership of one man, who would compel them to act as the House had seen the other night, when, on a Division which took place after a considerable amount of discussion, he led them, like so many sheep, into the Lobby. This being the case he could only say he should be apprehensive of the destinies of this country being placed in a very dangerous condition if one Party in that House was to bid against the other for the support of a body like that which he had foreshadowed. If such a state of things were to be brought about, he should say "Ichabod" might be inscribed on the standard of England, for its glory would have departed. He had felt it necessary to say this much, and he had only to add that he should give his cordial support to the Amendment.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, it had been the impression on that side of the House that Gentlemen opposite had made up their differences; but from what had taken place they appeared to be far from a happy family. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had uttered sentiments which were regarded with so much horror by hon. Gentlemen opposite that they had spent the whole afternoon in denouncing them, and then not knowing what to say, or whether to oppose the proposal or not, the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench had gone away. He congratulated the noble Lord on much of what he had said that day; he thought it creditable to him as a politician anxious to take a leading part in the business of the country that he should have recanted and renounced the pernicious and reckless nonsense which he had been in the habit of uttering before the commencement of the Session, and which he thought good enough to throw in the ears of what he called the Conservative Democracy. He had hoped that, having recanted, the noble Lord would have given them a sounder policy; but what he seemed to say was this—"Principle is all very well, but let us do all we can to get votes, and then, perhaps, we shall attain Office." The noble Lord told them that the psychological moment had come for the Conservative Democracy to make certain concessions to the Irish Party; but it seemed to him that the term "opportune moment" should be used, because the Irish Party a few days ago voted against the Government and with the Conservatives upon the Vote of Censure. Gratitude was all very well as a recognition of past services, but it was not so good a quality when it expressed a lively sense of favours to come. But that was not all. They were now informed that it was the intention of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords to throw out the Bill; and he asked what in the world was the good of telling the Irish people that the Conservatives would agree to the clause giving the franchise to them, when the whole of the franchise proposed by the Bill to be given to England, Scotland, and Ireland was to be refused by the House of Lords? That was what the noble Lord offered to the Irish Party. But where, he asked, was the Leader of the Opposition? Perhaps the noble Lord would say—"Here I am!" But he was referring to the right hon. Gentleman whom they all respected as the Leader of the Opposition. He saw the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); but it could not be suggested that the noble Lord was the Leader of that right hon. Gentleman. If a triumvirate had been established on the other side of the House which included the Members for Westminster and North Devon and the noble Lord, it must be based upon some sort of agreement that each Member of it should throw over their own followers, because the noble Lord had treated the right hon. Member for Westminster as a kind of Jonah, or as a sacrifice to be laid upon the altar of that friendship which had just broken out. For his own part, he very much distrusted what was going forward on the other side of the House; his impression was that a great deal of it was mere simulation. As on the Ministerial side of the House there did not appear any desire to talk on this Bill, it seemed to him that hon. Gentlemen opposite had decided to discuss the matter between themselves. One Conservative Gentleman got up and expressed his views, and another rose to say they were worth nothing at all, the result being that the time was wasted, for nothing was done. All that must, he thought, be due to an arrangement amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite, and he would suggest that Gentlemen on the Ministerial side should meet that conspiracy of loquacity by a confederacy of silence. He had asked the Leader of the Opposition, a few days ago, whether he was to take as gospel what he had read in *The Standard*, the organ of the Conservative Party—namely, that a meeting of the Leaders of the Opposition in that House and in "another place" had been held, and that it had been agreed to throw out the Bill in the House of Lords? He was confirmed in the view he had taken of that matter; the right hon. Gentleman, by not replying, practically assented to the statement, because silence gave consent. But he had read to-day in *The Standard* newspaper two letters. ["Question!"] It was the Question, because his point was that Gentlemen on that side of the House ought not to take part in useless discussions. He repeated that he had read in the newspaper called *The Standard* two letters—one from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and the other from Lord Salisbury, in answer to a gentleman of Ipswich, both stating that they would do their best to promote as speedily as possible an appeal to the country. When two distinguished persons, the one a Peer in his right and the other the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, thus declared their intention, it must be clear to all that they wished to get this question of Reform into their own hands. Under the circumstances, his opinion was that Gentlemen on those Benches should be silent while Gentlemen opposite were settling their difficulties amongst themselves, and await the result of the Bill being carried to the House of Lords, when, if it were thrown out, the question would have to be submitted to the country—whether 2,000,000 of people were to have the vote, or whether they were to be kept from having it by 300 or 400 Conservatives?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had not intended to long occupy the time of the Committee by intervening in the short space which remained before the Sitting was suspended. He should, therefore, be very brief in replying to the observations against this Amendment, the question being of too grave a character to justify notice of the jests of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He had ventured on a previous occasion to name his reasons for considering why this franchise ought not to be extended to Ireland. He was ready to admit, strongly as he held that opinion, that the question was one of some difficulty; and he could understand that some Members of the House should entertain doubts upon the subject, and argue that if this franchise were extended to England and Scotland, they could not very well refuse it to Ireland. But there were certain considerations which he thought it desirable to bring again before the Committee. They were asked, on the abstract grounds of justice and equality, to extend a uniform franchise to England, Ireland, and Scotland; and yet they were asked to make the qualification in Ireland lower than it was in England and Scotland. It was a matter of absolute certainty that the franchise in Ireland would be nearer to manhood suffrage than it was in England or Scotland. One of the arguments of the Prime Minister in favour of the extension to Ireland was that the people were poor. Last autumn, there was great excitement in this country at the miserable conditions under which many of the inhabitants of our large towns were housed; but he asked if it would enter into the mind of any Member of that House to believe that those unfortunate people could be made prosperous by merely giving them the vote, and making them the predominant political power in the country. Would not their circumstances and conditions prevent them from making a satisfactory use of the franchise? No answer had been given to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket), although they had had two speeches, one from the Prime Minister and the other from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. His objection to the proposal was that not only was the Prime Minister strengthening a most dangerous and anti-British movement in Ireland, but that, in order to support it, he was compelled to resort to arguments which would be hereafter turned against him by the anti-British Party. Every argument in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman might have been used in support of the repeal of the Union. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was only one way of making England weak in the face of Ireland, and that was by not applying to Ireland the principles of equality and justice. And he went on to say that so long as they endeavoured to do justice to Ireland, no one, however evilly disposed, could prejudice or injure the integrity of the United Kingdom. He would read a resolution which had been passed at a large meeting of the National League in November last at Ballynaclo, and he would ask hon. Gentlemen opposite and the Prime Minister, who used such strong language on Friday last, whether he was prepared to endorse that resolution, which was the practical application of the principles laid down by the Prime Minister? The resolution ran thus—

> "Whereas Mr. Gladstone had declared policy of equality and justice as one which should be pursued towards Ireland, and as the standard of equality and justice in England was to be found in the doctrine of Constitutional Government, which recognized the voice of the majority as the will of the people, it was resolved that the meeting demanded the application of that standard to Ireland."

Would the right hon. Gentleman assent to that? When that question was asked there was a dead silence at once; but when the right hon. Gentleman uttered the sentiment which the resolution embodied, he was cheered to the echo. The resolution concluded with these words—

> "We pledge ourselves never to rest satisfied with anything short of national self-government such as the majority of the Irish people desire."

If the Bill were passed in its present form, what would be the position of subsequent Houses of Commons? They would have to meet the question of the repeal of the Union. But how would that question be met? Not by argument, because the Government had made that practically impossible. Well, then, would it be granted? It could not be granted, because, as the President of the Board of Trade had admitted, national self-government in Ireland meant the ruin of the Empire. How, then, could it be met, except by the old agency of force? They had been told they would be creating a grievance if they refused the extension of this franchise to Ireland. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland spoke of a grievance universally recognized there. But the grievance was, not that the franchise was high, but that England governed Ireland. The Government were going to extend this franchise to Ireland, in order that the Irish people might more adequately represent their views in that House. Could they enfranchise vast masses of men on the ground that they were capable citizens, and when these masses, through nine-tenths of their Representatives, asked for the repeal of the Union, would the Government be able to treat that demand as the whim of spoilt children? There was no mean between refusing their right to the franchise and admitting their right to have their wish granted; and if they turned a deaf ear to the expression of those wishes, they would be creating a tenfold more legitimate grievance than any which existed at the present time. But the Government were striking at the root of Constitutional Government; they were bringing all the principles of the Constitution into ridicule and disrepute, and were giving to those dangerous men who wished to have recourse to violence and outrage for the attainment of their ends an argument which they never possessed before. It was said to be a mere question between the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) having 40 or 70 or 90 followers in that House. But the moment they lowered the franchise and allowed nine-tenths of the representation of Ireland to be absorbed by that Party, they gave them an excuse for their demand for the disintegration of the Empire which, unless the right hon. Gentleman did violence to his own principles, he could not refuse. The Prime Minister said—"You flatter these hon. Members by assuming that 70 or 80 of them will be a match for the English and Scotch Members of the House of Commons." It was true that they would not be a match for the English and Scotch Members, if those Members were always true to themselves; but three years ago, when it was not a case of 550 against 70 or 80, but when 600 Members were prepared to support the Government against 20 or 30 Members, the Chief of whom they had imprisoned on a charge of treason, a Cabinet of 12 could not be true to themselves, for they deliberately threw out one of their ablest Colleagues in order that they might enter into negotiations with the very Gentleman whom they had imprisoned. He said that with that recent experience in their minds they would be fools indeed if they trusted to the contingency that, in the face of Party exigencies, 500 men would always be together on national questions in that House. "Oh!" said the Prime Minister, "we have often heard those predictions before," and he answered the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) with a reference to some predictions which were indulged in in regard to the Emancipation of the Catholics. But if there was one man in the House who had not indulged in those predictions it was the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The Prime Minister was for ever throwing at the heads of the Opposition the fact that 50 years ago the Conservative Party opposed a large number of legitimate and just reforms in Ireland; but it was a curious fact that the only man now in that House who was associated with that Party, and who then persistently refused to redress the just grievances of the Irish people, whether on the subject of municipal or national rights, or on that of Catholic Emancipation, was the right hon. Gentleman himself. It was not fair of the right hon. Gentleman to throw upon the present Opposition the heritage of his own misdoings. If anyone would refer to the eloquent speech of the right hon. Gentleman when he accompanied Sir Robert Peel to Glasgow, in 1837, he would find that he was correct in his statement as to the predictions of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of Catholic Emancipation. But since the right hon. Gentleman became himself a Reformer, the position was reversed, and it was the Conservatives who had been right in their predictions, and the right hon. Gentleman who had been wrong. Therefore, the presumption was that the Conservative Party were right in predicting what would be the certain result of the extension of this franchise to Ireland if unaccompanied by a redistribution of seats. He believed it was the hon. Member for Tyrone who taunted Gentlemen on those Benches by saying that a generous thought never entered into their heads. They had not, perhaps, the same idea of generosity as the hon. Member and his Friends, because they came into that House and disappeared with such rapidity into lucrative permanent appointments that they evidently believed that a due recognition of self was a primary part of a just policy towards Ireland. Then the Conservative Party were told that they were opposed to every reform tending to improve the condition of the people in Ireland. He quite admitted *primâ facie* that because a man was poor it was not a sufficient reason for depriving him of the vote, and no one more than he deplored the lamentable standard of life which existed over a great part of Ireland, where many of the people were badly clothed, badly fed, and miserably housed. The fact could not be disputed that such was the condition of large numbers of the people, and he would be always ready to support any proposals made for the purpose of raising their standard of life. If the Government would adopt a sensible and sounder policy, such as that of bringing home to the poorer classes in Ireland the belief that it was their interest to support the Union, he believed that in process of time they would bring about a better state of affairs. The moment they could convince the people of Ireland of that truth, their hatred of England and their unquestioned disloyalty would be undermined, and no one more than he would work in the direction he had pointed out. He had stated on a former occasion, that if the Bill passed in its present state, no measure of redistribution would be possible for many years to come, and no Member of the Government had attempted to deal with that argument, which he adhered to and repeated. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), returned to that House with 90 Members at his back, would represent more than the number of seats to which his Party was entitled, and did the Government suppose that they would hereafter be able to curtail that number? The result would be that for years to come there would be no Redistribution Bill, because it would be impossible to carry one, and that was the consideration which everyone who looked at this question must bear in mind. It was not a pleasant thing to oppose the extension of this franchise to Ireland, and to support its extension in England and Scotland; but those who supported the Amendment of his hon. Friend knew the danger involved in such a step too well to stifle their consciences with threadbare platitudes, or to surrender their judgment at the request of the Prime Minister. Therefore, he should cordially support the proposal of his hon. Friend, because he was perfectly certain that, if the Bill passed in its present shape, they would in a few years find themselves face to face with this dilemma—either the Imperial Parliament would have to consent to its own disruption, or it would have permanently to deprive a large portion of the United Kingdom of Representative Government. As he was not prepared to face either alternative with complacency, he should vote against the Government proposal.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he should endeavour to fulfil the promise of being very brief in the observations he had to make—a promise which the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) made at the commencement of his speech, but inadvertently did not perform. It was the fashion with many hon. Gentlemen in that House to call themselves Irish Members. His impression was that they were American Members. As one of the small body of Members whom he might call "the Old Guard," he wished to say a word or two. He could comprehend the position of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench if they stated that Ireland ought to be governed as a Crown Colony. Not one hon. Member, however, had ventured to make that declaration; and it was one that he and his hon. Friend could not assent to. It was said that because a lot of money had been flooded into Ireland with the best intentions, and accepted with equally good intentions by those who received it, they were to consider that for all eternity Ireland was to be a prey to those locusts which at present infested it. His humble opinion was that there would be a change in that regard, and that as the supplies went down the people would become more intelligent, and act according to their lights in reference to the particular gentlemen in question. This was a question for the tenant farmers of Ireland, of whom he was one; and those gentlemen whom he called American adventurers, finding that the question was worn out, were going about Ireland to find out a new position which they might take up. ["Divide, divide!"] Those Gentlemen who cried "Divide!" complained in Ireland that they could not be heard in the House of Commons; they told the people of Ireland that they were not listened to; and yet they refused to allow a man to be heard who told them the truth to their face. He had the honour of being the senior Member in that House—at any rate, on the present occasion—and he might not, perhaps, have the honour of again addressing it. ["Hear, hear!"] He understood the hon. Gentleman who cheered that remark, who, doubtless, in Chicago and other places where money was to be collected through *The Freeman's Journal*, would be ready to take one side to-day and the other side tomorrow. ["Order, order!"] He was not out of Order. If he were out of Order the Chairman would take note of it. Perhaps the young sea serpent from the county of Clare——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not apply language of that kind to a Member of the House.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he withdrew the expression "sea serpent," and would confine himself to the doctrine that no man who called himself a Statesman or a Minister could say there was a United Kingdom of which England, Scotland, and Ireland were parts, and deny to one of them what was offered to the other two. With hon. Members below the Gangway opposite the question was one of self-preservation; they were paid for their services, and fought the country in the interest of self, and not in the interest of the country.

Mr. BRODRICK said, the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had appealed to him to withdraw his Amendment on the ground that he might be in a minority. [Lord Randolph Churchill: No.] Then he had misunderstood the noble Lord. However, he and his hon. Friends felt that there was one thing worse than being in a minority, and that was the sacrifice of a principle upon which they had taken their stand. However rapid the process of conversion might be, and however quickly conviction might come upon one, it was impossible that it should take place within the brief period occupied by a Parliamentary debate. Having been supported by every Member of Irish experience on that side of the House, he felt that it would be discourteous to the Committee, and contrary to the pledge he had given, if he did not carry his Amendment to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 332; Noes 137: Majority 195.—(Div. List, No. 99.)

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Friday*, at Two of the clock.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 21*st* *May*, 1884.

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 21*st* *May*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (the Labourers Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * [219]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * [220].

Second Reading—Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) [16], *negatived.*

Report—Gas Provisional Orders (No 2) * [181].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT — RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE — PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION — NEW STANDING ORDER, TO FOLLOW STANDING ORDER No. 133.—RESOLUTION.

MR. B. SAMUELSON: I rise, Sir, to move—

> "That where a Chamber of Commerce or Agriculture, or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or business in any district to which any Railway Bill relates, petition against the Bill, alleging that such trade or business will be injuriously affected by the rates and fares proposed to be authorised by the Bill, or is injuriously affected by the rates and fares already authorised by Acts relating to the Railway undertaking, it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills, if they think fit, to admit the Petitioners to be heard, on such allegation, against the Bill, or any part thereof, or against the rates and fares authorised by the said Acts, or any of them. The provisions of this Order relative to rates and fares already authorised, extend to Traders and Freighters, and to a single Trader, in any case where a locus standi would have been allowed to them or him, if this Order had not been made. Nothing in this Order shall authorise the Referees to entertain any question within the jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners."

This Standing Order is consequential on the Resolutions of the Committee on Railway Rates and Fares, which sat in 1881 and 1882, and on the Resolution of this House of May 4th, 1883. The latter of these is to the effect that—

> "It is expedient that the Railway Commission be made permanent and a Court of Record; and that in general conformity with the recommendations of the Committee, the powers of the Commission be extended, and that, on application by a Railway undertaking for Parliamentary powers, a locus standi be afforded to Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture, and similar bodies, and to persons injuriously affected by the rates and fares sought or already authorised in the case of such undertaking."

The House will observe that this Resolution consists of two propositions—the first of which refers to the powers of the Railway Commissioners; and the second to procedure before Committees of this House on Railway Bills. The Government has undertaken to deal with the first; and we have been expecting a Bill on the subject from my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain). It seems somewhat doubtful, at present, whether it will be possible for him to deal with the matter during the present Session; but, with regard to the second, we have no promise from the Government; and it is because the Government have not undertaken to deal with it, which I should have much preferred, that, having moved for the appointment of the Select Committee, and having also moved and carried the Resolution of this House of last year, I have thought it to be incumbent on me to propose this Standing Order. The House will remember that I gave Notice of my intention to do so towards the close of last Session; and it was only at the earnest request of the Prime Minister, and in order not to interfere with pressing legislation, that I consented to postpone it from the last to the present Session. Had it been carried then, it would have given to traders facilities of which they stand in great need during the present Session; and I am anxious that they should not be deprived of them, at any rate, beyond this Session. When the Resolution of the 4th of May was before the House it met with no opposition. My right hon. Friend merely reserved some means of protecting Companies against frivolous complaints, somewhat after the manner in which the fiat of the Attorney General is required in the case of certain criminal prosecutions. No one amongst the numerous Representatives of the railway interest in this House opposed it. Indeed, the only one of those Gentlemen who spoke on the subject was the hon. Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. Bolton), who is the Chairman of the Caledonian Railway Company, and he confined himself to a general defence of the Railway Companies against complaints which he supposed to have been made against them. But, when I gave Notice of the Standing Order, one of those papers with which hon. Members of this House are familiar was circulated, which, I suppose, represented the objections of the Railway Companies. The tenor of these objections was that the new Standing Order would involve an entire change in the rules and practice of the Court of Referees; that it would be inconvenient to give a *locus standi* to Chambers of Commerce or Agriculture, who could now, if they desired, support a Petition of traders; that its purpose was to attack powers already conferred by Parliament, which had hitherto been held to be inviolable; and that the matter ought not to be dealt with by a private Member. To the last of these objections I have already replied; and I can only repeat that I regret very much that the matter should have been left to be dealt with by one so incompetent as myself. As to whether the change is, or is not, an improvement, and with respect to the power to be given to Chambers of Commerce or Agriculture, I need scarcely tell the House, after all the evidence which was given before the Select Committee of 1881-2, that single traders are afraid to attack Railway Companies. The Companies have so many means of inconveniencing those who enter into a contest with them that few, except the very wealthiest and most independent traders, have the courage to take proceedings against them; and, with reference to the most important objection to the Standing Order—namely, that it attacks powers already conferred—I would remind the House that, in all Railway Bills which have been passed within the last 30 years and more, a clause has been inserted, reserving the right to Parliament of revising the maximum rates and fares granted by such Bills. I am anxious that it should not be supposed for a moment that I am unwilling to do justice to the general fairness of the Railway Companies in their dealings with traders. I have said, on various occasions, that I believe the policy of those great bodies has, on the whole, been straightforward and advantageous to the trading interests. At the same time, it cannot be denied that this has not always been the case. Indeed, this has been proved by numerous witnesses; but, if these should be supposed to have been partial, I may appeal to a witness, to whom, I suppose, the Railway Companies will not take exception. A meeting of Railway Shareholders was held at the Cannon Street Station Hotel on the 3rd January of the present year. Lord Brabourne was in the Chair, and Sir Edmund Beckett was asked by the Chairman to move a resolution. His speech was full of invective against all who had ever attempted to control the Railway Companies in any way. The President of the Board of Trade, the Railway Commissioners, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were all denounced; but, in the midst of these denunciations, a little light was thrown on the dealings of Railway Companies amongst themselves and with the public. He said that—

> "One of the first things he had learned in his long experience was that jealousy was a stronger motive with railway officials than any feeling of joint interests. A Railway Manager or Chairman asked himself whether any particular proposal was more likely to harm him than his rival. Supposing that the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) and Mr. Forbes were asked to assent to a certain proposal—he would not say which was A; but A would say, 'Well, now, let me see; I think this would do B more harm than me.' And, in that case, he knew, by experience, that A was very apt to assent to the proposal. The same thing had occurred with other A's and B's."

And so he proceeded, in a similar strain, to expose the motives which occasionally guide the actions of Railway Directors and Railway Managers, amidst which, it is quite certain, that the interests of the public are the last to be considered. But, as I said at the outset, this matter has really been threshed out. There is no occasion for me to dwell upon it, and I will conclude by proposing the Standing Order of which I have given Notice?

MR. GREGORY: I have great pleasure in seconding the Motion of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. B. Samuelson). It would be well for us to consider, with reference to this new Standing Order, what is the position of a Railway Company when it comes before us for further powers. I take it, it is this. It appears in the character of a Petitioner for some powers that are not accorded to it by the Common Law—for something not allowed by the ordinary law of England—and for which it, therefore, makes special application to Parliament. Well, these Parliamentary powers are granted in consideration of certain benefits and advantages which the Company, in return, confer on the public. The Railway Companies are in a position of having to make terms with the public and with Parliament for the powers which they wish to acquire; and that is the case, whether the application they make is an original one, or whether it is merely supplementary—for instance, for further powers to extend the powers already granted. Therefore, I apprehend that the question is in the discretion of the House, and that Parliament generally—that is to say, this House and the other branch of the Legislature—has a right to exact such terms as it pleases from the Railway Companies seeking these powers. Now, this question of the rates charged by Railway Companies is, perhaps, one of the most important subjects to the agricultural and commercial interests of the country that can be well dealt with; because we all know that the railways at the present day have practically a monopoly of the conveyance of produce, whether manufactured or otherwise. Therefore, it is most desirable that fair and reasonable terms should be provided between the public and the Railway Companies with respect to the conveyance of that which is essential to the commerce and agriculture of individual districts, and of the whole country. It was generally admitted before the Select Committee of this House on Railway Rates and Fares—a Committee upon which I had the honour of sitting—that, in one respect, railway rates required revision. I think the Representatives of the railway interest made no question of that, and that we were all at one with respect to it—namely, that there should be something like a classification of rates. It was admitted that the present method of fixing rates was a hap-hazard one. The classification is carried forward from one Bill to another, and there has been nothing like a uniform or technical classification of goods that are to be carried at particular rates. That should be one of the points that the Standing Order should deal with; because the attention of the Committee considering a Railway Bill should always be called to the question of classification of rates, as well as to their amount. As to the amount of rates, that is a question of controversy. It is quite clear to me—in fact, it was shown to my satisfaction before the Committee on Rates and Fares, and to the satisfaction also of other hon. Members—that many of the rates are unnecessarily high—in fact, by means of terminals and other charges of that nature, much higher than the railways have a legal right to charge—and that these improperly high rates enable the Companies to give preference to one class of persons and one class of goods to the prejudice of another class of persons and another class of goods. We found that the power of giving one interest an advantage over another was frequently exercised in favour of the foreign producer against the home grower of agricultural produce. Under the Standing Order, as proposed, attention will be directed to this subject; and it is absolutely necessary, to my mind, that it should be so. Many of the railway rates have never been revised, or looked into, ever since the railways were originally established, and that is the case particularly with one of our railway systems in the South of England. In that case, I believe the rates are 40 years old, and they are now anything but in accordance with the circumstances of the traffic of the present day. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be some method of revising these rates. What method can we adopt? I see none but by taking advantage of the applications of Railway Companies when they come to Parliament for fresh powers. I see nothing unfair in that; I see nothing unfair in saying to a Company—"You come to us for further powers; you have these rates which have never been properly regulated, and, therefore, you must submit to a fair and reasonable investigation and revision." I think we ought to throw upon the Committees of this House, when asked to grant further powers, the duty of placing some regulation or exercising some proper control over the rates; and that, as I take it, is the object of the present Standing Order, because it says—that when application is made, it may be alleged by Chambers of Commerce or Agriculture that trade or business are injuriously affected by the rates and fares, and—

> "It shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills, if they think fit, to admit the Petitioners to be heard, on such allegation, against the Bill, or any part thereof, or against the rates and fares authorised by the said Acts, or any of them. The provisions of this Order relative to rates and fares already authorised, extend to Traders and Freighters, and to a single Trader, in any case where a locus standi would have been allowed to them or him, if this Order had not been made."

The bodies referred to in the Standing Order are Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture; and I do not know what bodies are better constituted, or more qualified to be consulted in regard to rates and fares than them. They will not *primâ facie* have an absolute right to petition against a Bill, but will only have the power of applying for permission to deal with the subject. Remember, they are only to have power to apply to the Referees for the purpose of being heard before the Committee, and the Referees will grant them a *locus standi* or not as they think proper. It will be the duty of the Referees to see that the application is a *bonâ fide* one, to see that the applicants sufficiently represent the trade and business of the district with which they are connected, and to see whether there are sufficient grounds for yielding to the desire of these bodies. If it is shown that the application is a *bonâ fide* one, can there be anything unreasonable in the operation of a Standing Order? There will be a control or check on anything like vexatious opposition on the part of these public bodies, by the action of the Referees in the first instance, and their liability to costs in the second. It is absolutely necessary that we should have something of the kind. We cannot leave the opposition to Railway Bills in the hands of private persons. It is necessary that you should have some combination—some organization; you must have something like a public body to meet a public body, particularly when the latter possess an unlimited purse. The Railway Companies are enormous organizations, and are able to get up their cases very carefully before Committees. They are very experienced, and their advantages are so great that they cannot be met by individuals, and, therefore, must be opposed by combinations having facilities and advantages somewhat akin to their own. It appears to me, therefore, that to carry out this object, the Standing Order is very properly devised. With regard to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), it is said that—

> "Where an application is made by a Railway Undertaking for Parliamentary powers, attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee, and that persons affected by such rates or fares shall have a 'Locus Standi' before such Committee."

That would make the Standing Order defective and ineffectual, unless some such principle as that I have described is embodied in the Amendment. By the Amendment, the power of calling attention to these rates and fares will be left to private individuals, instead of to large representative bodies. On these grounds, in conjunction with my hon. Friend, I venture to submit the Standing Order to the judgment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That where a Chamber of Commerce or Agriculture, or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or business in any district to which any Railway Bill relates, petition against the Bill, alleging that such trade or business will be injuriously affected by the rates and fares proposed to be authorised by the Bill, or is injuriously affected by the rates and fares already authorised by Acts relating to the Railway undertaking, it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills, if they think fit, to admit the Petitioners to be heard, on such allegation, against the Bill, or any part thereof, or against the rates and fares authorised by the said Acts, or any of them: The provisions of this Order relative to rates and fares already authorised, extend to Traders and Freighters, and to a single Trader, in any case where a locus standi would have been allowed to them or him, if this Order had not been made: Nothing in this Order shall authorise the Referees to entertain any question within the jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners."—(*Mr. B. Samuelson.*)

MR. LAING: Mr. Speaker—Sir, in the absence of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), who is prevented by indisposition from being in his place to-day, I beg to move the Amendment standing in his name, which proposes to leave out all the words after the first word "Where," in order to insert—

"An application is made by a Railway Undertaking for Parliamentary powers, attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee; and that persons affected by such rates or fares shall have a 'Locus Standi' before such Committee."

I move this Amendment with more pleasure, because, on this question of controlling the charges of the Railway Companies in the interests of the public, I have always taken the view that a more efficient system than that at present in use should be adopted, and I have always recognized that there are, and always must be, monopolies; but I am entirely opposed to attempts to meddle bit by bit with the security of railway property by unsettling and eccentric enterprizes. I may observe that, in the first place, I think the attempt to found the proposed Standing Order on the authority of the Committee on Railway Rates and Fares is not one altogether borne out by the facts; for, in reality, the recommendation of the Committee involved a very large and comprehensive system of control. It was based upon several Resolutions, which declared, amongst other things, that it was not to be a one-sided arrangement, taking everything away from the Railway Companies and giving them nothing in return. As compensation for the right of revising railway rates it was proposed to give the Railway Companies the regulation of terminal charges and of other matters—in short, it was a fair and comprehensive measure that was proposed. I hold that any measure or legislation on this subject, or any alteration of the Standing Orders which comes to the same thing, ought to be conceived in that spirit—namely, a fair and comprehensive spirit. If the arrangement arrived at is to be a permanent one between the public and the Companies, it must be one based on fair reciprocity, considering the magnitude of the railway interest, and how largely the public credit would be affected by anything that might have the appearance of exceptional legislation against them, without giving them a fair compensation. The capital invested in railways has been recently estimated at about £750,000,000, or about the amount of the National Debt; so that any attack or interference with vested interests of that magnitude without fair consideration and adequate compensation would be as great a shock to public credit as any injudicious steps taken to interfere with the interest payable in respect of the National Debt. The return on the enormous amount of capital invested in railways is something very moderate, having regard to the vast benefits conferred on the public, and the vast interests that are concerned. According to recent Returns, it appears that the interest on the railway capital amounts to only a very little over 4 per cent, which is certainly not an excessive amount when we look at the risks and at the magnitude of the operations. It cannot be denied, on the whole, that the public have benefited by the construction of our railways to a much larger extent than the shareholders have done. The great objection which I feel to this new Standing Order is that, practically, it will and must give what may be a very large power of interference with the vested interests of the Railway Companies to a body which, however respectable, is totally unfit to deal with questions of this description. The Standing Order goes the length of giving to the Referees on Private Bills the power, if they think fit, of admitting the Petitioners to be heard against a Bill, or any part of it, or against the rates and fares authorized by the Companies' Acts. No doubt, as I have said, the body to which this power is given, in the first instance, is a highly respectable body; but it certainly, to my mind, is the last body which should have the right of saying whether a property as large as the National Debt is, or is not, to be injuriously affected by legislation. A great many cases must arise where such interference would amount almost to a confiscation of railway property. Suppose a Railway Company comes to Parliament to ask, not for anything which would be of great advantage to the shareholders—not to increase its dividends, but to carry out some improvements for the benefit of the public, such as making new stations, laying down an additional line, or improving its rolling stock. Would it be fair, under those circumstances, for the Referees, when considering a Bill for that purpose, to allow all Chambers of Commerce to come in, and state any grievances they might have with regard to rates and fares? Would it be fair to oblige the Company to enter into an expensive Parliamentary contest with every Chamber of Commerce in a district which fancied it had a grievance? I think it is clear that an interference of that sort should only be exercised under the control and supervision of some public tribunal of weight and authority, which would take a large view of the whole matter. Such a tribunal, it appears to me, exists in the Board of Trade, which already exercises a control and supervision, both over the railways and the commerce of the country; and I have not the least objection to a Department like that, represented by a Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons, having the right to say whether or not a Company possesses excessive powers and uses them unfairly; and that, therefore, the question of such powers shall be referred to the Select Committee to whom they may desire to apply for further Parliamentary powers. To whom can this proposal be objectionable? I take it to no one but those engaged in the legal work of Parliamentary Committees, such as agents, solicitors, and barristers. Every Bill promoted would bring about an expensive contest; and, not only that, but one Committee would take a view favourable to Railway Companies, and another a view adverse to them; and the result would be that some railway interests might be very considerably injured, although only applying to Parliament for power to carry out a work of great public utility, while others might be benefited or have their rates left as they were, without proposing any advantages to the general interest of the community. The only safe position, therefore, for us to take is that some independent Body, such as the Board of Trade, should alone have the right to interfere. Such a Body would be more likely to take a large view of the subject, and, in the next place, their recommendations would carry more authority. A Bill for the purpose of improving the control and superintendence of railways has been promised, and was to have been brought forward this Session; but whether or not it will be brought forward this year I cannot say. I can only say that I, for one, should very much regret if the state of Public Business made it impossible to devote adequate time to the consideration of a matter of that sort. It is better that the question should stand over until another year, when it can be considered as a whole, rather than that it should be dealt with in the meantime by this sort of piecemeal legislation, which will only make "confusion worse confounded," and will benefit no one but the lawyers, who will get fees from the multiplied contests that will ensue. I have no wish to detain the House any further from going on with the Public Business; and, therefore, with these few remarks, I will confine myself to moving the Amendment which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease).

Mr. BOLTON: Mr. Speaker—Sir, in rising to second the Amendment, I will only detain the House for a very few minutes. My objections to the proposed Standing Order are many, and, first, I object to piecemeal legislation on a matter of this kind. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment (Mr. Laing) has shown to the House that the Committee who sat, I think two years, on the question of Railway Rates and Fares, proposed a number of recommendations for the consideration of the House. Amongst those considerations was the one now made by the hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson); but he was unable to induce the Committee to adopt his views in the matter he brought forward. The hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) has told the House that the reason why we should entertain the proposal of the hon. Member for Banbury is, that some of the rates now charged by Railway Companies are more than 40 years old; but he omitted to tell the House, at the same time, that the obligations of the Railway Companies are of exactly the same age; and I think that, before he proposed to alter the rates, or to give power to a body to alter the rates authorized to be levied by the Companies, he ought to have shown that these were not charged in accordance with the Acts authorizing them. But he has not done any such thing. No one can say that the Railway Companies are charging rates in excess of those authorized. Another objection which I have to the proposed Standing Order is, that it will preclude Railway Companies from coming to Parliament to obtain power to carry out improvements which are very much required by the traders of the country; they will think twice before they expose themselves to all the expense that it will be necessary to incur by coming to Parliament, when the only object to be attained is, perhaps, the extension of some small section of line, in the interest of the public. For example, Companies cannot acquire additional rolling stock without applying to Parliament for authority to obtain money to purchase it. Very often they come for power to acquire additional rolling stock on account of some spurt in certain districts, which spurt may be ephemeral. The Companies come for additional money and additional power to obtain this rolling stock, and are met by objections that, in certain remote districts, the rates are adverse to a certain class of traders. Consequently, these traders, whose interest in the railways is very slight indeed, are to prevent powers being granted that would be to the beenfit of very large interests. It is assumed that when Railway Companies apply for addititional powers, they only do so in their own interest; but such is not the case. I can speak from a great many years' experience, and I can say that Railway Companies avoid coming to Parliament as much as they possibly can. When they do come, they come in the interest of traders for additional facilities, asking for rolling stock, for sidings, or some line for the convenience of trade; but it is not usually to their interest to extend their system. In the majority of cases, I maintain, they do not ask these powers in their own interest, but in the interest of traders using their system. Well, the effect of this Standing Order would be a direct tendency to prevent Railway Companies applying to Parliament at all. Now, Sir, we are told that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) has the intention of introducing a Bill this Session, based on the recommendations of the Railway Rates and Fares Committee, of which the hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson) was a Member. I know I can speak for the Companies, in stating that they will give the right hon. Gentleman every assistance in their power in legislating on the lines of all the recommendations of that Committee; and I think, under the circumstances, and seeing, moreover, that the rejection of this Standing Order by the House would not in any way affect the legislation of the present Session, that the House ought to pause before accepting the Order, and wait for the Bill the right hon. Gentleman has promised to give us. For these reasons, I beg to second the Amendment of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing).

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after the first word "Where," to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "an application is made by a Railway Undertaking for Parliamentary powers, attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee; and that persons affected by such rates or fares shall have a 'Locus Standi' before such Committee,"—(*Mr. Laing*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. R. H. PAGET: Mr. Speaker—Sir, I have listened with interest to the remarks of the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment now before the House; and, as far as I understand the hon. Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. Bolton), his objection, which is also shared by the hon. Member who moved the Amendment (Mr. Laing), is, that this is a matter of piecemeal legislation. But, if I understood him aright, he proposed to the House that there should be introduced into the Standing Orders a new Resolution, giving large powers to the Board of Trade, which it does not at present possess, and which would be, in itself, open to the very objection that he takes to the original proposal. The Proposer and Seconder of the Amendment suggest piecemeal legislation. That appears to be the one and chief ground of the opposition, and the reason why the original proposal is not to be accepted by the House. But this piecemeal legislation, as it is called, has already been adopted, to a certain extent, on this very matter; because, it was only last Session, or the Session before, that a Standing Order was introduced by my right hon. Friend the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), which, to a certain extent, deals with this very question of Railway Companies seeking powers to levy rates in excess of those already authorized. That Standing Order was passed directly to deal with that particular question, which had been the subject of investigation by the Railway Rates and Fares Committee which sat for two years. Now, Sir, the Resolution that has been proposed is one which has been proposed on separate grounds. What does it attempt to introduce? What is to be done by this, is to give effect to that which was recommended by the Railway Rates and Fares Committee—namely, to give a *locus standi* to Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce which at present does not exist. It is desirable to point out to the House the necessity that exists of allowing a number of persons interested in trade to combine together, for the sake of opposing that which has been pointed out as one of the largest interests in the Kingdom—to oppose the Railway Companies, who have an invested capital, if the fact be as stated by the hon. Member opposite, as large as the National Debt. That cuts two ways. If you are dealing with operations so vast, and you put them on one side of the scale, and the small traders in remote districts, whose interests are seriously prejudiced, on the other side, surely the argument tells in this particular case not in their favour, but decidedly in favour of granting additional protection to those who, by the side of the railway interests, are insignificant. The Railway Companies do not, in many instances, impose rates in excess of the maximum in their various Acts; but that is a matter which, I think, is still open to some kind of doubt. If I remember rightly, a case has been recently decided, where the hop growers in Kent objected to the rates, and an appeal has been lodged which will be decided in a day or two. At present, it has only been decided in the Court of First Instance. The traders for years claimed the rate which the Court of First Instance has declared to be a rate that has no right to be charged. Why did the traders wait so long? I am satisfied that it was because only now the people have taken upon themselves to subscribe a sum sufficient to enable the case to be brought before the tribunal. Now, Sir, another reason which is suggested against this proposed Standing Order is this. We are told that, in the future, Railway Companies will be prevented from applying for additional powers, either for rolling stock, or to carry out improvements, because they will be afraid to have their rates called in question. Well, if their rates are wrong, no doubt they ought to be called in question. It is no argument against this proposed Standing Order to say that it will afford an opportunity of looking into the rates of every Company. I will go on further; I will go to this point—that, instead of it being necessary to wait for an opportunity when a railway comes for increased powers, in order to allow an aggrieved trader to appeal, that the opportunities of the trader who feels himself injured should be more easy, and not necessarily contingent on a Company coming to ask for further powers. If the rates are indefensible, those who are injured by them should surely have a right to make their case heard without waiting for the chance that may be afforded to them when the Companies come to ask for increased powers. So far from the argument that this Standing Order would enable the rates of a Railway Company to be gone into when that Company comes for increased powers being against this Standing Order, it appears to me to prove that what is required is something still more sweeping. The hon. Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. Bolton) made a somewhat bold statement when he said that Railway Companies habitually came to ask for increased powers, not in their own interest, but in the interest of the traders. That is an interesting statement—one which, I venture to say, if I may be permitted to use the expression, is somewhat audacious. The objection I take to the Amendment recently proposed is this—that it certainly would appear to set in motion the Board of Trade, and that without stating on the face of it in what way that Department is to be set in motion. It says—

> "Attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee."

Who is to direct that attention? Are the Board of Trade to set themselves up as a tribunal, ready to hear the complaints of traders who think they are grievously affected by existing rates or proposed rates? Are these, or any traders or freighters, who think their interests are affected, to have the right to go to the Board of Trade and make a complaint, and is the Board of Trade then to make its opinion known; or is the Board of Trade to arrive at the decision without hearing the case, or being applied to by the traders at all? In the Amendment there is no method of moving the Board of Trade pointed out. The arguments in favour of this new Standing Order are very strong. One thing is clear, and that is that the small traders do demand at the hands of this House a larger amount of protection than they at present get; for it has been abundantly proved, in evidence before the Railway Rates and Fares Committee, that, rightly or wrongly, the great body of traders, large and small, were fully convinced of this—that it was prejudicial to their interests to venture to engage in a battle with the Railway Companies. We had a statement made to us distinctly by traders dealing with vast amounts of goods, to the effect that they were afraid that they were likely to be further prejudiced by the rates which would be charged if they opposed the Railway Companies; and they, therefore, individually held their hands, for fear of such a thing coming about. The arguments in favour of this proposed alteration of the Standing Order are, to my mind, very forcible. It would have been well if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had been able to bring in his promised Bill, dealing with this matter in a larger spirit. In such case, there would have been a great deal to be said against making a small alteration of the Standing Orders; but I hear, from the best source of information, that we have no reason to hope that this Session will see that Bill passed into law, even if it sees it introduced. We have to deal with the present as it is. The proposed Standing Order is a small step in the desired direction; and I venture to think the House will be in favour of its adoption.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, it will, perhaps, be convenient for me to intervene early in the discussion, and to state what are the views I take, both in respect to the proposal itself and the Amendment which has been suggested. There can be no doubt as to the great importance of the subject raised by my hon. Friend (Mr. B. Samuelson), not only in relation to the public interest involved, but also in reference to the Board of Trade, and this enormous amount of property which has been accumulated under statutory protection. Speaking first, with regard to the Amendment, it is proposed that whenever a Railway comes to Parliament the Board of Trade should be asked to make a Report as to its rates and fares; and the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), in an Amendment which he has on the Paper, would carry that a little further, and would suggest a method by which those duties might be performed by the Board of Trade. Well, I find, on inquiry, that there is no doubt it would be possible, if it were the will of Parliament to impose this duty on the Board of Trade, for the Board of Trade to carry it out. But I must say I am not at all anxious to see the functions of the Board of Trade increased, and to have our work overloaded in the way it is suggested. I must show what it amounts to. Take, for instance, the case of a railway system like that wonderful system, the London and North Western Railway. I believe that Undertaking levies its charges under the provisions contained in the Schedules of no less than 128

Acts of Parliament. Every one of these would be subject to careful examination by the Board of Trade; and if the work is to be done effectually, the Board of Trade would have to constitute itself a judicial tribunal. It would have to hear all the complaints and representations; and an inquiry of this kind would be a monstrous addition to the work already undertaken by the Board of Trade. Moreover, it would be very expensive to all parties concerned; and I am sure that the result would not be satisfactory either to the House or the country. In addition to this, as has been pointed out by my hon. Friend (Mr. Laing), if there is to be a revision of this kind by this tribunal whenever a Company comes before Parliament—and that, in the case of our great lines, would be every year—it would be very unfair to the Company; because, after the matter has been once settled, the whole of the business would have to be gone into again and again every year, and there would be no limit to the extent to which rates and fares would be tinkered and interfered with, so that all confidence in the stability of this property would be destroyed. Passing over the Amendment, I come to the Standing Order proposed by my hon. Friend (Mr. B. Samuelson); and I must say I admit that it does not go further than the recommendations of the Report of the Select Committee on Railway Rates and Fares. But, then, it must be remembered that the Report of that Committee dealt with the whole subject, and that this recommendation was one of a number of recommendations which were all very closely connected together. I do not deny, in the least, that a case may be made out for the revision of rates in certain cases. It cannot be supposed possible that these maximum rates, having been in existence for so many years, are always consistent with the circumstances of trade. It cannot be supposed that the circumstances of trade have not at all altered since the rates were fixed, and that, therefore, none of the rates charged are injurious to commerce. It may be desirable that the rates should be revised in these cases as against the Railway Companies, and in favour of the traders; and then, on the other hand, it is quite true that there are rates which require revision in the interest of the Railway Companies themselves. That is true as to what are called station terminals. Though the Companies have no statutory right to make these charges, inasmuch as the terminal expenses have gradually increased since the Acts were obtained, nothing could be more equitable than that they should be allowed to make a reasonable charge for these services. All I contend is this—that if these statutory rates and provisions are to be revised at all, the revision ought to be complete, and be a revision in the interest of the Railway Companies, as well as in the interest of the public. Well, then, Sir, I come down to the point that, if there is to be a revision, the tribunal suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury would not be the best, nor would it be the most satisfactory tribunal for the purpose. My hon. Friend suggests, in the first place, that the Referees on Private Bills should declare whether or not the parties have a *locus standi*. Now, to do that, the Referees must take evidence, and go into the whole circumstances of the case, in order to see whether there is any real injury done. It would be necessary for them to look into various Acts of Parliament, and undertake work which has never yet been imposed upon them by Parliament. It would throw upon them an amount of labour which it can hardly be expected a Committee of that kind can undertake. But, supposing that they have made this preliminary examination, and have given a *locus standi* to individuals or public bodies, the matter would then have to go before a Parliamentary Committee. It does appear to me that this idea of perpetually altering railway rates by a tribunal which is constantly changing would be objectionable. If these rates ought to be revised, they ought to be revised by a competent tribunal—an expert and a permanent tribunal; so that there should be something like a principle in the manner in which they are dealt with. I think, if matters of this kind are to be dealt with, they ought to be dealt with by the Railway Commissioners, and not by Parliament. Reference has been made several times already to the fact that the Government have given Notice of their intention to bring in a Bill which will, of course, deal generally with the suggestions of the Railway Rates and Fares Committee, which included the suggestion raised by my hon. Friend as to the Standing Order. The introduction of this Bill has been delayed by circumstances which are known to the House. I have felt that in a Session so crowded with work as the present Session is, it would be almost useless to bring in a Bill, and hopeless to expect to go forward with it, if there were anything like opposition to it from any section of the House. Therefore, I have been engaged in endeavouring, more or less successfully, to consult the different interests concerned, and to secure some common agreement, notwithstanding the differences of opinions which prevail, by which the Bill may be referred to a Grand Committee, where the details would be carefully examined and considered. I do not know whether I have already succeeded in my efforts; but, in view of the Motion of my hon. Friend, I have come to the conclusion, at all events, that it is better not to wait any longer, but to introduce the Bill as it has now been put into shape, in order to ascertain what the opinion of the House is, and then to decide whether it will be possible to proceed with it this Session. Under those circumstances, I hope my hon. Friend will not proceed with his Motion. I do not ask him to withdraw it; but I would suggest that the debate be adjourned, in order that the House may have an opportunity of seeing what the proposals of the Government are, and then of considering whether it would still be advisable to go on with the Motion of my hon. Friend. As it is possible that I may not have an opportunity on the introduction of the Bill of explaining its provisions, it is, perhaps, desirable that I should state now what is the general nature of the proposal I have to make on this particular point. In the first place, I entirely agree with my hon. Friend in reference to what he has said as to giving a *locus standi* to public bodies to appear before the Committee. I do not think that any Bill could be effectively worked, or would be satisfactory to the House, which did not contain a provision of that kind. I may remind the House that, during last Session, a Resolution was unanimously passed that a *locus standi* should be given to the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture, as well as to Town Councils, as representative Bodies. It may be necessary to provide that there should be some right in the Board of Trade, or some other public Department, to say whether, or not, a Chamber of Commerce is a fairly and properly representative Body; but, with that limitation, the Bill proposes to give a *locus standi* to these public authorities. Then, Sir, the Bill proposes to deal with two questions—with the revision of rates in the first instance; and, secondly, of terminals. I had hoped that it would have been possible to deal with the question of classification in the Schedule of the Bill; but I find that the Railway Clearing House classification, which is always taken as the basis of revision, contains no less than 2,300 different articles; and, therefore, before the House is asked to proceed with a Schedule of that kind, it would be necessary to consult all the interests affected by the whole of these 2,300 different articles, which would involve an inquiry the House can hardly be expected, possibly or fruitfully, to undertake at the present moment. Under the circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that the proper way of dealing with the subject will be to throw upon the principal Companies the onus of bringing in Bills to provide a new classification of maximum rates, and, at the same time, of making proposals for such a revision of rates as may be essential in order to bring the rates into relation with the new classification. It appears plain that the moment the classification is altered the maximum rates must also be altered. A Bill of this kind might usefully be referred to a strong Hybrid Committee, who would take evidence where any representation was made that the interests of any trade or persons were injuriously affected; and the new classification and new rates having been assented to, then the classification and rates might be put into the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, and made an essential condition of every new measure. That is the way in which, I think, the matter may be dealt with; and I, therefore, propose to insert in the Bill, in the first place, a clause which will give the Railway Companies the right of appealing to the Railway Commissioners to allow them, on sufficient evidence, to make a reasonable terminal charge. In the next place, it is only fair and right that the measure should be made applicable to Railway

Companies, conditionally on their having previously introduced into Parliament, and obtained the sanction of Parliament, to a reduced classification of rates. In that way, the whole matter may be dealt with. I have not described the details of the proposals; but I have simply given a general idea of what will be found in the Bill, which, if possible, I will introduce either to-morrow night or on Monday. Under those circumstances, I will now move, in order to raise the question, that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I think the House will agree with me in the conclusion I have arrived at—that it will be quite impossible and very unwise to discuss, at the present moment, the provisions of the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade proposes to bring forward, until we have seen the Bill itself. I think the House is obliged to him for the interesting statement he has made. I think, also, that the hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson), who has brought forward the Motion today, will agree with me that, under the circumstances, and especially as we are to have the Bill before us in the course of a day or two, it would be useless to take up the public time by a further discussion of the particular question now before us. It is quite clear that we could come to no satisfactory conclusion upon it until we have seen the Government proposals in a formal shape before us. Therefore, I will not take up the time of the House further than by saying that if it had been necessary I would have seconded the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. I hope the House will at once agree to it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 18th June.

MOTION.

——o——

PARLIAMENT—ASCENSION DAY.

MOTION FOR MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Committees shall not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock, and have leave to sit until Six of the clock, notwithstanding the sitting of the House."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in opposing the Motion, said, he wished to speak with sympathy and respect in regard to religious observances; but it was well known that those who were most attentive to such duties attended Service at 8 o'clock in the morning. If the Committees, therefore, sat at the usual hour, hon. Members would have an opportunity of attending at the hour mentioned. [Mr. Warton: Oh!] The Motion referred only to Committees; and the effect of passing it would be that about 12 or 15 Committees, including the Standing Committee on Law, &c., would meet to-morrow at 2 instead of at 12 o'clock, and half the working day would be lost. No doubt, they got permission to sit until 6 to make up for it; but experience showed that that permission was seldom taken advantage of. This was a serious matter. In proof of that, he stated that a Bill like the Manchester Ship Canal Bill cost as much as £1,500 a-day for Parliamentary expenses. Besides, town clerks, solicitors, members of municipalities, and other important functionaries were kept in town, and the greatest inconvenience was thus caused to municipal and great commercial bodies. The town clerk of a large city had just told him that they all looked on Ascension Day with dread, because of the expense and inconvenience caused by this arrangement. For the reason he had stated, he would oppose the Motion.

Mr. WARTON said, he supported the Motion, but thought that it ought to be insisted on that the Committees should sit till 6 o'clock. For himself, he should go to church at 11 o'clock, as usual.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 93; Noes 37: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 100.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 16.]

(*Mr. Molloy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MOLLOY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the alterations in the existing Act proposed by that amending Bill were very few and simple. They related—first, to the confirmatory Act of Parliament; and, secondly, to cottages. The present Act, introduced by his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), as they all remembered, was passed last year in a great hurry, in order that it might be sent up in time to the House of Lords; and the consideration which it received was, therefore, not of a very satisfactory character. Their experience of the working of the Act was very large, inasmuch as applications had been made for it to be put in operation in every part of Ireland; and it was found that, without the Amendments which were now proposed, the Act would be absolutely futile, because of the difficulties in the way of carrying it into execution. Under Clause 7 a considerable number of preliminaries had to be gone through before anything could be done. For example, when it was proposed that labourers' cottages should be built, a representation had to be made by 12 ratepayers to the sanitary authority. By the Act, it was also necessary to come to Parliament for a confirmatory Act, before the Provisional Order granted by the Local Government Board could come into operation, and that involved waiting for another Session of Parliament. Now, that confirmatory Act was absolutely useless; and the only effect it had, as he had shown, was to considerably delay the carrying into effect the schemes adopted by the local sanitary authorities. It might be alleged that it was necessary for the protection of the owners of land, whose ground would be then under the Act; but he did not think that would be found to be the case, because there was no secrecy about the taking of the land—it was advertised in the local journals, and inquiries were held at which the landowner could appear. These confirmatory Acts, therefore, were entirely unnecessary. They were passed without attracting the attention of anybody. That day they had had two of them introduced as Bills, and nobody appeared to take the least interest in them. The present measure, therefore, was intended to get rid of the necessity for a confirmatory Act to give effect to the Provisional Orders made under the Act of last year, and so to enable those Orders to come into force without delay. The next point in which it was sought to amend the Act was in giving power to the sanitary authorities to repair the houses erected when necessary, and this it was proposed to carry out by means of the 4th clause. The same provision existed in the Artizans' Dwellings Act, and it was clearly a slip to omit from this Act. There was also a Proviso, that the sanitary authority might alter and repair cottages at present existing which were inhabited by labourers, where they considered such repair and alteration necessary, and charge the cost on the owner of the premises. That provision was already in existence in England, and he saw no reason why such a power should not be extended to Ireland under this Labourers' Act. Another Amendment was this—There were a large number of cottages in Ireland which were perfectly capable of being used as labourers' cottages; but there was no plot of ground attached to them. By the Bill it was sought to enable the sanitary authorities to purchase that plot of ground—not to exceed the usual half acre—and attach it to these cottages as garden ground. It was also found that many necessary witnesses were unwilling to attend the inquiries held under the Act, and, by the Bill, the Inspector sent down to hold the inquiry would have power to issue summonses and compel such attendance. An important provision of the Bill also was this—that if the sanitary authority rejected the scheme put before it by the ratepayers, or if it declined to take any steps in the matter, the Local Government Board, on proper representation from the ratepayers, should have power not only to inquire into the scheme, but to follow up that inquiry by granting the usual Provisional Order, after drawing up and approving of a scheme. At present the Local Government Board had power to inquire, but had not the power to go further; and, unless they got the power to follow their inquiry, the inquiry held would be a mere useless expenditure of money. The 8th, the most important clause in the Bill in his opinion, was that which gave power to a leaseholder or a tenant, holding under a statutory term under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, to lease land for the purposes of this Act just as if he were a life tenant. There was no doubt the purchase of land was attended with great expence, involving, as it did, heavy costs as to the examination of titles. To obviate this very heavy cost, it was proposed, by the Bill, to enable a leaseholder or tenant holding under the Land Act to grant a lease of a plot of ground for the purposes of the Act for a term of 99 years, just as if he were a life tenant. This was a matter on which he believed there was no divergence of opinion between them and the Representatives of landlords. Under the circumstances which would be created by that clause of the Bill, the position of the landlord could not be injuriously affected, as, in case of non-payment of rent by the tenant, he would have the security of the tenant's crops, and would in addition have the security of the local sanitary authority, so far as the particular plot on which the cottage stood was concerned; and beyond that, the provision, while enabling something valuable to be done for the labourers, would also obviate the heavy expenditure in costs which made the present Act almost prohibitory, and it was to it that he looked for the successful working of the Act. By Clause 9, they endeavoured to lessen the heavy expenditure attaching to the purchase of sites. By the present Act an examination of title for 40 years was required. Now they proposed that that examination should be reduced to 12 years, considering, as they did, that 12 years would provide sufficient precautions in the matter. If it was possible for the Government to suggest a better way of meeting this difficulty, he need hardly say they would be very glad to accept any proposal the Government made in the matter. It was, moreover, essential that the cost of putting the Act into operation should be reduced to a minimum. Men who were paid at the rate of 8*s.* a-week in winter and 12*s.* in summer could not pay any very high sum for expenses; and it was also found that the costs attending the purchase of land, in many cases, induced landlords to oppose the schemes; and they therefore proposed that, in all cases, such costs should be charged on the sanitary authority. This clause, he might say, had been taken from an Act already passed, by which the costs incurred in the purchase of land for public purposes were charged on the local authority. Clause 11, which extended the time for repayment, was another very important clause; and the object of it was the same as that of all the other clauses—namely, an endeavour to reduce as much as possible the expenses of bringing the Act into operation. The larger the interest charged by the Treasury, the larger the charge of rent on the unfortunate labourers. Now, the charge made by the Treasury for money advanced under this Act was £5 7*s* 6*d.* per cent, actually more than what was charged on money advanced to the landlords and tenants. So long as the Treasury was secured in the repayment of the capital and interest, he did not see what objection they could have to the alteration proposed in the Bill—namely, the lengthening of the period of repayment to 52 years, and the reduction of the annual charge to £3 16*s* 6*d.* per cent. Under the Bill, also, it would be left to the discretion of the local authority, whether the cost of carrying the Act into operation should be charged on the electoral division, the dispensary district, or the Union at large. These were the whole of the provisions of the amending Bill which he had now the honour to move, and which he hoped would meet with the approval of the Government, and with no strong opposition from any quarter of the House. It was a Bill which simply aimed at supplying and amending the defects in the Act of last Session; and, if it were desired to make that Act efficient and economical, it was absolutely essential to carry a scheme similar to the one he now had the honour to place before the House. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. VILLIERS STUART: I have much pleasure in seconding the Motion for the second reading of the Bill now before the House. It would not be too much to say that without it the Labourers' Act of last year will be of little use. I am qualified to form an opinion on the subject, for I am a member of an Irish Board of Guardians which did its best to utilize the existing Act. We held special meetings; we appointed committees, to form schemes, to select sites, and to choose plans of cottages; owners and occupiers gave every facility for acquiring the land; but we were met by the following difficulties:—first, while no labourer could afford to pay more than from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, we found that the lowest sum for which we could supply a cottage and half-an-acre of land was £100—105: the annual payment to the Board of Works on this would be 105*s.* or 2*s.* per week—namely, from one-fourth to one-third more than the tenant could afford to pay as rent. The elements in the cost were the cost of proving the title, so as to comply with the too high standard of perfection required by the Board of Works in details of cottage and offices; the cost of meeting the comparatively high rate of interest imposed by the Board of Works, coupled with the limited period within which it is repayable; cost of local inquiry; and cost of surveyors and architect. The minimum net cost of cottage and offices is £70, of half an acre of land £11, together £81. The expenses I have enumerated make up the rest. This estimate is made where, as in our case, no opposition is offered; but it would be greatly increased if compulsory powers had to be resorted to. We were finally defeated by the intricate technicalities of the Act, and by the very limited time it allowed. I have been in correspondence with a large number of Boards of Guardians on the subject of the Act of last year. There is a general agreement amongst them all as to its virtual failure, and also as to the alterations necessary to make it effective. Without a single exception, they are unanimous that nothing approaching the rent rendered necessary by the expenses of working the Act could be paid by the labourers. They all agree that the interest payable on the advances of the Board of Works must be diminished, and the time for repayment extended to 52 years. Most of them agree that the Act of last year is of little benefit, and must be amended in a thorough-going manner. Some of them consider half-an-acre of land too little, when the land necessary for house, offices and fences is deducted from it. They consider that the half-acre should be in addition to the surface required for these. In a large number of instances, the Guardians state that they had failed to carry out the provisions of the Act, owing to its complicated character, and also to the limited time allowed. Another serious difficulty mentioned was the cost of proving title, and cost of complying with the conditions imposed by the Board of Works; their standard of the minimum qualifications for granting a loan being too high, and making the cottage too expensive. With regard to the expense and difficulty connected with the proving of title, the Guardians suggest that the conveyance by the reputed owner should be held valid. They recommend that the Board of Works should obtain powers to dispense with title, and to accept conveyance from the reputed owner, if he is willing to execute it. It is no uncommon thing, even in London, to take title for granted. Miles of streets have been constructed on building leases, from owners whose title the builders are precluded from investigating. Another Amendment urged by the Guardians is, that power should be given them to repair or improve existing cottages, and to attach lots of land to them, not necessarily adjoining, provided they be sufficiently near. I may mention that I have allotment lands for my labourers, in some instances, a quarter of a mile distant from their cottages; and no complaint is made of inconvenience. This arrangement would often enable existing cottages to be turned to account. It frequently happens that the walls are good, and that a new and improved roof and offices is all that is required; but the existing Act gives no power to the Guardians to do this. They must, if they intervene at all, build entirely new cottages. The Bill before the House provides for most of these points; and I earnestly hope that Her Majesty's Government will give it a favourable reception, unless they contemplate bringing in a Bill themselves on entirely new lines. I shall venture to remind them, Sir, of the urgent need there is for effective legislation upon this subject. The miserable condition in which the labourers live is the most fertile source of pauperism, and of the maintenance of a pauper caste in Ireland; while the disabling of bread-winners of families by fever and other ailments caused by unhealthy dwellings imposes most serious burdens upon the ratepayers. I may quote, in illustration, one of the cases which came to my notice in the course of my inquiries. The Guardians of a large Union in the South of Ireland assured me that, although there were 5,000 labourers within its limits, there was scarcely a single labourer's dwelling fit for human habitation, or even fit for animals to be housed in. They stated this in reply to my question, whether, in their case, any advantage would be derived from empowering them to repair or improve existing cottages. Now, mark the consequences. The average daily number of paupers in this Union throughout the year was 668; the population 32,000; cost of pauperism for the year £13,354. I will now take two other Unions, nearly the same in size and population, and I find as follows:—Dundalk, with 43,000 inhabitants, had a daily average of only 267 paupers, and a total cost of £6,124; Antrim, with a population of 32,000, had a daily average of only 216 paupers, costing £4,224 for the entire year. Here you have in the Union, distinguished by specially defective dwellings, a proportion of pauperism three times as great as that in other Unions with larger populations, but better circumstanced as regards labourers' dwellings; and this principle will be found to hold good throughout. If those who claim that the Irish labourers' condition is steadily improving, because they are now getting higher wages than formerly, should undertake a special tour of inspection through the counties of Ireland, and visit the homes of the labourers, and see for themselves the conditions of their existence, their optimism would sustain a shock from what they would witness which would silence them for many a long day. It is true that wages have risen; but not to such an extent as even yet to furnish proper food and clothing; and they would expend the increase on improving these before doing so upon their dwellings. It appears, from the latest Census, that there were no less than 40,665 mud hovels in Ireland containing only one room. When a starving man gets a shilling he spends it in filling his belly, and not in improving his house. They have been so accustomed from infancy to these wretched homes, that it will be long before they expend any surplus they may have in raising their homes to a higher standard. Unless aided from without, they will long continue to reside in their degrading hovels, and disease and pauperism will long continue to result if the question be not effectively dealt with. One evil, the consequence of the wretchedness of Irish labourers' houses, is the development of pauperism. It is no hardship for those who live amid such squalid surroundings to migrate to the poorhouse, whenever employment becomes scarce. Another consequence, not less serious for the ratepayers, is that fever often strikes down the labourer and his family, and they then become a heavy burden upon the rates. In every Union there is a certain proportion of crippled individuals who are a lifelong charge upon it. This proportion is largely, if not entirely, caused by the squalid hovels in which they live. It is generally taken for granted that the condition of Ireland is improving; but I grieve to say that, if the Poor Law Returns are any indication, that is not the case. The pauper totals for the five years including 1879 and 1883 are as follows:—

1879......	91,814	costing	£845,608
1880......	100,856	,,	847,955
1881......	109,655	,,	929,967
1882......	112,829	,,	965,128
1883......	115,684	,,	967,483

To those figures must be added the amounts which medical charities cost the country. That is a head of expense peculiarly affected by unhealthy dwellings, for most of that outlay is for cases of families stricken with fever, owing to unhealthy dwellings, as I well know, having been for some years Chairman of a Board of Guardians. Now, the bill for medical charities which, in 1879, stood at £144,912, has been rising steadily as follows:—1879, £144,912; 1880, £146,030; 1881, £153,375; 1882, £157,244; 1883, £159,028; and the total cost entailed upon the ratepayers of Ireland for pauperism in those successive years, including medical charities, was—1879, £990,520; 1880, £993,985; 1881, £1,083,342; 1882, £1,122,372; 1883, £1,126,511; and the rate per head of the population rose within the same period from 3*s.* 8*d.* per head to 4*s.* 6*d.*, a truly alarming rate of increase. From the above figures it appears that there were about 25,000 more paupers in 1883 than in 1879, and that they cost the country £236,000 a-year more in the latter year than in the former; and that, notwithstanding that 1879, the first year of the series, was, to a considerable extent, a year of famine. The figures I have quoted, therefore, are inconsistent with the theory of progressive improvement in the condition of the labouring classes and of higher wages. There is no doubt that the cost of labour is higher during seed time and harvest than it was formerly; but these occupy but a limited portion of the year, and the advantage is counterbalanced by less employment being given during the remaining months. In any case, we are confronted with the fact that pauperism is increasing. It represents an addition to the local taxation of an already overtaxed and poor country of £236,000 a-year more than was the case five years ago. I regard it to be a matter of urgent necessity to check this alarming increase of poor rate; and I am convinced that no step we can take will be more effective for this purpose than to give the labourers healthy and decent habitations, and suitable allotments of land for gardens at fair rents, such as the farmers themselves pay. I have made an estimate of the annual amount to be found, in order to supplement the maximum rent which can be expected from the labourers. I have calculated that it would be about £250,000 per annum. I have shown that the increase in poor rates within the last five years is £236,000 per annum, or little less than the sum required. Therefore, even the restoration of the poor rate to what it was in 1879 would nearly repay the balance of £250,000 a-year required, as shown above. But I maintain that we should not be too sanguine in anticipating that the improved condition of Irish labourers would result in reversing the process of the last five years, and in reducing the poor rate as much below the standard of 1879 as it has, under existing conditions, risen above it. That is to say, the country would gain the difference between £250,000 a-year and £472,000 a-year directly; but that would be insignificant compared with the indirect gain to the nation in the contentment and improved condition, and in the increased value of the labour of so large and important a class of its population. It is taken for granted that, because the Irish labourers have borne their hard lot so patiently hitherto, they will continue to do so; but the reason why no serious agitation has taken place in the past is because they had no leaders, and no political power to tempt agitators to take up their cause. But the situation is about to undergo a very important change. This ill-used class will soon be invested with political powers, and their cause will become worth taking up. At the last Election, scarcely a single Irish Election address except my own contained any reference whatever to them; but, at the next Election, they will occupy a prominent figure in almost all. Funds will be collected, associations formed, and mass meetings held, and there will be a duplicate of the campaign of 1880-1. Let the Government, therefore, be wise in time. The claims of the labourers are moderate now, and to meet them in advance will disarm agitation. They may become much more difficult to deal with later on. The labourers feel that, while benefits have been flung with a lavish hand into the lap of the class above them, they themselves, the cultivators of the soil, have been mocked with sham legislation, which has failed to give them any relief worth mentioning. To them it must seem that the obstacles which hitherto tripped up all attempts to turn the Labourers' Clauses and Acts to account have been purposely flung in the way to insure failure. Since the Land Act of 1882 two amending Acts have been passed dealing with the labourers' question. I had the honour of introducing one of them; but it was so altered in its way through the House of Commons, and, subsequently, the House of Lords, that its value was greatly impaired; and since then, another Act was passed last year, but that also has practically failed, owing partly to the complicated nature and partly to the conditions attached to carrying it out. Their patience will not last for ever. Despairing of getting them relief in any other way, I rejoice that they will now have political power enough to compel attention to their just cause. Let not the Legislature, therefore, shut its eyes to consequences; let it be wise in time; let it take up the labourers' question in earnest; and let it, moreover, exercise a prudent liberality. I beg to second the Motion for the second reading of the Bill now before the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had intended to have seconded the Motion for the second reading of the Bill; but he rejoiced at what was then the mischance, of his place being taken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for County

Waterford (Mr. Villiers Stuart), because the hon. Gentleman made it a great deal more difficult for the Government to oppose the Bill. The hon. Gentleman was as well entitled to speak on a question of this kind as—if not more than—any other Member of the House; and the reason why he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said the hon. Gentleman would make opposition by the Government more difficult was, that the hon. Gentleman, besides the large interest he had taken in this question, had every reason to oppose anything like an unfair or unjust treatment of the question. The hon. Gentleman was a large holder of land, and had been intimately associated with Local Boards which had the carriage of such measures as this under their control, and the hon. Gentleman was a faithful follower of the right hon. Gentleman who at present occupied the Treasury Bench. Turning to the Bill itself, like every other Bill introduced into the House, it had provisions of diverse importance. There were some clauses of the Bill which he would consider as the very centre and core, and the rejection of which he would regard as fatal to the Bill; but there were others upon which, of course, they were open to suggestion. Although he must say that he thought the Bill had been very carefully drafted—and certainly the intention of those who drafted it was not to put one line inside the Bill which could endanger its passage through the House—with regard to the question of repairing cottages, he had got representations from several parts of the country—and he might take this opportunity of thanking the gentlemen who had been kind enough to send him their views on the question—agreeing in the statement that no larger sum than £10 or £20 was frequently required to repair cottages; whereas the erection of a cottage would cost, on an average, £100; and, in the most economical circumstances, would cost £70. In face of the fact that £10 or £20 would do all that was required, was it not manifestly absurd to insist that £70 or £100 should be expended? He knew that objection was raised to the clause which allowed a plot of land to be attached, though not adjacent; and objection was also raised to the power given to the Board to make a charge upon the owner of the house. Nobody knew better than the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, that this clause only applied to rural districts provisions which were already enacted by the English Artizans' Dwellings Act with regard to urban districts. He knew that that was a very strong proposal; but he wished to put it, especially to hon. Gentlemen from Ireland, that the Artizans' Dwellings Act should long ago have been applied to rural districts in Ireland. For Ireland was essentially a rural country of villages and small towns. With regard to the summoning of witnesses, he said that, in a great many cases, schemes had fallen through because witnesses had not attended. Under the Act as it stood, the person appointed to investigate the circumstances had a right to summon witnesses, but not to compel their attendance; and the result was that a person who was opposed to a scheme like this could actually nullify the scheme by the very simple expedient of not appearing to give evidence either for or against it. The House must appreciate the unfortunate fact in reference to the Act that it met with a great deal of passive resistance, and passive resistance from, he was sorry to say, more than one class of the community; and it would be one of the necessities in making the Act effective that there should be some means provided for defeating that passive resistance. That led him on naturally to the next clause, which gave the Local Government Board the power to carry out the scheme which the Board of Guardians had failed to do. This might appear a very strong measure; but he did not see it should meet with any opposition from, at least, the Government. It was a proposal not to take away power, but to add to the power of the central authority at Dublin. If they were to face the resistance to the Act, and make it work, it was necessary that there should be a reserve power of compulsion. With regard to the power of giving a lease, he must say there was one point, above all others, against which he had the right to protest, and that was the point of view of the dry-as-dust lawyer. They must get rid of the cant and of the obsolete traditions and shivering and feminine fears of any novelty which distinguished the legal mind. It would be said that the tenant, at present, had only a statutory term of 15 years, and that they proposed, under the Bill, to give him the power of leasing for 99 years; but the objection to that was a mere technical objection; because, for all practical purposes, the tenant was a tenant in perpetuity as long as he paid his rent. Therefore, being a tenant in perpetuity, surely he had a right to give a lease for 99 years. A life tenant could give such a lease, the argument being that the life tenant represented not only his own interest, but that of the person who followed. Had the life tenant as large a representation of the interest of those who succeeded him as the farmer who had fixity of tenure, and who was destined to give his farm, if he could possibly manage it, to his children? Before many years were over, he did not suppose there were many tenants in Ireland who would not be absolute owners of their land. At present there was a sort of competition between the Government and the landowners, as to who should be first to make the tenant in Ireland absolute owner; and therefore any objection on the point was a mere technical objection. The clause, moreover, was important in this way—that it would save a good many of the Boards from the necessity of buying up the freehold, leasehold tenure being just as good. There were differences of opinion as to the degrees of importance of the various sections of the Bill; but, by general consent, the three first points were these—First, simplification of the proof of title; second, reduction in the rate of interest; third, the power of extending the charges over the whole Union. Not a single person had written to him with regard to this subject, who had not stated that the expense of conveyancing and proving title was absolutely prohibitory. Indeed, in a memorial which he had received from one Board of Guardians, and which represented the general feeling now existing in Ireland, it was stated that the Union had determined not to spend a single penny in proof of title; and that, in case the Government did not come forward with some amendment of the Act on that question, Boards of Guardians all over the country would not proceed one step further, but would agree in allowing the Act to remain a dead letter. He would ask hon. Members above the Gangway, of what advantage it was to them that the expense in this matter should be so great? Not a penny of it went into the pockets of the landlords; and the fact was, that, practically, there was not a sod of land in Ireland the ownership of which was not as well known as was the ownership of Windsor Castle. This question of the search for title was, after all, a matter which interested one class—the lawyers, and the lawyers only; it put money into their pockets, and their pockets only. And, what with the Land Act and the Arrears Act, and the rest, even the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) would admit, that the lawyers had got enough. This expense of conveyancing and proof of title had actually in many cases cost as much as the land itself. [Several hon. MEMBERS: More.] That, in his opinion, was a monstrous and absurd state of things, good for nobody but the lawyers, who were being gorged with fees as the result of past legislation. He had no doubt that the House would have the interesting spectacle of the hon. and learned Gentleman the present Solicitor General and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) getting up and embracing each other, and denouncing every encroachment by the lay and practical mind on legal technicalities as an interference upon their preserves. They would say, doubtless, that conveyancing was a very difficult subject, and that to dare to touch it was sacrilege. Let the Government make any objections they liked to the plan of the Bill; but let them save the landlord and tenant and the labourer alike from this grievous and most unnecessary expenditure, or the Act of last year would remain a dead letter. He wanted the House to consider this most extraordinary state of things—that the labourers of Ireland, who were the more impoverished class of the community, were yet charged more money by the Treasury for advances than any other section of the people. When the landlords, some four or five years ago—in 1879 and 1880—wanted money, they got it on very reasonable terms—1 per cent—and for the first two years they had to pay no interest whatever. He was not going to revive the dead controversy of the fairness of the course then pursued, or to blame the Government for the handsome terms given to the landlords; but the fact remained—and he wanted to enforce it on the mind of the House—that while the landlords were charged 1 per cent for advances, the tenants were charged 5 per cent, and the labourers £5 7*s.* 6*d.* per cent; or, in other words, the rate of interest was in inverse proportion to the wealth of the person paying it. He maintained that unless the Government consented to a reduction of those two items of charge—the rate of interest, and the charges required for searches into titles—they might just as well repeal the Act as continue to mar the hopes of the Irish labourers with it, for it was useless. A shilling a-week was the most they could expect the labourer to pay, amounting to £2 12*s.* a-year, leaving a balance of about £3, taking into account the charge of 4*s.* for expenses. He need hardly say that that was almost prohibitory. A Board of Guardians which erected 1,000 cottages would find themselves with a deficit of nearly £3,000. As long as that state of things was allowed to continue, the Act would remain a dead letter. He did not want the Government to say that they objected to some small point or other in this Bill, and that, therefore, they objected to the Bill itself. Let the Government propose means of their own, if they would not accept those now put forward; but, at all events, let the Act be workable. There was no doubt that this question of the labourers was one of the greatest dangers to Ireland at the present moment. There was not a man who had the interest of that country at heart who did not wish that the reasonable demands now made should be complied with at once. At present everything—their destitution, the want of and the unsanitary condition of their house accommodation—tended to make the labourers of Ireland a danger to the State, and a blot upon the condition of the country itself. So long as they were not properly housed, and not otherwise improved in their condition, no one could expect anything like prosperity and peace and social order in Ireland. Another point which he would impress upon the Government was that before long—it did not matter whether in this Session or the next, or from this Ministry or another—these men would undoubtedly have the franchise; and he, therefore, appealed to the Government to do them this justice now. Would it not be well for Parliament to show them, before they compelled it to do justice, that it was willing to do it voluntarily, and without any other compulsion than the urgent demand of the consciences of its Members, or the still more urgent and kind demands which were now made by those who promoted the Bill? For these reasons, he hoped that the Government would either accept the Bill, or, as he had said, carry out its objects by means of their own.

Colonel COLTHURST, in supporting the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, said, he would not blame any class; but still there had undoubtedly been resistance to the operation of the Act of last Session. Besides the three points mentioned by the previous speaker, he attached the very greatest importance to Clause 4, which gave the sanitary authorities power to execute repairs themselves, and compulsorily to acquire premises requiring repair. It would be frequently found, as had been said by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), that an expenditure of £10 or £20 would make a cottage completely habitable and decent to dwell in, although it might not come up to all the requirements of a theoretically perfect labourer's dwelling. There was no new principle in this clause, which merely carried out the 31st section of the Land Act, under which the Sub-Commissioners were authorized to order the erection or repair of dwellings where they thought it necessary, or to advance public money to the occupier for the purpose of improvement. This clause, like the Act of last year, had been inoperative, the reason being that it was left to persons who were unwilling to carry it out. The tenant farmers had thrown every obstacle in the way of the working of the clause; but if the sanitary authority had the power to enter upon any place, whether a judicial rent had been fixed or not, and order repairs to be executed, or do the repairs themselves, then there would be a chance of the labourers getting some attention. The cost in most cases would be very small, and the comfort of the labouring population would be enormously increased. He quite agreed with what had been stated regarding the reduction in the rate of interest, and the extension of the period of repayment, and with the provision that the tenant under a judicial rent should be empowered to devise land for the purposes of this Bill, for they were all equally necessary in order to insure the working of the measure. In short, he looked upon it as being fair and reasonable; and he trusted that, although Her Majesty's Government might not approve of all its details, they would, at all events, give the Bill their favourable consideration, combined with a general support.

MR. MOORE said, they were all waiting with anxiety to hear what the Government were going to do in this matter. He (Mr. Moore) had, he would confess, somewhat adversely criticized the Labourers' Act of last year, and rather severely, because he looked with some misgiving upon its provisions; but he had since been converted, and had come to a different conclusion. This Bill embodied the principle which was put before the House by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), when the Land Act of 1881 was being discussed; and the question was now, seeing that everybody was agreed as to the principle, how the Act of last year was to be made workable. That Act was undoubtedly difficult to understand and to work. Even Members of Parliament, accustomed to the technicalities of Bills, found some difficulty in mastering the details of the measure; and if that were so, how much more difficult would it be for the elected members of Boards of Guardians—men very often in humble positions in life—to understand and administrate it? The thing to be done was to simplify the procedure of this Bill; for he was afraid it was too complicated to be easily workable, and it would be of little real value unless it was made more expeditious in its operation, and cheaper as a system. Above all, it was necessary to reduce the cost, not only with regard to the expense of conveyancing, but also as to the rate of interest to be charged. The present rate was one which it was beyond the power of the labourers to pay. Probably, the provision for giving an half-an-acre plot would seem a terribly Radical proposal to some hon. Members; but it could not be denied that one of the most distressing features of the labourers' question was the way in which they had been driven off the land, and made to congregate in villages, where the house accommodation was of the most wretched description, and the possession of this plot of land would undoubtedly raise the labourer in the social scale—in comfort and self-respect. There was no objection in itself to the labourers living away from their work and congregating in villages—that was done in France; but then look at the difference of the house accommodation. Where in Ireland would they find snug, warm cottages covered with creepers, and the broad roads which were the rule in France? Of course, it could not be proposed that, in Ireland, the sanitary authorities should buy land and turn the labourers out of the villages; but there was no difficulty in securing plots for them in the neighbourhood of those villages. The Irish labourers were a thoroughly deserving class, who worked much harder, and for longer hours, than the English agricultural labourers. During the last harvest, labourers were at famine prices. It had been impossible to get men to carry on the harvest work; and that difficulty was becoming greater and greater every year; and if these men were not afforded some degree of comfort in their humble way, lamentable consequences might ensue, for they would, in increasing numbers, join their relatives on the other side of the Atlantic. He hoped that this question of the housing of the labourers would meet with attention. It was quite as important a question as that which was involved in the Artizans' Dwellings Act for small towns. He endorsed every word that had been uttered by previous speakers; for, indeed, there was practical unanimity on the subject; and he therefore earnestly trusted that the Government would support the Bill, or bring in one of their own which would make the Act of last year operative.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he also cordially supported the Bill. No people in the world were so badly housed as the Irish labourers; and he wondered at the absence of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), who talked so much about the mud cabins in Ireland. When a Bill having for its object the doing away with these mud cabins was before the House, the hon. Member stayed away. He thought that if the hon. Member were earnestly desirous of improving the condition of the Irish labourers he would be in his place, and support the Bill of his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy), which would go a long way towards replacing the mud cabins by comfortable homes. The Bill would simplify the Bill of last year, which, though a very good measure, was unfortunately so complicated and so hard to understand that many Boards of Guardians gave up the effort to understand it, as being more than they could accomplish. They could not carry it out; and, therefore, the great object was now to amend it, so that they could do so. They particularly wished to curtail the legal expenses—the cost connected with the deed of conveyance, and so forth. On what ground did the Government wish to charge the unfortunate labourer £5 7*s.* 2*d.* per cent for the repayment of loans, when they would grant loans to the purchasers of land at £5 per cent for 35 years? He wished the Government to agree to this Bill, so that leases of 99 years might be entered into, as was the case in the cities and towns. The Government should recollect that this want of houses in Ireland was a great cause of pauperism. As a practical Guardian for many years, he knew that there were innumerable cases in which labourers, after years of hard work, were compelled to go into the workhouse, because they had no other house to go to. The providing of houses for the labouring population, therefore, would be a very great step towards the extinction of pauperism. He, and his hon. Friends, asked the Treasury to reduce the rate of interest, and to extend the payment over a longer period. Surely, when the Government could borrow money at £2¾ per cent, it should be sufficient for them to charge £3 7*s.* 2*d.* per cent instead of £5 7*s.* 2*d.*, and to advance the loans for 50 years. He would appeal to the Government if they could devise any better plan for simplifying the Bill of last year, to bring their plan forward; but, otherwise, he hoped they would not stand in the way of this Bill, which was brought forward to reduce the rate of interest and costs, and to secure a longer period for repayment.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that the discussion up to that point had disclosed a certain amount of unanimity, and had been, in many respects, very interesting; though he thought a considerable amount of pessimism had been introduced into the speeches of hon. Members. The Government had taken the responsibility for the provisions of the Act of 1883, but none of the credit. That credit belonged to the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), and those who acted with him in pressing the Bill upon the attention of the House; and he (Mr. Trevelyan) thought that those hon. Gentlemen had much underrated the benefits which they themselves had conferred upon Ireland in passing it. He feared that the sanguine hopes of hon. Members from Ireland must have been unduly raised, since they were so generally disappointed as to the operation of the Act. The hon. Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) said that the Act had been rendered futile, and that he did not see how it could prove beneficial to labourers in Ireland. The hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers Stuart) also talked of the failure of the Act; and the hon. Member for Galway, speaking of his own child, had descanted upon the necessity of turning it into a reality instead of a sham. Now, he (Mr. Trevelyan) would appeal to hon. Members to say whether it was fair to apply those words to the Labourers' Act and to its operation? The Act had only been in force for a year, and that a very short year; but in that brief period 70 Boards of Guardians had inaugurated upwards of 700 schemes, and of those Boards of Guardians 60 had carried the schemes so far as to present Petitions; there had been inquiries by Inspectors in 50 Unions with reference to 574 schemes; and in 38 Unions Orders had been actually made. There had been 34 non-compulsory Orders, including 216 houses, and 35 compulsory Orders, including 2,601 houses—that was to say, in the short period of less than one year, upwards of 2,800 houses would be erected under the operation of the Act up to the present time, and that was only a first instalment. The cost of these houses was, on an average, about £70 odd.

Mr. PARNELL said, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether law costs were included in that estimate?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, his impression was that the amount included law costs. The cost of a house would be something over £70, and, including the half-acre and incidental expenses, the entire cost might be averaged at £100, so that considerably upwards of £250,000 would, under the Act, in the first year have been borrowed by the Irish Unions from the Treasury; and it was impossible to say that a great benefit would not thus be conferred upon Ireland. The Act was an attempt to extend to the rural districts of Ireland something in the nature of the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, which had been extended to the large towns in England, and the terms of the Act were that where cottages were unfit for human habitation the Act should come into force. He did not know what hon. Members from Ireland meant by insufficient; but when 2,600 exceptional dwellings had been dealt with in the course of one year, he thought that could not be called a bad year's work, and that the Labourers' Act of 1883 could be spoken of as a failure. It was always an unfortunate thing, to his mind, that they should pull up legislative plants to see how they grew; and his desire had been to make the preliminary scheme so complete that it should have the chance of running for a few years without serious alteration, in order that the full effect of it might be produced and understood before any call for serious amendment was made. As to the increase of pauperism to which the hon. Member (Mr. Villiers Stuart) had referred, the hon. Gentleman's figures stopped at the point when things began to mend for the first time for many years, although it was not disputed that, up to a certain time, there had been an increase of pauperism, although opinions differed as to the cause of it. Up to May, 1883, the number of paupers in workhouses and persons receiving outdoor relief steadily, and with only one break of one week, increased; but in May, 1883, the number of people in the workhouses in Ireland fell off by 200 as against the year before, and continued falling off, until in the last week of last year there were 3,810 fewer in the workhouses than in the previous year. The number of persons in receipt of outdoor relief continued to increase down to November last year. Then it showed for the first time a falling-off, and by the end of last year there were 2,400 fewer outdoor paupers than in the year before. And if he could trust to his recollection of the subsequent year, the diminution in both indoor and outdoor poor had been continuous and very satisfactory; yet there was now brought before the House a Bill to amend the Act of last year. He did not dispute that the condition of the labouring classes of Ireland was not all we could wish it to be; and, therefore, he supported the Act of last year. It was a pity that this Bill was not in their hands before Saturday last, because, as it was, the Irish Government had only had three days for its consideration; and, seeing it involved matters upon which the Irish Government would have to consult with the Treasury as to matters upon which the Cabinet would have to decide, it would be seen that the time for consideration had not been sufficient. He would, however, say what he thought of the Bill. The first important clause was the 3rd, which provided that the Orders of the Local Government Board should not require to be confirmed by Parliament; and he must say no sufficient reason had been shown why that should not be so. Indeed, the existing Act provided that confirmation should not be required when no land was taken compulsorily, and where the ratepayers did not petition against the scheme. The cost to Boards of Guardians of the seven or eight confirming Bills now before Parliament would not be more than £5 each; and up to that time no opposition had been offered to any scheme. If opposition was offered, the fact would prove that if Parliament had not been asked to give its sanction great injustice might be done. There was no precedent for the compulsory taking of land otherwise than by Act of Parliament, and to infringe that principle would be to deprive Parliament of one of its most important functions, standing as a guarantee between the private proprietor and the public interest. The Act of 1883 made a concession to Ireland in allowing the Local Government Board to apply the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts by special order to urban districts; but it would be impossible to go further, and to extend the application of those provisions to all the districts of Ireland, without doing the same in England and Scotland, and that would require the consideration of the English Local Government Board and of the Scotch Board of Supervision. His first impression was, that it was proposed to apply the provisions of the Act to houses and cottages that could be made good by repairs. As regarded that point, several Irish landlords of well-known patriotism and humanity had, from time to time, made representations to him in this sense—namely, that the Act should be extended so as to give the Guardians power to take over the cottages and put them in a proper state of repair, as well as to take power to buy land and build new ones, in order to save the money of the ratepayers. He did not gather that this clause proposed to do that. This clause only gave the Guardians, or the sanitary authority, power to execute repairs and alterations, and then charge the premises with the burden, leaving the premises still in the hands of the landlord. That was a very different operation from the other.

Mr. HEALY: But they have the other power already.

Mr. TREVELYAN: No; the Guardians have not the other power. This clause went much further than that, and applied the Artizans' Dwellings Act to rural districts for the purpose of the repair of cottages, which was certainly too large a power to give off-hand in an Irish Bill. Indeed, it was a power which he would hesitate to extend to Ireland at all, until a very searching and rigorous inquiry was made. That searching and rigorous inquiry he had every reason to believe would be held. The Royal Commission which was now sitting to inquire into the housing of the poor was, he believed, about to extend its operations both to Ireland and Scotland.

Mr. PARNELL: But there is not an Irishman on it.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that in order to enable that Commission to extend its operations in a manner that should command the confidence of these two countries, steps had been taken to place upon it Gentlemen whom, he would venture to say, would carry out satisfactorily the objects which he had named.

Mr. PARNELL: Who are they?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, it was not his business to say at that moment who were the Gentlemen who had been invited to join the Commission, and whose names Her Majesty had been pleased to approve; but he was justified in saying that the Commission would extend its inquiry to Ireland.

Mr. HEALY: How many are appointed?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was not justified in stating any more than he had done. Until the Commission had brought its inquiry to a close, however, he would venture to say that the Irish Government could not adopt such a proposal as the extension of the Artizans' Dwellings Act to rural districts in Ireland. With respect to the half-acre plot of ground to be attached to all labourers' cottages in Ireland, that was a question on which he must decline also, at the present moment, to make any distinct declaration. It was a point with respect to which it would be absolutely necessary to consult the Local Government Board. He ventured to say that it would be impossible off-hand to decide on the advantages of having half-an-acre of ground attached to a labourers' cottage; but if, in the course of time, the Royal Commission recommended an allotment scheme for England and Scotland, he could understand that, in that case, in any measure that would be necessary to be introduced in order to carry out that allotment scheme, that recommendation would be extended to Ireland; but he could not accept the proposition until the Royal Commission had reported on it. It was not necessary to dwell on Clause 5, in so far as it depended on Clause 3; but any facilities as to the details of advertising and preparing the schemes the Government were perfectly prepared to give, and would carefully consider the other proposals contained in it. With regard to the provisions for summoning of witnesses and requiring production of documents, the clause containing them, Clause 6, was superfluous, as the powers of the Inspectors in that respect were already ample, and any person who refused to obey was deemed guilty of a misdemeanour.

Mr. HEALY: Why, then, have they not been exercised?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he had gathered from the remarks of the hon. Member for Galway that the Inspectors did not make a proper use of their powers; and he would, therefore, undertake to have a prompt and thorough inquiry on that point made by the Local Government Board. Clause 7 was a very serious clause. It was a clause which gave power, where the sanitary authority had failed or refused to make a scheme, for the Local Government Board to make one. This was so arbitrary a proposal that the Government would be quite unwilling to grant it.

So far from wishing to centralize, the present Government would be most anxious to extend the powers and responsibilities of local authorities, further, perhaps, than some people thought could be safely laid upon them; and he thought, where operations necessitated local pecuniary guarantees and local knowledge for carrying them out, it would be most unfortunate to give the central authority power to override them. If the local bodies did not do their duty in the matter, the ratepayers had their remedy in their own hands. Then, again, if the local authority did not see its way to adopt a scheme one year, it might do so the next. The clause, in fact, would abolish one of the most valuable parts of the machinery of the Labourers' Act of 1883—namely, that there should be two authorities concerned—an initiating authority and a confirming authority; and, therefore, it was inadmissible. Then came Clause 8, giving power to lease lands. On this clause he had formed a very strong *primâ facie* opinion. It seemed to him that this clause proposed to cut at the root of the guarantees given by the Labourers' Act of 1883. The Labourers' Act of 1883 gave this guarantee — that the land which was taken from the landlord would be taken by a responsible local authority, which would give a pecuniary guarantee. That local body would, therefore, certainly not undertake the responsibility, unless there was very good reason for it; but, in this case, any tenant might give a lease to any person for a term of years, for a period which would be very little short of freehold possession, and he might give it under circumstances which would make all supervision and guarantee almost nugatory. He thought it would be impossible so to guard the clause, if this proposal were carried into effect, as to prevent the tenant subleasing to his own son or near relative; and the result would be, so far as he could learn, to introduce into and revive again in Ireland that which they were all so eager to discourage and banish from it—the worst social evil from which it had ever suffered—the sub-division of agricultural land. The question of Clause 9 he was very unwilling to argue. He was afraid the matter would take him into deep water; and all he could say was, that the Government was most anxious, as far as possible, to ascertain any means by which the legal expenses of these transactions could be diminished, and he would give hon. Members the very strongest pledge that he would consult with the Law Officers, and see whether there was any process to be discovered for reducing these expenses. But, at the same time, he must confess that he was not so hopeful as the draftsman who prepared the Bill, nor as the hon. Gentleman who had supported it. As far as he could gather, the Guardians could at that moment, if they chose, take a title of 12 years; but if they did take 12 years instead of 40, the clause would not indemnify them from the consequences, for he did not gather that it gave them a statutory title in the same sense as the Landed Estates Court. But if it did give a statutory title, he still could not see how the real difficulty was got over — the difficulty of seeing that the previous owners did not suffer an injustice. Of course, it would be quite possible for the Guardians to be allowed to make out a title, and to have the money at once paid into Court; but, then, the question of searching the titles for the purpose of seeing how the money should be distributed would have to be got over, and at somebody's expense. That somebody clearly could not be the landlord. It therefore merely came to this—whether the State should pay the expenses, or whether the Guardians should run the risk of having to pay them. The proposition that the State should pay them was a very serious one, and he did not quite see upon what principle it could be made. At the same time, he felt quite unable to accept the clause as it stood. He was informed it would be of no benefit to the Guardians whatever; and he must repeat, that the only promise he could make was, that the question should be very carefully considered by the Law Officers; and if any human means could be found whereby what now appeared to be an insurmountable difficulty could be overcome, he would see that they were availed of. Now he came to the two concluding clauses of the Bill, which the hon. Member for Galway declared to contain the essential point of the measure. As regarded the present terms of payment, the hon. Member appeared to consider that the Irish labourers—and he (Mr. Trevelyan) was quite willing to accept their definition given by hon. Members—were exceptionally burdened. The Irish labourer had to pay £5 7*s.* 2*d.* for 30 years for every £100. But he paid that not under statute, but under the Treasury Minute which regulated the great majority of loans. He (Mr. Trevelyan) had more than once been to the Treasury, on the business of his own constituents, and had always been met with the hard-and-fast rule, and been informed that in England and Scotland people who borrowed money from the Government must borrow it on the terms laid down in this Treasury Minute. Hon. Gentlemen had referred to a class of persons in Ireland who had been better treated; and, without much hope that the precedent could be accepted, observed that the landlords of Ireland in the winter of 1879-80 were allowed to borrow very large sums at the rate of £1 per cent. Now, in the first place, he (Mr. Trevelyan) had more than once expressed his opinion in the House that that was a very questionable transaction. At any rate, these loans were given in the most perfect good faith, under the pressure of a great fear lest the Irish people should suffer from hunger; and the object of the arrangement was to provide employment for the people; but, however that might be, he had argued pretty often in the House that that was a very bad way of meeting distress. But that advance was made for a special and temporary purpose; whereas this operation of the Treasury lending to Boards of Guardians would be permanent, universal, and constantly recurring, and was applicable to all loans. A much better analogy was furnished in the case of the loans for the purchase of land under the Land Act at £5 per cent for a term of 35 years, as quoted by the hon. Member for Galway. In that case the interest was 3½ per cent; while in the case of the Treasury Minute which governed the Act of 1883 it was 3¾. Then there was this difference—in the first place, hon. Members must remember that the tenants could only borrow three-fourths of the sum, and had to find the other fourth themselves; whereas in this case the Boards of Guardians would borrow the entire sum; and, secondly, it should be borne in mind that the terms of interest under the Land Act were quite exceptional—that no such thing as lending money for the purpose of creating a peasant proprietary had ever been known in England at all; whereas loans of the character under the Labourers' Act were frequently granted on the same terms as those applied in Ireland. But if the other provisions of the Bill were such as the Government could approve, the mere fact of its containing a much too favourable proposal of advance—namely, for 52 years, at only 3 per cent—would not, of itself, be insuperable, and a sufficient cause to reject the measure, and he would not on that account be unwilling to approach the Treasury on the subject, if he were not compelled, because of the other provisions, to ask the Government to reject the Bill. He was perfectly willing, however, to see whether the Treasury would give better terms than they were in the habit of doing; but the terms mentioned in the Bill it would be absolutely impossible to accept. Fifty-two years was a period during which, in many cases, the product of the loan would have been exhausted, for the cottage would be worth very much less at the end of that time than at the beginning. Therefore, to lend money for that term at 3 per cent was a step which, no doubt, the Treasury would be slow to take—in fact, they would never think of taking it on any ground whatsoever. On the last point—with regard to the area of chargeability—he could only say that the question was discussed very frequently by the Irish Government, when they were drawing up their Amendments to the Bill of the hon. Member for Galway; and they came to the conclusion that it would invalidate the strict supervision which the local authorities should give to schemes under the Bill, if the incidence of taxation could be spread over the entire Union. Whether the Local Government Board in Ireland had altered their opinion he did not know; but he had no reason to think that they had. He certainly had not heard anything himself to induce him to change his opinion. For all these reasons it was quite evident, after having gone very carefully through it, that it was a Bill to which the Government could not ask the House to give a second reading. But there were three points to which the Government would be glad to give their consideration in order to deal with them. The first was whether, following the provisions and conditions of the Act of 1883, cottages might not be taken over by the Boards of Guardians for repair, as well as plots of ground acquired for building new cottages. Secondly, he was perfectly willing to approach the Treasury with reference to the money terms of the Bill; and, thirdly, he would ask the Law Officers and the Members of the Local Government Board, or the Board of Works, who were half lawyers from their minute acquaintance with these subjects, to look very closely into the question of whether there could be any available diminution in the law expenses of these transactions. Further, and lastly, the Irish Government were ready, and even eager, to receive and consider the Report of the Royal Commission when it inquired into the condition of the rural population of the urban districts of Ireland, in order to see what could be done. It was impossible for him, however, to ask the House to give a second reading to this Bill as it stood, and he had arrived at that determination after a very close and minute consideration of the Bill.

MR. PARNELL: Sir, the course which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has been pursuing this Session with regard to Bills brought forward by Irish Members, and supported by the unanimous feeling of Members for Ireland sitting on both sides of the House, reminds me very much of the course which was followed in the last Parliament by two right hon. Gentlemen who then held the same office, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther). These right hon. Gentlemen, upon every occasion when Bills were brought forward by Irish Members, met them with a refusal or a negative; and the right hon. Gentleman who now holds the same Office seems to consider it his highest duty to imitate the example—the evil example—of his two Predecessors. This is the third Bill this Session which the Irish Members have brought forward, and which were supported, not only by the unanimous opinion of the Irish Members who sit on those Benches, but by those Irish Members who are supporters of Her Majesty's Government. This is the third Bill, I say, so introduced, which has been met with a blank refusal by the right hon. Gentleman; and he certainly cannot complain, since he has chosen to turn himself into a deliberate obstructor of Irish legislation, if he and his Government meet with a little retaliation in these matters. I hope the lesson will not be thrown away on those who have been dubbed by the Prime Minister "nominal Home Rulers," that this is the reward that they, and the more regular supporters of the Liberal Party, receive for their journeys and exertions in coming so industriously, on every critical occasion, to support the Government. I do not know that I ever listened to a speech with more pain than that which I have experienced while listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He seemed entirely to have misunderstood the true gravity of this question. If he turned to the Census of the decennial period, ending 1881, he would find that, of a labouring population of only 247,855, close on 100,000 left the country. In fact, the emigration of other classes of the people, as compared with the agricultural labourers, was a mere fraction. Now, Sir, the hon. Member for the borough of Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to three vital points in the Bill, and he entreated him to deal with those, and not to base his opposition to the Bill upon minor and unimportant points; but it was not until the end of his speech that the right hon. Gentleman deigned to refer to those three points, although it had been pointed out that they were the vital points of the Bill. The three points to which we attach most vital importance are the diminution of the expense of proving the title where the landlord dissents from the scheme brought forward by the Board of Guardians; the reduction of interest, and the extension of the period of payment; and the extension of the area of chargeability. The right hon. Gentleman devoted a very large portion of his speech to rebutting features in the Bill which were certainly of minor importance, and he paid very little attention to the important and more weighty subjects brought under his notice. He has told us that we are claiming too little credit for the working of the Act; but I should be only too glad if we possibly could, as honest men, claim, in anticipation, that this Act of last Session was likely to work successfully. It was drafted by my hon. Friend the Member for Galway and myself; it was carried with but very little assistance from the Government, and against the passive resistance of hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway on this side (the Conservatives), so that we should be only too glad to claim all the credit we could for that Act; but we do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in his estimate of what it has done for the labourers of Ireland. It is a mere illusion for the right hon. Gentleman to suppose that the erection of the large number of labourers' cottages which he read to the House is at all likely to be carried out. According to all the evidence which has been given at the inquiries regarding those schemes, and which must have come under the notice of the Department of which the right hon. Gentleman is President, the cost of the investigation of title in an opposed scheme will be as much as the cost of building the house—that is, the average cost of each investigation will be £50, making every allowance for the fact that many of them will be very simple to carry out. In the estimates which have been made by Boards of Guardians throughout the country regarding the building of those houses, and the obtaining of lands, no sufficient provision has been made for the cost of proving title; because it could not be known in advance whether that cost would have to be borne by the Guardians or by the landlords. I am now convinced that in cases where the landlords dissent, or something like 85 per cent of the whole number of schemes under the Act, the Boards of Guardians, finding themselves face to face with this great expense of proving the title, will probably drop the schemes altogether. The result will be that the great expectations raised in the minds of the agricultural labourers as to the operation of the Act by this course of action will be turned to bitter disappointment. This is a very serious question. It is true these labourers have been a patient and long-suffering class. They have not committed outrages, and they have not houghed cattle; nor have they done any of those numerous things which appear to be necessary to direct the attention of the Liberal Government to legislation for Ireland. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, when he talks with such confidence of the Report of a Royal Commission, which consists entirely of Englishmen, whether he really intends to wait until the Irish labourers burn the houses over the heads of the dissenting landlords before he does anything? These labourers have been very patient and long-suffering; and it is intolerable we should be told that these people may wait on their mud floors and under their leaky roofs until this Royal Commission has first investigated the grievances of English labourers in the course of the next 12 months or two years, and that then it will go over to Ireland to investigate a question which has been already investigated, until there is no more room for investigation. It is not investigation that is required; but the removal of difficulties that stand in the way of working the measure. We had the Devon Commission 40 years ago, which amassed a vast amount of valuable information as to the condition of the agricultural labourers, and made recommendations which have never been acted upon. We have discharged our responsibility. We have pointed out difficulties in the way of the working of this Act, and on the head of the Government will be the responsibility of obstructing this measure, and of doing what is necessary to render the working of it a reality and not a sham. I think that if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had been in his place he would not have permitted the right hon. Gentleman to have taken up his present attitude. The Prime Minister told us, early in the Session, that the Bill would receive favourable attention, and hinted it would get exceptional facilities for passing, and that, if it were blocked, Government time would be given to it. But the right hon. Gentleman is not in his place now. I can only regret his absence, and deplore that he should be represented by so poor a substitute—a Gentleman with so very poor sympathy for Ireland as the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He said that the ingenuity of the Irish lawyers would be ransacked to endeavour to make these transfers of land less expensive, adding that that could not be done without an Act of Parliament. But the right hon. Gentleman has not told us even that he will bring in any Bill to simplify the conveyancing of the land, so as to prevent the failure of the Act in so important a respect. The result of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman will be to deter the Boards of Guardians from putting the Act in motion unless they are obliged; and, in fact, it has already been found very difficult to get them to do so. I wish to give every recognition to the way in which the Act has been received by the elected Guardians; but in every case it has been left to the *ex-officio* Guardians to obstruct the working of the measure. They have insisted on inquiries, which causes charges and costs of a useless description, without any convenience or advantage to the public. The elected Guardians have done everything which could reasonably be expected to make the measure a success; but it is out of the question to expect that they will incur those charges and costs for the purpose of filling the pockets of gentlemen of the long robe in Ireland, who have already taken far too large a share of the good things resulting from this land legislation. The right hon. Gentleman, too, refused an extension of the area. I am certainly surprised he should have taken up that attitude; for two years ago, if not more recently, he announced that he himself was going to bring forward a measure for Union rating in Ireland. I suppose that, even in that respect, the good intentions of the right hon. Gentleman have been changed by contact with the permanent officials of the Local Government Board. He also says it would be hopeless to approach the Treasury asking for an extension of the period of repayment to 52 years, or to get the rate of interest reduced below 3½ per cent. That augurs very little for the wonderful scheme of land purchase which the right hon. Gentleman expects to introduce, and which I am curious to know how it will work out. The matter stands thus—For your loans to landlords you charged only 1 per cent; for the loans to the tenants 3½ per cent; and you charge the labourers—the most impoverished class in the community—£3 17*s.* 8*d.*, or about 3¾ per cent. Now, if there was one thing that public opinion expressed itself clearly upon last winter it was that of the housing of the poor, both in England and Ireland, and the unanimous opinion was that the public Exchequer should make exceptional advances, in the shape of loans, for the purpose of housing decently the agricultural and labouring populations of the Three Kingdoms; and it is intolerable, therefore, when we make a request, that we should be met with the poor encouragement the right hon. Gentleman has given us on the present occasion. However, we have taken the responsibility off our shoulders. We have undertaken to present a Bill to the notice of this House of an essentially moderate character—simply confined to meeting obvious defects of the Act which experience of its working has shown to exist. In doing so, we run the risk of being denounced by many of our own friends. But I am glad our Bill is a moderate one. The fact of its being so, and of its being received in the way it has been, will open the eyes of the Irish people to the extreme difficulty of obtaining any sort of justice or fair play even from a Liberal Government, and it will show some of the difficulties that we have to contend with in these matters. The responsibility is now transferred to the shoulders of the right hon. Gentleman; and if the result is as it should be, and as it must be, these schemes brought forward under the Act will hopelessly break down in the working, and the right hon. Gentleman will only have himself to thank for it that it is so.

MR. GIBSON said, that any measure calling itself either an original or amending measure, having for its object the building or improvement of labourers' cottages in Ireland, was obviously, from the nature of things, entitled to a most respectful hearing, and the kindest and closest sympathy of the House. He was quite sure that every hon. Member who had assisted in the discussion had done so with an anxious desire to see whether or not a good case had been made out for the second reading of the Bill. Both hon. Gentlemen, the Mover and Seconder of the measure, had put the matter in a very persuasive point of view, when they said that the object of it was to make the Act recently passed workable. That, of course, suggested that the Act was not workable, and that if it was not amended it would remain a dead letter. He (Mr. Gibson) had listened attentively to the whole discussion, and the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who, as President of the Local Government Board in Ireland, was charged with carrying it out, and the record he had given was that a steady and increasing work was being done under the Act; and, therefore, it was obvious that its operation was a substantial one. He (Mr. Gibson) had also seen—as everyone who read the Irish newspapers must have seen—that the Act, although it had attracted a great amount of attention in Ireland, having been brought before the attention of a great many bodies of local authorities, was only now beginning to be thoroughly understood and realized by many of them; and, next year, they might fairly and reasonably expect that, with increasing knowledge and experience, it would come to have a wider operation. The Act had really only been in operation between eight and nine months, and must obviously require a strong case to show that it was necessary to amend an Act so shortly after its passing, as they were now asked to do. If it could be shown, by those who were responsible for its administration, that it had been instrumental in the building of 2,000 houses, and that a great many schemes were waiting to be considered, it was clear that it was an Act which was working, and was likely to work more. As regarded the remarks of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in reference to the spirit in which the Act had been received when it was presented in August last, all he (Mr. Gibson) could say was, that there never was a Bill introduced at any time into Parliament that was more provocative of criticism, and met with so little criticism of a hostile character. Every hon. Member knew that any single Member could have stopped the progress of the Bill had he so wished; but it was the loyal co-operation of the landlords above the Gangway who practically enabled the Bill to pass into law at all. So that when the hon. Member for the City of Cork, in a sort of "aside," as if he were uttering a mere truism, stated that the measure was resisted by the Irish landlords, he (Mr. Gibson) might also be permitted to have his "aside," and to reply that there was no foundation in fact for the statement. Now, it was noteworthy that the great Department in Ireland that had the administration of this Bill intrusted to it was the Local Government Board there, and the Local Government Board was a Board, of course, of much importance. He (Mr. Gibson), however, was not aware that that body had found it necessary, in its administration of the Act, to ask for any amendment of it this Session; and, in his idea, it would be a strong thing to do to force upon that Board powers which it did not need. [Mr. HEALY: Hear, hear!] Parliament had a right to take into account these matters, when they found that a great measure intrusted to a certain Department was found not to require that Department to have to come to Parliament to ask for further powers to enable it to work the Act properly. Another question, too, was obviously how the Act was administered; but if there were any faults in its administration, of course that was a matter that could readily be corrected, by their being brought under the notice of the Government by Questions in the House. The subject was an enticing one; but he should not be induced to go into it. What was sought to be accomplished, and what he could understand the necessity for, and was favourable to, was the simplification and cheapening of the process of transfer, the proving of title, and the lessening of the cost of conveyancing by some diminution of the Stamp Duty, and otherwise. But he did not think that the measure before the House would accomplish that; and he thought that, possibly, some machinery might be suggested in the scheme which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was going to introduce in a few days, by which the transfer of land and the examination of title, so far as regarded cost, might be diminished and rendered a subject of less trouble. With regard to the first point, the Bill proposed to treat a man as the owner of property, who was not so, and would allow him to grant leases of portions of that property, for the purpose of transferring from him that which might, and actually did, belong to some one else. That, no doubt, would be a simplification of title; but it would be attended with inconvenience to certain persons—the real owners of the property in question. In reference to the subject of the diminution of the amount of interest payable to the Government on their advances, he did not propose to discuss that subject, it being one on which Irishmen invariably sank all differences of Party and endeavoured to approach in a broad and catholic spirit. Accordingly, he was disposed to leave that question where he found it, hoping that the Treasury would find it possible for once to open their hearts and endeavour to do something in the way of liberal and generous action as regarded it in a frank and fair way. The other topic suggested was that of making a change in the area of charge—a subject which he thought a very important one—but he was not aware that there had been anything adduced to show the pressing necessity for a change in that direction. He could not help saying that there were other clauses in the Bill which had not been noticed, or had been passed over lightly; for instance, as regarded the powers enabling the sanitary authorities to appropriate, under certain conditions, half-an-acre of land for the labourer's dwelling and his use, there was nothing which would prevent the labourers on one farm getting half-an-acre on another; and he (Mr. Gibson) could see that there would be great heartburnings and no end of complications between the tenants and labourers on that account, without great care and caution were exercised. He also thought that the clause sweeping away the protection afforded when the land was compulsorily taken, in requiring a Provisional Order, was one which it was quite obvious could not be assented to. He was as anxious as anyone could be to advance the condition of the Irish labourer and improve his cottage. Last year he, and those who acted with him, willingly assented to the passing of the Labourers' Act for Ireland. That Act was now in operation; indeed, he believed it was increasing in operation. It was a good Act, so far as it had been tested, and he did not think a case had now been made out for its amendment. If, however, in the future, it should be shown on questions of detail that it was not working smoothly and well, why then it would be time to come to Parliament, and ask them to consider whether they were not willing to revise the work and make it better.

MR. W. SHAW said, he did not believe that any hon. Member from Ireland who knew anything of the working of the Labourers' Act would think that it did not require some amendment. He said, for himself, that it required a great deal of amendment, so much so, that he had had an expectation that the Government would bring in an amending Bill. In fact, in the Union with which he was most connected the Act was almost a dead letter. It had been brought in last year along with another Bill—the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Bill—at a period of the Session when it was impossible to amend it in any way; and they had been told that if they touched its provisions at all it would come to a speedy end. The consequence was that the Irish Labourers' Act and the Tramways and Public Companies Act passed in a shape in which they were found to be unworkable; for he did not believe that ever two Bills passed through the House that more needed amendment than they did. He was much disappointed at the manner in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had met the Bill. He (Mr. Shaw) did not exactly know at that moment what course he might take in consequence of that opposition; but, at any rate, when the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), who now led the Opposition, and who led it very well, brought forward his next Vote of Censure—and he (Mr. Shaw) hoped the noble Lord would keep to what he had said on the point—it would be for the Irish Members to consider whether they should not signalize their disappointment with the conduct of the Government as regarded the matter. That there was reason for its amendment was shown by the fact that every official of the Irish Local Government Board that he (Mr. Shaw) had met admitted it to be unworkable. It was impossible to extend the operation of the Act throughout Ireland; for, with its present cost, it imposed a burden on the Unions which many of them could not bear, and the whole machinery was too elaborate. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had spoken of the Royal Commission sitting in Dublin. If it did that, it would not do much good. If, however, the Commissioners desired to do some good in Ireland, they should tramp through the country and see the miserable dwellings of the Irish labourers for themselves; and, if they did so, they would raise a cry which would go to the public mind and heart of this country. But they would really do no such thing. He would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he would not bring in a measure himself, should refer the Bill to a Committee of Irish Members. The right hon. Gentleman had himself admitted that, in a good many points, the Act should be amended; and if he referred it to a Select Committee there would be an amount of attention given to it by Members on both sides of the House which would make it a perfectly good, workable Bill. If, however, he did not do so, they would have very good cause of complaint.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) spoke of the Labourers' Act having been loyally taken up by the elected Guardians and obstructed by the *ex-officio* Guardians; but it was his (Colonel King-Harman's) opinion, from personal knowledge, that a more unfounded statement than that was never made. The main cause why the Labourers' Act had not worked better and more extensively was that it had been used by the elected Guardians as an instrument of terrorism, and not in the spirit in which the House had intended it to be applied. In a number of cases with which he was acquainted efforts had been made by the elected Guardians to place cottages on the holdings of tenants differing from them in political or other opinions; and several schemes had been thrown out, because it was attempted to place the houses not where they were really wanted, but simply for the annoyance of loyal and respectable men. Although he thought the Labourers' Act required amendment, it was not his intention to vote at all on the question, for the simple reason that there were some points in the Bill which were good. He sincerely hoped that, as soon as possible, the Chief Secretary for Ireland would carry out the promise to do his best to induce the Treasury to modify the cost of procedure. There were, however, other clauses in the Bill which made it impossible for him to support it. He knew a number of hon. Gentlemen who knew nothing about the Bill would support it, and that a larger number who knew nothing about it would vote against it; but he would content himself by simply walking out of the House.

MR. MOLLOY said, he would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether he would consent to remit this matter to a Select Committee, and thus save the House the trouble of a Division?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that some of the reasons he had given for the rejection of the Bill had been misunderstood. He had desired to express his goodwill to the object of the Bill, although he wished to say it was such a Bill that the Government could not accept. He had consulted with his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and they thought that the question of the housing of the Irish poor was one which might very well be referred to a Select Committee. Therefore, although the Bill was not such that he could assent to its second reading, he had no objection to the subject itself being referred to a Select Committee.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 75; Noes 138: Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 101.)

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (THAMES CROSSINGS) BILL.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG discharged from further attendance on the Select Committee on Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill, &c.:—Mr. TATTON EGERTON added to the Committee.—(*Sir Henry Hussey Vivian.*)

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 22*nd May*, 1884.

MINUTES—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, further on account, £3,468,550.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Metropolitan District Railway,* and *passed.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order * [221];

Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order * [222]; Railway Regulation Acts Amendment * [225].

First Reading — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) * [223].

Second Reading—Metropolitan Police * [209].

Committee—Report—School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) * [45-224].

Third Reading—Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) * [181]; Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) [75], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE—REPORT.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER: In laying the Report on the Table I wish briefly to state the arrangements made by the Committee on Public Petitions for carrying out the pledge which I made on their behalf on Monday on the Motion of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). As the House understands, Petitions are supposed to be presented by Members "in their places," though, owing to the great increase in the number of Petitions, this practice has, in a great measure, been superseded by "the bag system," to the great saving of time and convenience of Members. Still the system requires limitation and control, and your Predecessor in the Chair made it a rule that no Petitions should be received after 5 of the clock to avoid the confusion which would otherwise arise from Petitions being passed in during any time of the Sitting, and the consequent setting and re-setting of the printing type. The Committee on Public Petitions are unanimously of opinion that this rule should be adhered to; but when my hon. and gallant Friend spoke of the inconvenience entailed on those hon. Members who came down after 5 in having their Petitions returned, it occurred to me that this inconvenience might be, to a great degree, met by "a supplemental bag," for the reception of such Petitions as might arrive after 5 and before 6, such bag to be cleared on the following day, and the Petitions to be then taken as presented and entered accordingly in the Votes. But I now find that I can go further, and that there is no difficulty, so far as the Journal Office is concerned, in the bag remaining during the entire Sitting, and that the Speaker will give his assent and directions to that effect. The time for the presentation of Petitions will remain as before, up to 5 of the clock; and when the usual bag has disappeared, the "supplemental bag" will take its place, which, to avoid confusion, will be of a different colour. Members must, of course, make their own arrangements with regard to the insertion of the notices of Petitions in the public papers, so as to make the date of presentation correspond with the entry of them in the Votes; but, so far as the Committee is concerned, it will be a source of much satisfaction to them if they have been enabled to promote the convenience of the House without disarranging the Journal Office.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL (*by Order.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

(Queen's *Consent* signified.)

MR. BROADHURST said, he did not know whether he was quite in Order; but he wished to have an explanation in regard to the Metropolitan District Railway Bill, the third reading of which he had come down to the House, at considerable inconvenience, to oppose. He had been sitting there ever since the House was made with that intention, and he could assure the House that the Bill was one in which great interest was taken.

MR. SPEAKER: I put the Question distinctly from the Chair that the Bill be read a third time, and there was no opposition. I am, therefore, afraid that the hon. Member is now too late.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Sir ARTHUR OTWAY) said, he had heard the Question most distinctly put from the Chair. Not only so; but the hon. Baronet the Member for Walsall (Sir Charles Forster), who had charge of the Private Business of the House, within his (Sir Arthur Otway's) hearing, called upon the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) by name.

QUESTIONS.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—ROYAL CARRIAGE DEPARTMENT—MOUNTINGS FOR NAVAL ORDNANCE—REDUCTION OF HANDS.

Mr. BOORD asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, for several years past, nearly the whole of the mountings for Naval Ordnance, except hydraulic mountings, have been manufactured in the Royal Carriage Department at Woolwich; whether any cause has arisen for dissatisfaction on the part of the Admiralty either with respect to the quality of the work or the charges for manufacture; whether the orders given to the said Department by the Admiralty have been for some few years past slowly diminishing in quantity, and are this year very considerably less than they have ever been previously; and, whether the Admiralty are now sending their orders for such work to private firms, or do they propose that the manufacture shall be undertaken in the Royal Dockyards instead of, as heretofore, in the Royal Arsenal; and, in the event of any such change being in contemplation, what saving to the State is estimated to result therefrom?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Up to the end of the financial year 1882-3, nearly all mountings for naval ordnance, except hydraulic mountings, were provided by the War Department, and paid for out of Army Votes; and it is believed that most of them were manufactured in the Royal Carriage Department at Woolwich. The Admiralty had no cause for dissatisfaction with the quality of the work; its cost concerned the War Department only. Last year was the first in which the Admiralty gave direct orders to Woolwich for the manufacture of gun mountings: this year the orders will be somewhat diminished; but I am not in a position to give any pledge as to the source from which the supply will be obtained in future. There is no immediate intention to manufacture mountings in the Dockyards. The object of the change of arrangements has been to make the Admiralty more directly responsible for the provision of gun mountings; and it is believed that advantage will be thereby gained to the Public Service.

Mr. BOORD asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether a considerable discharge of hands from the Royal Carriage Department, to the extent of 200 or 300, is in contemplation; and, if so, whether such reduction is due to the diminution of orders from the Admiralty for naval carriages and slides; and, whether it would be possible in time of slackness to shorten the hours of work in preference to discharging trained hands, thereby distributing the distress likely to be felt on such occasions, and to some extent obviating the injury always sustained by unused machinery?

Mr. BRAND: Certain reductions in the Royal Carriage Department have taken place owing to a diminution in the number of orders, and others are contemplated on account of alterations in construction, which involve the use of more machinery and less labour. It is undesirable to reduce the number of working hours, as highly skilled artizans will not accept from the Government lower wages than they can obtain in other quarters.

NAVY—COASTGUARD STATION IN DONEGAL.

Mr. LEA asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If, in 1878, Admiral Phillimore, then Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves, urged the building of a new Coastguard station at Kincaslagh, county Donegal, and if, in consequence of his representations, an officer of the Board of Works was sent down, who selected a site for the station; if, shortly after, the Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves so strongly approved of his predecessor's action that a ninety-nine years' lease of the ground was obtained in October 1881, the tenant right settled for, and all preliminary arrangements made; and, if, after so much expense incurred, it is intended to proceed with the work?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The site selected for the new Coastguard station has been again inspected, and further inquiry has led the Admiralty to decide against erecting the buildings at Kincaslagh.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—FRANCE AND THE AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Mr. BROWN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can now state whether there is any truth in the alleged negotiation between the African International Association and the French, whereby the French are to obtain the property, treaties, and stations of the Company on the Upper Congo?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to this Question, and to that of my right hon. Friend the Member for Lynn (Mr. Bourke), I can only refer to the replies given in "another place" by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to the effect that he had applied for authorization to make public the information confidentially communicated to him on the subject referred to in these Questions. I hope, therefore, very shortly to be able to give more complete information.

BOARD OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION—THE EXAMINERS.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Do the Intermediate Education secretaries defer publishing each year's list of examiners till it is too late to cancel any unsuitable appointment; has a gentleman been appointed to examine this year in arithmetic, who was also examiner in 1881 and in 1882; has he been thus selected for re-employment without the usual interval of two years since his previous employment, and in preference to others on the list more specially qualified, who have never been employed at all; is this examiner a brother-in-law of one of the secretaries; and, has the Lord Lieutenant given his sanction to the appointment?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Assistant Commissioners who act as secretaries at the intermediate education examination, inform me that they have no authority to publish the names of selected examiners until authorized by the Board to do so; and that it is the practice of the Board not to authorize such publication until the commencement of the examination. A gentleman has been appointed to examine in arithmetic this year who examined in 1881 and 1882. His case is not exceptional, as 10 other examiners have been similarly re-appointed. There is no rule of the Board requiring an interval of two years to elapse before re-appointment. The gentleman referred to is a brother-in-law of one of the Assistant Commissioners. He was, in the first instance, appointed by the Board to examine in arithmetic and book-keeping, because they considered him specially qualified for the duty by long experience, and they re-appointed him because he discharged the duty to their entire satisfaction. The Lord Lieutenant has sanctioned his appointment.

STATE OF IRELAND—MEETING OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE AT ABBEYFEALE—SUPPRESSION OF MEETING.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the Abbeyfeale meeting on Sunday week was suppressed, by what authority the police dispersed the weekly indoor meeting of the League on the same day, which had no relation whatever to the public meeting, and is it intended that a proclamation of an outdoor demonstration should extend to all indoor gatherings whether routine or otherwise in the same district?

MR. TREVELYAN: The public meeting proposed to be held at Abbeyfeale was prohibited on the ground of apprehension that if held it would endanger the public peace and give rise to intimidation, there being a number of evicted and "Boycotted" farms in the locality. With regard to the suppression of the indoor meeting, what occurred was this; the Rev. Mr. Casey, being prevented from addressing the people in the street, adjourned to a house in the town, accompanied by a large crowd, who remained outside in the street while he and the members of the National League went upstairs, and were about to hold a meeting. The magistrates considered this an attempt to evade the prohibition contained in the Proclamation, and they therefore prevented it. I have, on a former occasion, stated that in matters of this kind some discretion must be left to magistrates on the spot charged with enforcing the terms of a Proclamation.

MR. SEXTON invited the right hon. Gentleman to answer the second clause of the Question.

MR. TREVELYAN: It is not intended, Sir; but some discretion must be left to the magistrates.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—CATHOLIC INMATES—PROVISION FOR DIVINE SERVICE IN DONEGAL WORKHOUSE.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware of the complaint of Catholic inmates of Donegal Workhouse that the religious obligation imposed on them at Easter could not be kept owing to the conduct of the guardians as to the chaplain, and do the Local Government Board propose to leave the feeble and sick without the ministrations of the clergy; can the Local Government Board provide no remedy in the case of those who have been deprived of Mass on Sundays and holidays since the chaplain's resignation, and who are unable to go to the church, but who could be present at Divine Service in the House; what is the average attendance of the Catholic inmates at Divine Service on Sundays and holidays since the chaplain's resignation as compared with the attendance at Mass in the House for the same length of time previously; and, is it a fact that the children have been altogether deprived of Divine Service and instruction in the Church since sickness set in some three months ago; is he aware of the intense feeling that exists amongst the Catholics of the Union on account of the opposition of the Protestant majority of the Board to the appointment of a catechist or any other Catholic official to the House; and, having regard to the fact that the vast majority of the ratepayers of the Union and of the inmates of the Workhouse are Catholics, and in view of the spiritual destitution which the latter class suffer, will the Local Government Board set aside by sealed order the present Board of Guardians and appoint paid Vice Guardians in their stead, who will discharge their duty to those under their care?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board have no information before them to show that the Roman Catholic inmates of the Donegal Workhouse complain of being unable to keep their religious obligations, or that intense feeling exists among the Roman Catholics of the Union on account of the action of the Guardians in regard to the appointment of a catechist. The Board cannot obtain an accurate Return of the number of inmates who attended Mass in the workhouse chapel; but there is no doubt that the number of inmates of the workhouse attending Divine Service in the parish chapel is less than the number of persons who were present at Mass when it was held in the workhouse. With regard to the children, the facts appear to be that in consequence of an outbreak of measles in the workhouse they were prevented from congregating together, either at school or Divine Service, until the doctor thought they could do so with safety. This affected the Protestant children as well as the Roman Catholics. The Local Government Board have no power to appoint a catechist. I propose to make a suggestion, which I hope will facilitate the settlement of a controversy in which I think there are faults on both sides.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — MR. SUB-COMMISSIONER GRAY.

Colonel DIGBY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the estate of Captain Hill, in the county Donegal, out of eighty-four cases recently adjudicated upon by Mr. William Gray, Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act of 1881, the reductions were so extreme that the landlord has appealed against his decisions in every case?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that Captain Hill, of county Donegal, has appealed in 84 cases from the decisions of the Sub-Commission of which Mr. Gray was a member.

Mr. LEA asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would take measures to prevent the intimidation of Mr. Gray and other Sub-Commissioners by Questions asked in that House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I cannot take any steps such as are suggested by the hon. Member; but I think it is very unfortunate that Questions of this kind should be asked so frequently. I always regret that they should be put, from whatever quarter of the House they may come.

EGYPT—PUNISHMENTS—USE OF THE "CAT."

Mr. GRAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has yet received the reply of Mr. Clifford Lloyd to the question whether there is any truth in the allegation that he had in any cases substituted for the whip in ordinary use for purposes of punishment a cat-'o-nine-tails with the thongs loaded with metal?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes; there is no foundation for the report, and the use of the whip has been restricted to cases of violence and mutinous crime within the prisons, and the number of strokes has been reduced from a maximum of 300 to 24.

Mr. GRAY inquired whether the attention of the noble Lord had been called to a letter published in *Truth*, over the name of the junior Member for county Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan), in which he stated that at a meeting recently held he had defended the use of the courbash, and then added—

> "I did, indeed, contrast the courbash favourably with the new lead-tipped cat-o'-nine tails —administered not to the soles but to the bare backs—which Mr. Clifford Lloyd has substituted for it in the Cairo prisons."

Would the noble Lord inquire from the junior Member for county Wicklow on what grounds he made that statement?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I sent out a copy of the hon. Member's Question the other day, and the answer I have given is founded upon the inquiry. I have no doubt, therefore, that it is quite accurate.

Mr. GRAY: It is not a question of accuracy. The question is, whether the noble Lord will inquire from the junior Member for county Wicklow on what grounds he made the statement I have read?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have no objection to make that inquiry.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked whether they were to understand that before Mr. Clifford Lloyd went to Egypt the whip was used in the prisons; or whether it was not the fact that the courbash was used, and that Mr. Clifford Lloyd substituted for it the whip?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No. What I understand, on the contrary, is that the use of the whip has been limited, and also that the number of strokes has been limited, and that this has been done during the time that Mr. Clifford Lloyd has held the office of the Ministry of the Interior, and therefore all the credit of it is due to him.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary, whether there is any intention of re-employing Mr. Clifford Lloyd as a police magistrate in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Mr. Clifford Lloyd is at present on lengthened leave of absence without pay, and I can make no statement at present with regard to his re-employment.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Is Mr. Clifford Lloyd on lengthened leave of absence from Ireland, and also on leave of absence from Egypt? Can the right hon. Gentleman state what is the intention of the Egyptian Government regarding him?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I know nothing, Sir, of the intentions of any Government but the Irish Government.

Afterwards—

Mr. GRAY said, he was unable to catch the full significance of the reply of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to his Question as to the alleged use of the cat-o'-nine-tails on prisoners in Egypt. When the noble Lord said that the imputation conveyed in the Question was unfounded, did he refer to the use of the cat-o'-nine-tails, or to the portion of the Question which alleged that the cat-o'-nine-tails were loaded with lead? He wished to know whether, since Mr. Clifford Lloyd went to Egypt, the cat-o'-nine-tails had been introduced, whether loaded with lead or not?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied that what he understood was that the cat-o'-nine-tails had not been introduced; but as his answer did not make that clear, he would answer a further Question on the subject.

Mr. GRAY said, he would put a further Question.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND)—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is now in a position to state whether the proceedings of the Commission on the Queen's Colleges will be public?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners have decided to hold their meetings in public.

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONE EXCHANGE LICENCES.

Mr. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, How many licences for telephone exchanges have been applied for and how many have been granted since he instituted the new condition requiring each Company receiving a licence to undertake to sell instruments to him?

Mr. FAWCETT: The number of applications for telephone exchange licences since the period referred to has been 77, and the number granted has been eight. As bearing on this subject, I may state that as the condition to which allusion is made was imposed solely for the purpose of protecting the public interest, and was never intended to restrict the establishment of telephone exchanges, I have been for some time considering whether, with due regard to the public interest, the condition can be in any way modified. As soon as I am in a position to come to a decision on the point, there shall be no delay in making it known.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — POSTAL ACCOMMODATION IN LIMERICK.

Mr. KENNY (for Mr. O'Sullivan) asked the Postmaster General, Why it is that the district of Abbeyfeale, in the county of Limerick, having a population of over ten thousand, has not a second delivery of letters on week days as well as the other towns in that county?

Mr. FAWCETT: So far as I have been able to ascertain, no communication has been received by the Post Office asking for the establishment of a second delivery. I have, however, given instructions that an account shall be immediately taken of the number of letters that would be facilitated by a second delivery, and then I shall be in a position to decide.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—FAIR RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that an application to fix a fair rent under the Land Act, in which Mrs. Margaret Staples was landlady and Thomas Sinnott, of Duncormack, tenant, was heard at Wexford on the 8th April, before Messrs. Rice and Barry, Sub-Commissioners; that the area of the holding was two acres, the valuation £2, and the rent £4; that only one valuator was examined, who estimated a fair rent at £2 7*s.*, and that no evidence whatever in answer was offered by the landlady; that the Sub-Commissioners did not visit the lands or even view them from a distance, and that they fixed the judicial rent at £4, being the amount of the old rent, and double the valuation; and, whether, under these circumstances, he can state on what grounds the Sub-Commissioners arrived at their decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This Question was referred to the Land Commissioners for any observations they may have to offer with regard to it; and they report as follows:—

> "The application of Thomas Sinnott to have a fair rent fixed was heard, as stated, before a Sub-Commission, consisting of Messrs. Rice and Barry. The area of the holding was over three acres; the valuation was £2; the rent was £4; and this the Sub-Commissioners left unaltered. The Land Commissioners have no knowledge of the evidence that was offered, nor as to whether the Sub-Commission visited the farm. The Commissioners are not aware of the grounds on which the Sub-Commission arrived at its decision, and they decline to make inquiry. If the tenant is dissatisfied with the decision he has a right of appeal."

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—FIRING AT THE PERSON—CASE OF MICHAEL BURKE.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the last Tipperary Petty Sessions, in reference to the charge against a herdsman named Michael Burke, in the employment of Mr. F. H. Massey, J.P.; whether it was proved that Burke fired a revolver shot at three young men on the public road, without provocation; that he then proceeded, in a state of furious intoxication, to a neighbouring gate-lodge, where an old woman was standing with a baby in her arms, and discharged another revolver shot towards the public road, challenging anybody there to fight him; and that, when pursued by Constable Garry, he dropped on his knee, presented his revolver at the constable, and swore that if he stirred a step he would let daylight through him; whether, notwithstanding the evidence to this effect, a majority of the magistrates refused Sergeant Jack's application to have him remanded to the Bansha Petty Sessions, for the production of further evidence, and directed him only to be charged with drunkenness, and with having discharged loaded firearms on the public road; whether the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Meldon, dissented from their ruling, and was in favour of returning Burke for trial to the assizes for shooting at the person with intent to kill; whether any notice will be taken of the conduct of the magistrates; whether Burke was awarded £130 compensation, under the Prevention of Crime Act, for an assault alleged to have been committed upon him, although he had not been confined to bed, and no doctor had visited him; whether that amount will now be levied; and, whether Burke will be deprived of his licence for carrying firearms?

MR. TREVELYAN: This case is at present before the Attorney General for directions as to whether the circumstances are such as to make it proper that further proceedings should be taken. I cannot, therefore, at present, make any statement as to the details of the charge against Michael Burke. With regard to the award of compensation to him under the Prevention of Crime Act, the facts are, that about two years ago he was attacked and beaten about the head—the motive for the outrage being that he remained in the employment of a gentleman who was "Boycotted" for giving a site for a Constabulary hut. I am advised that circumstances connected with the charge now made against him could not be held to be a reason for withholding the compensation legally awarded to him. The question whether Burke's licence should be revoked will be considered by the Lord Lieutenant.

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS—CLEARANCES IN WHITECHAPEL.

MR. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that a site in Whitechapel, nearly eight acres in extent, from which five thousand persons were displaced by the Metropolitan Board of Works, under the provisions of the Goulston Street and Flower and Dean Street schemes made under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts, remains still almost wholly unbuilt on, although a large part of it was cleared nearly four years ago, and the remainder a year ago, and although the need for dwellings for the poor is very pressing in that over-crowded district; whether he will, if it is within his province to do so, call the attention of the Board to the above facts, and urge them to sell the land for building without delay, or to require those who have bought it, or parts of it, to proceed forthwith to erect dwellings of the kind needed for the accommodation of labourers; and, whether he will suggest to the Board that, in case they desire further delays, they should plant this site with shrubs, and let it be used as a recreation ground till such time as the erection of the dwellings required can be begun?

MR. HIBBERT (for Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): The only portion of the Goulston Street area in the market in 1883 comprised about two acres. Of this, only one acre was reserved for the re-housing of the artizans displaced. This was put up to auction on the 1st of June, 1883, but was not sold, and the Metropolitan Board have since been using every endeavour to find a purchaser. They have recently been successful in so doing, and the agreement for sale was executed on Friday, May 9. The Metropolitan Board have not yet been in a position to dispose of the remaining land, as it has not long been cleared, and the approaches have only just been completed; but negotiations are in progress for the sale of the whole of the remaining artizans' land in the Goulston Street area, and the Flower and Dean Street sites are to be advertised this week. It may be stated that a small site in George Yard—part of the Flower and Dean Street area—has already been covered with buildings for the accommodation of 100 persons. The Secretary of State will press upon the Board the desirability of pressing forward the sale of the land and the erection of the necessary dwellings.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—TRUSTEES BALANCES.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his estimate of one million sterling, as the amount of the aggregate balance likely to remain in the hands of the Board of Trade when the sums formerly held by trustees in bankruptcy were paid in to them has been realised; and, if not, what the aggregate balance now is?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The aggregate balance now in the hands of the Board of Trade from this source is £382,489. The money is coming in at the rate of from £10,000 to £15,000 a-week, and the Board of Trade has no reason to doubt that ultimately the amount originally estimated will be realized.

NAVY—GENERAL OFFICERS OF ROYAL MARINES.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that, on the 4th June next, there will be only three General Officers of Royal Marines eligible for employment under Army Rules, out of a total of fourteen Generals; and if there is any intention of retiring those Officers who cannot again be employed, as is done in the case of every other branch of the service?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In answer to my hon. and gallant Friend I have to say that the statement of fact in the first part of his Question is correct. There is no intention to assimilate the Rules as to pay and retirement of General Officers of Royal Marines to those affecting General Officers in the Army.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS—TONBRIDGE SCHOOL.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he is aware that the school of Sir Andrew Judd at Tonbridge was founded, and has been carried on for three centuries, as a free school for the benefit of all classes; whether, by the Scheme of 1880, the school was constituted a high or grammar school, from which, through the high scale of fees adopted, the sons of the trading and working classes are practically excluded; whether the Charity Commissioners, in their first draft Scheme, proposed, out of the surplus income of the endowment, to establish a middle or lower school in or near the town of Tonbridge; whether it is true that, on the faith of this proposal, the Skinners' Company, who were the original governors of Judd's free school, did pay to the Charity Commissioners a sum of £20,000, to assist in the establishment of such lower class school in Tonbridge; whether the Commissioners now insist on the establishment of this school at Tunbridge Wells, a town five miles distant from Tonbridge; whether the Skinners' Company, in a Letter dated 22nd June 1883, protested against this change of destination of the endowment, and declared that the school ought to be established, as intended, at Tonbridge; and, whether the Government will take steps to restore to the poorer and middle classes of Tonbridge the advantages and rights of which the Scheme of the Charity Commissioners deprives them?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The history of Sir Andrew Judd's school at Tonbridge is related in the published Reports of the Charity Commissioners appointed by the late Lord Brougham, and in that of the Schools Inquiry Commissioners. The school is now regulated by a scheme which was passed by the Charity Commissioners in 1880, and which was laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and is now a Statute of the Realm. The various Questions of the hon. Member relate to a subject which some years ago gave rise to much controversy, and the complete answer to them would require an elaborate statement altogether exceeding the usual limits of answers to Questions in this House. If the hon. Member desires the production of any correspondence between the Charity Commissioners and the Skinners' Company subsequent to the time when the scheme became law, it shall be produced. The Government has no power to take any steps to vary a scheme which Parliament has sanctioned, and which is now law.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS asked whether, in the original scheme of 1875, the Charity Commissioners did not propose to establish a school in or near the town of Tonbridge; whether they did not afterwards propose to establish it in an adjacent parish; and, whether two years after the scheme was sanctioned by Parliament they did not disclose their intention of removing it to Tunbridge Wells?

Mr. MUNDELLA: It is impossible to give a categorical answer to these Questions. I have received from the Charity Commissioners several folios upon the subject, which I shall be very glad to submit to the hon. Member.

Mr. CAUSTON asked whether it was not the fact that the Skinners' Company protested against the secondary school being placed at Tunbridge Wells, and that it was only with the greatest reluctance that they had given up fighting the Charity Commissioners upon the subject?

Mr. MUNDELLA: That is very possible; but the hon. Gentleman who represents the Skinners' Company did not challenge the scheme in the House;

and it is impossible to go into the matter three or four years afterwards.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg to give Notice that I shall call attention to the matter in Committee to-night.

INDIA — THE QUETTA RAILWAY.

MR. SLAGG asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the sanction of the Secretary of State for India has been given to the construction of the Quetta Railway, and that the work will now be pushed on rapidly; and, whether it is intended to submit the important Frontier question involved in this step to the consideration of the House of Commons?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The sanction of the Secretary of State has been given to the construction of the Quetta Railway, and the work will be executed with due despatch. It is not intended to submit this Question, which is one of railway extension, to the House of Commons. With regard to the Question of the Frontier, my hon. Friend is doubtless aware that the President of the Local Government Board stated in this House, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, on the 22nd of February last, that the administration of the Quetta district had been taken over by the Government of India, with the full concurrence of the Khan of Khelat.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Will the railway be made from revenue?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Yes, Sir; it will be made from revenue.

MR. SLAGG said, he should take an early opportunity of calling attention to the Question of the Frontier.

LAW AND JUSTICE — MAGISTRATES' CLERKS—PROSECUTIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, since it is a common practice in counties to hand over the prosecutions to the magistrates' clerk upon the committal of the accused, and that the clerks to the borough magistrates are expressly prohibited by statute from being directly or indirectly interested in the prosecution of any person committed by those justices, he is prepared to introduce or support a measure to secure the disinterestedness of the legal advisers of county magistrates?

MR. HIBBERT, in reply, said, the Home Secretary would take the earliest opportunity of putting the clerks in counties on a footing with those in boroughs.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — THE "BLUE RIBBON" IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If his attention has been called to the dismissal from a school at Turriff, Aberdeenshire, of a boy for wearing the blue ribbon; and, whether he can give instructions from the Department to restrain teachers from acting in this way in future?

MR. MUNDELLA: The school board of Turriff report that a boy was expelled for insubordination, and not for wearing a blue ribbon. They have notified to the parents that the boy might return to school on condition that the insubordination should not be repeated; and it was not made a condition of readmission that the boy should cease to wear a blue ribbon. It is now well understood that managers have no right to expel or refuse admission to children because of their wearing the blue ribbon; and we constantly act on this principle.

THE MIDDLESEX REGISTRY.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Land Transfer Commissioners "as to whether the Middlesex Registry should be continued or abolished," in which they observe as follows:—

> "On this point we have thought it necessary to examine only three witnesses. All agree in saying that the Registry causes a great increase of trouble and expense, affords no additional security or other advantage, and ought not to be continued. We entirely concur in this opinion, and recommend that from as early a date as possible the Registry should be closed as regards the registration of deeds executed after that date;"

whether it is now proposed that this Registry shall be established as a Government Department; and, whether, if the Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill should become Law, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to convert that Registry of Memorials into a Registry of Titles?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, these Questions were of an argumentative character, and he should prefer not to answer them until the Bill was again before the House for discussion.

LAND IMPROVEMENT AND ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND) BILL.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the honourable Member for Cavan and the honourable and gallant Member for Dublin County, Whether they will withdraw their Notices of opposition to the Bills now before the House on the subject of Arterial Drainage, so as to allow of the appointment of a Select Committee with power to call evidence?

Mr. BIGGAR asked the hon. and gallant Gentleman whether or not he had read this particular Bill?

Colonel COLTHURST replied in the affirmative.

Mr. BIGGAR: Perhaps I may be allowed to ask him, also, whether he would think it desirable that a Bill of so great importance as this should be allowed to pass the important stage of second reading without discussion?

Colonel COLTHURST: If I had thought that I should not have asked the Question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT — THE STEAMSHIP "ELEPHANT."

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence given before the Wreck Commissioner in the case of the steamship *Elephant;* whether an officer of the Board of Trade admitted that he met the *Elephant* in the Thames in an overladen condition, but took no steps whatever to stop her; and, whether he has considered the conduct of the officer in question?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The evidence given before the Wreck Commissioner in the case of this vessel has been under my notice. It is true that a subordinate officer of the Board of Trade, who was coming up the river in one of the ordinary passenger steamers, saw the *Elephant* going down the river in what he believed to be an overladen condition. That officer had no authority to detain ships; and even if he had had such authority he could not have stopped the steamer he was on. When the officer landed from the river steamer the *Elephant* had passed out of reach.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—SIR HENRY BULWER.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Sir Henry Bulwer still holds the office of Special Commissioner for Zulu affairs; and, if so, what are the duties of that office, and over what portions of Zululand those duties extend?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir Henry Bulwer is still Special Commissioner for Zulu affairs. His jurisdiction and duties may best be described by reading a passage from his commission by which he was appointed to conduct all relations with the Native Tribes in Zululand, except in regard to matters affecting the Transvaal State—

> "We do hereby authorize and empower you, in our name and on our behalf, to take all such measures and to do all such things in relation to the Native Tribes in Zululand as are lawful and appear to you to be advisable for maintaining our Colony of Natal in peace and safety, and for promoting the peace, order, and good government of the tribes aforesaid, and for preserving friendly relations with them."

Mr. GUY DAWNAY: May I ask the hon. Gentleman when he will be able to lay fresh Papers on the Table relating to this subject?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Within a few days, Sir.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—OVER-INSURANCE.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he has any information of the existence of a practice among underwriting and insurance companies to any large extent of affording undue facilities for the over-insurance of ships with a view to the increased premium thus obtainable; whether the over-insurance of ships, especially of ships of a markedly unseaworthy character, can, according to the information of the Government, take place to any large extent without the connivance or culpable negligence of underwriting companies operating with a view to excessive premiums; and, whether he will undertake to complete the Bill before the House by restrictions upon the facilities which may now be possessed by underwriting and insuring companies for tempting the owners of unseaworthy ships to effect excessive insurances for the sake of the high premiums obtainable upon such over-insurance?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In the first of these three Questions the hon. Member appears to impute to the Underwriting and Insuring Companies the practice of affording undue facilities for the over-insurance of ships. All I can say is, that I have no information of the existence of such a practice. With regard to the second Question, it cannot, I think, be to the interest of the Underwriters knowingly to insure ships of a markedly unseaworthy character; but it is, in my opinion, almost impossible for them to exercise such a supervision over ships as to prevent over-insurance altogether. As regards the third Question, I am not aware of any temptation to owners to effect excessive insurances, except that offered by the law in connection with valued policies on ship and freight. The Merchant Shipping Bill before the House imposes heavy penalties on Underwriters who effect void insurances, and I do not think that any further provision is necessary.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Has the Board of Trade no information as to whether Underwriters continue to offer facilities for over-insurance?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware that Underwriters do offer facilities for over-insurance of ships, knowing them to be over-insured.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RE-APPOINTMENT OF THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What does he now estimate will be the cost of the Irish Land Commission this year; and, will a Supplementary Estimate be necessary, in consequence of the decision of the Government to extend the employment of the temporary Sub-Commissioners until July?

Mr. COURTNEY: I am sorry to say a Supplementary Estimate will be necessary. I have not received the particulars of it; but I am told by telegram that the additional sum asked for will exceed £23,000.

Mr. GIBSON: What has been the Estimate charge for the past year?

Mr. COURTNEY: About £90,000. The £23,000 will be additional to this.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—COMMUNICATION WITH KHARTOUM.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has observed the following statement of *The Times* Correspondent in Cairo, published on May 20th:—

> "After repeated attempts I have succeeded in finding a Greek knowing the Country, who undertakes to convey messages to Khartoum and to bring back answers in about two months, provided that £1,000 be guaranteed to him, payable on the delivery of the replies, nothing to be payable in the event of failure. I am earnestly requested to give the utmost publicity to this offer, as it promises apparently the sole probable means of ascertaining the real situation of General Gordon;"

and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to take advantage of this chance of communicating with General Gordon?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have left to Mr. Egerton, Acting Agent and Consul General at Cairo, full discretion as to despatching messengers to Khartoum. Various offers of a similar kind to that cited by the hon. Member have been made; and Mr. Egerton will, no doubt, select the means which he, being on the spot, considers most likely to be effectual.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—MISSION TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can give any further information as to the present position of Admiral Sir William Hewett and the progress of the negotiations with the King of Abyssinia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The latest information received is to the effect that the Admiral, who left Massowah on April 7, had reached Adowa on the 6th of May, and was awaiting the arrival of the King, who was expected on the 12th instant. He was accompanied by Mason Bey, the Governor of Massowah, and Captain T. C. S. Speedy, a gentleman well acquainted with the language and customs of the Abyssinian Court and country. Admiral Sir William Hewett states that he was being treated hospitably by Ras Aloula, and that the officers and others attached to the mission were in good health.

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE GOVERNOR—PAYMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL TAX.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the Governor of Madras declines to pay Professional Tax in Madras, on the grounds that he never resides there, but that he spends five months of the year at his country seat of Guindy, and the other seven months at Ootacamund, on the Nilgiri Hills; and, whether Her Majesty's Government sanctions this arrangement on the part of a Governor of Madras?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: We have no information on this subject; but I may inform the hon. Member for Cavan that the Governor of Madras does not appear to be liable to pay Professional Tax under the City of Madras Municipal Act 5 of 1878.

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE—EXAMINATION OF NATIVES.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is true that under the limit of age, namely, twenty-two years, for the admission of candidates to the India Civil Service examinations, which prevailed from 1854 to 1866, a number of Natives of India were enabled to enter by competitive examination; whether the limit of age was reduced during the period from 1866 to 1876 to twenty-one years, but Natives of India, though only in the proportion of one a year, were still enabled by exceptional study to enter by competitive examination; whether the limit of age was reduced in 1876 to nineteen years, and has been maintained at that early age ever since, with the result that not a single Native of India has been able to enter by competitive examination for the past eight years; whether the Government was informed that if the age of entrance was fixed sufficiently early it would practically exclude Natives of India from the competition for the India Civil Service, owing to the difficulty of acquiring the English language and of crossing the seas to England in mere boyhood; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take immediate steps to restore their former opportunities of examination to the Natives of India?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The best answer to this Question will be an accurate statement of the facts relating to the maximum limits of age, fixed from time to time, and of the number of Natives who have been selected by open competition for the Indian Civil Service. From 1855 to 1859, inclusive, 23 was the limit of age. During these years no Native of India was selected. From 1860 to 1865, inclusive, 22 was the limit. During that period one Native was selected. From 1866 to 1878, inclusive, 21 was the limit of age. Thirteen competitive examinations were held in those years, and 10 Natives of India were selected. From 1878 to 1883, inclusive, 19 was the limit; and during this period one Native of India was selected. The limit now (under an alteration, taking place last year for the first time) is practically 19½; for the examination takes place in June, and what the Rule requires is that the candidate should not be over 19 on the 1st of January preceding the examination. The hon. Member asks whether Government was informed that, if the age of examination was fixed sufficiently early, it would practically exclude Natives? The Government of India, in a letter of the 2nd of May, 1878, written some time after it had been decided to reduce the age to 19, expressed the opinion that

> "The recent reduction of the standard of age for the competitive examination will practically render the competition of Natives educated in their own country a matter of exceptional difficulty."

The assumption that the limitation of age to 19 years prevents the appointment of Natives is hardly borne out by the facts. Twelve Natives altogether have entered the Covenanted Civil Service. One, aged 20, was selected in 1863; four, three aged 20, and one 19, were selected in 1869; one, aged 19, was selected in 1870; one, aged 20, was selected in 1871; one, aged 20, was selected in 1873; two, aged 18 and 17 respectively, were selected in 1874; one, aged 19, was selected in 1877; one, aged 17, was selected in 1882. Of this total 11 were selected when the limit was 21 or upwards. Of these, six were 20 when they competed, three were 19, one was 18, and one was only 17; and the one successful candidate since 1878 was only 17. The establishment of the "Statutory" Civil Service, to which

Natives are appointed in India in the proportion of one to every six selected by competition in England, must be taken into account in estimating the effect of the present arrangements. The Government has no present intention of making any alteration in the Rule as to the limit of age.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—HYDE PARK—OPEN-AIR PREACHERS.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Commissioner of Works, If his attention has been called to the fact that itinerant lay preachers are permitted by the Park Constables of Hyde Park each Sunday to make politico-religious orations in that part of the park used by visitors solely for the purpose of promenade; if he is aware that last Sunday three or four rival preachers, one a young man in a sporting grey suit, disturbed the visitors seated round the Achilles Statue by loud-toned orations and singing; and, if he will give orders to the Park Constables to prevent such conduct in future?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: By the Rules of the Park addresses may be delivered in a certain specified part of it, which includes the spot referred to by the hon. Member. I am informed that nothing has occurred lately on Sundays in contravention of the Rules which would justify the police in interfering.

EXCISE—THE TOBACCO DUTIES.

MR. MACFARLANE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to inquire into the whole question of the duties now levied upon tobacco imported into the United Kingdom?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to remind him that the Motion which he recently made on the subject of the Tobacco Duties only referred to the duties on tobacco, either imported in a manufactured state or unmanufactured in bond. This is a simple question which I will further consider before next year, having regard to the settlements made after very careful inquiry in 1863 and 1878. But in the debate on the hon. Gentleman's Motion the general question of the Tobacco Duties was raised by suggestions to introduce the system of *ad valorem* duties with a view largely to reduce the charge on unmanufactured tobacco. This charge now produces over £8,500,000 a-year, and I am not prepared to submit to a Select Committee such a question, considering the magnitude of the Revenue involved, and the absolute abandonment by Parliament of the system of *ad valorem* duties. My answer to the hon. Gentleman must, therefore, be in the negative.

PORTUGAL — SEIZURE AND DETENTION OF THE BRITISH YACHT "MAUD" ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN COAST.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in possession of information concerning the forcible seizure and detention of the British yacht *Maud*, by the Portuguese authorities, on the South African coast?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We know nothing at all about the matter at the Colonial Office.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Will the hon. Gentleman cause inquiry to be made? The matter has been fully reported in the Liverpool papers.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I will get hold of the Liverpool papers and look at the reports.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—STATEMENT OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN—THE VALUERS.

MR. NORWOOD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the four gentlemen who estimated the insurance value of certain steamers made the usual survey and examination of the vessels and their machinery to enable them to arrive at a just conclusion; whether two of them, viz., Mr. White (underwriter to the Marine Insurance Company) and Mr. Stringer (formerly a shipbroker) are professional valuers; and, whether he, before accepting their valuation as authoritative, took any steps to inform himself as to their possessing any scientific or practical acquaintance with the construction and values of ships and machinery?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that he had ordered copies of the Question to be forwarded to the gentlemen referred to, and as soon as he received their replies he would give a full answer to the Question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE "INCHCLUTHA."

Mr. MAC IVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any inquiry was held with regard to the loss of the steamer *Inchclutha*, and with what result; whether there was any suggestion, either then or since, that the vessel was overladen or undermanned; and, whether he referred to the vessel on Tuesday without giving the owners any notice of the statement which he intended to make, and therefore without affording the opportunity of making a reply?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: If the hon. Member will refer to the report of my speech in *The Times* he will find that I said—

> "I am going to ask the House to consider the case of two vessels, both belonging to owners of whose honour, integrity, and high character there cannot be the slightest doubt;"

and that, after giving certain details connected with the two vessels, I added, as regards the *Inchclutha*—

> "There was an inquiry into this case, and the Court found that the lost vessel was seaworthy and not overladen."

In these circumstances, I do not see that there was any reason for communicating with the owners before stating the facts.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that in consequence of the reply of the right hon. Gentleman, he gave Notice of a further Question—Whether the *Inchclutha* and the *Ajax*, which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned in his speech as having sailed on the same voyage from the same port on the same day, were not, as a matter of fact, engaged in entirely different sailings; whether the one was homeward bound from Calcutta, and the other outward bound from Liverpool to China with passengers and cargo; whether, in comparing the crews of the two vessels with a view to sustain his allegations as to the one, he overstated the number of effective hands on board the other by including the doctor, the stewardess, and the cabin servants; whether he was in a position to give the name of any cargo steamer which carried a crew numerically as strong as a passenger steamer; whether it was not the fact that the insured value of the *Inchclutha* was less than the cost of replacing her, and that the vessel at the time she was lost was chartered in advance for nine months; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman notwithstanding the result of the inquiry, still wished the House to understand that this vessel was overladen, and undermanned, and over-insured; or whether he withdrew unreservedly all imputations against Messrs. Hamilton, Fraser, and Co., or would endeavour to substantiate his allegations by taking steps of such a character as would enable the gentlemen whom he had traduced to be heard in reply?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he would give an answer to the Question of the hon. Gentleman if he would put it in proper language on the day he proposed to ask it. In the meantime, he would say that the hon. Member had misquoted the statement he made. He did not say these vessels started from the same port on the same day on the same voyage. Neither had he alleged that the *Inchclutha* was overladen. On the contrary, he distinctly stated that the Court of Inquiry found that she was not overladen. Neither did he allege that she was undermanned, although he showed that the proportion of the crew was smaller than in the case of the *Ajax*. He brought no allegations of the kind suggested by the hon. Member.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he quoted from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman as reported in the newspapers, and as sent to him by the owners.

Mr. O'DONNELL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, in consequence of a letter which has appeared impugning the accuracy of the reports, whether we are to understand that the mis-statements in his speech, of which he complains, are attributed by him to the reporters or to any other cause?

[No reply.]

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—THE INDO-AFGHAN RAILWAY.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether there has been a raid recently on the road railway works on the Hurnai route, when several Native workmen were killed and wounded, and if he can state whether our political agent or the Khan of Khelat is responsible for the protection of those workmen; and, what arrangements are contemplated for the permanent protection of the men who are engaged in the Military Trans-Frontier Line, and at whose expense this protection will be accorded?

MR. J. K. CROSS: No official Report on this subject has yet been received; but it is believed that the fact is as stated by my hon. Friend. The protection of the workmen employed on the Hurnai road rests with our Political Agent, by whom also, in conjunction with the military authorities, the arrangements necessary for the permanent protection of the workmen will be made at the expense of the Government of India.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, as the opinion of the House of Commons had not been asked as to the removal from the capital of the Empire of the national monument of the Duke of Wellington, and after the recent vote in "another place," the Government would give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion before the First Commissioner of Works proceeded with the further mutilation of the statue? He would also like to know if he would state to the House what the Government proposed to do in reference to the recent vote in "another place?"

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Hon. Members will recollect that on the first night of this month, after a second and very full discussion of the proposal with respect to the statue of the Duke of Wellington, the House, by a majority of 219 to 108, or more than 2 to 1, affirmed the scheme, and voted a sum of £2,000 towards an order for a new statue to be erected in the centre of the place at Hyde Park Corner. The House of Lords had previously, by a majority, affirmed the same scheme, and I had also the approval of Her Majesty. Under these circumstances, I considered the matter to be concluded, and the controversy at an end; and I therefore at once gave an order to Mr. Boehm for a new statue, and requested that preparations should be made by the War Office for the removal of the existing colossal statue to Aldershot. These preparations are in a very forward state, and a commencement has already been made to take the statue to pieces with a view to its removal. I hope, therefore, it will not be considered that it is from any want of respect to the House of Lords that the Government feel unable to carry out the more recent Resolution of that House, and that it must complete the arrangements already agreed upon and which are in course of execution. The noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) and others on that side of the House will, I am sure, admit that I have been very anxious in this case to avoid controversy and to do what would be agreeable to all. If I have failed in arriving at a course which meets with general approval, it arises from the difficulty which is inseparable from all questions of taste and sentiment, and I am not aware of any other plan which would not have raised greater opposition. With respect to the first Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I consider the whole subject he refers to was fully discussed and settled in the debate on the Vote; and I cannot offer him any facilities for raising the question again.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Perhaps I may be allowed the opportunity of expressing my sense of gratitude at the right hon. Gentleman's extreme anxiety throughout all these proceedings to conciliate, if possible, the views and the different interests involved in this question. I wish to ask him, however, what preparations are being made at Aldershot for the reception of the statue?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I do not know. Perhaps the noble Lord will put the Question to-morrow.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he will not consider the advisability of gratifying at the same time the wishes of the right hon. Baronet and the people of Dublin by removing to London the Wellington monument there, which has long been an eyesore and a nuisance to the population?

[No reply.]

IRELAND — CONDITION OF IRISH LABOURERS — THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he proposes to move for the Select Committee to inquire into the subject of the condition of the Irish Labourers?

MR. TREVELYAN: I intend to move for the Committee after Whitsuntide, during which period I shall consult with the Irish Government as to the scope of the Reference. My own view is that it should be to inquire into the working of the Labourers' Cottage Act of 1883, which was the subject of the Bill that was before the House yesterday, and I should wish that every question started upon that Bill would receive consideration.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—POLITICAL EMBLEMS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, since giving his reply to the Question of the 15th instant with regard to the portrait of Lord Beaconsfield and the mottoes "Peace with Honour," in the National Schools at Rothwell, any further information has come to his hand with regard to the explanation given to him by the master of the schools?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have received several communications on that subject. It is now admitted that all the mottoes were removed after the banquet, except the motto in question, which was removed only after the Notice of the hon. Member's Question. I hope that is the last I shall hear about the matter.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE ROYAL ACADEMY—THE CHANTREY BEQUEST.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, since giving his reply to the question with regard to the subject of the Chantrey bequest, he is aware that the subject of the administration of the Chantrey bequest is much discussed by artists; whether, inasmuch as charitable donations and bequests by will are subject to supervision by Parliament, and by Commissioners appointed by Parliament, the Government acquiesces, in the view of the President of the Royal Academy, that the trust in question is of such an exclusive character as not to allow of any interference whatever from without; whether it is a fact that the bulk of the fund is now absorbed by members of the Royal Academy buying the works of their own body; and, whether, privileges having been granted by Parliament to the Academy, with a local habitation, at the expense of the nation, inquiry will be made, in the interest of art, into a matter affecting an institution so important in its public influence and character as the Royal Academy?

MR. GLADSTONE: As to what the right hon. Baronet has embodied in the first portion of his Question, I am not possessed of that information in detail, and I have not felt justified as a Minister of the Crown in asking for it. The essential point in the case, which I am afraid I have not fully stated before, is that we have absolutely no power of instituting an inquiry in this matter. The Royal Academy, no doubt, stands in a certain relation to the Crown or to the State. It may be a little difficult to say which originally; but, whatever that relation may be, it does not invest the Executive Government with any sort of discretionary authority in regard to their proceedings.

SIR ROBERT PEEL reminded the right hon. Gentleman, as to the statement that the Government had no power, that a Commission in 1863 inquired into the position of the Royal Academy. In further enlarging on the subject of the administration of the Chantrey Trust, and while quoting from the Report of this Commission——

MR. SPEAKER said, the right hon. Baronet would not be in Order unless he intended to found a Question on the quotation.

SIR ROBERT PEEL said, he intended to do so. He would ask the Prime Minister, whether the President and Council of the Royal Academy were, in fact, trustees for the public of the works of Art purchased out of the funds at their disposal as the property of the nation; and, whether the Government, as in the case of charitable donations and bequests by will, could not interfere? If the right hon. Gentleman gave him an unsatisfactory answer, he would call attention on the first opportunity to the position of the Royal Academy.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have every disposition to give as satisfactory an answer as I can; and if I do not do so it is not really my will, but my poverty, that is in question. I am absolutely correct in saying that the Government have no power whatever, although the nation, no doubt, has a great interest in the good administration of those trusts and of many others. No doubt a Royal Commission was instituted to inquire into the condition and management of the Royal Academy; but I am correct in saying that that Commission was instituted with the good will and assent of the Academy itself. Unless it had been so instituted, it would have had no power of producing any result.

SIR ROBERT PEEL gave Notice that he would call attention to the matter on an early day.

CITY OF LONDON LIVERY COMPANIES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Right honourable Sir Richard Cross, Whether he can inform the House when the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the City Livery Companies is likely to be presented?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: With regard to this Question, I may state that these Questions are usually addressed to the Secretary of State, who obtains the information, and not the Secretary to the Royal Commission. I am not aware that a Member of any Royal Commission is entitled to state anything in this House or elsewhere as to the opinions of any of the Commissioners until their Report is presented to the Queen. I have, however, received a letter from the Secretary to the Commission. and I am willing to state this. The Report and all the evidence connected with it will, no doubt, make a very large number of volumes; but the first volume containing the Report is in a very forward state to be placed in the hands of the Secretary of State. I can assure the hon. Member, as far as I am concerned, and as far as the Secretary is concerned, there will be no delay in the presentation of that volume containing the Report in consequence of the opinion of any of the Commissioners.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

MR. GOURLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is true that the Government intend sending a flotilla of armed boats to Dongola, Berber, Khartoum, and other besieged places on the Upper Nile, for the purpose of relieving the garrisons, so soon as there is sufficient water to float the boats over the cataracts; and, further, what measures, if any, are being adopted to communicate with General Gordon?

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: I wish to ask, whether the Government are, or have been, in communication with Messrs. Cook, of Cook's tourist fame, in reference to the supply of vessels for the rescue of General Gordon?

MR. GLADSTONE: With respect to the Question on the Paper, what has happened is simply this. On the requisition of General Stephenson, and with the full assent of the Admiralty at home, Lord John Hay is at present making arrangements for patrolling by steamboats a certain portion of the Nile. I am not able to state absolutely as to what that portion is; but I believe it is above Assiout, and it is certainly below Wady Halfa. Whether it extends all the way to Wady Halfa I do not know. These steamers belong to the Khedive; but there will be a small company of British sailors on board each. It is purely a measure having reference to arrangements in the interior of Egypt.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Are British officers on board?

MR. GLADSTONE: I presume that is probable; I think it must be so.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: I shall ask a Question to-morrow on the subject.

MR. GLADSTONE: I find that I omitted to answer one part of the hon. Member's Question. Her Majesty's Government are using every effort they can to communicate with General Gordon; but it would not be of advantage, and might be very inconvenient, if the exact means employed were now stated.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. GIBSON: I wish to ask a Question as to the course of Public Business. The Chief Secretary stated a few nights ago that he would state to-day on what occasion he would present the Bill, and make a statement with reference to the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act. In the event of its being Tuesday, I would like to know whether the speech will be made, and the Bill presented on the Motion for Adjournment?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; the proposal is that the subject should be introduced on Monday night for the purpose of making it an Order of the Day, not for the purpose of statement or discussion, and that then it should become the first Order on Tuesday.

In reply to Lord JOHN MANNERS,

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the first Business that evening would be the Vote on Account; the second, the Civil Service Estimates; and the third, the National Debt Bill, which, however, would not be taken after 11 o'clock.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Prime Minister, Whether it was the intention of the Government that the House should adjourn after the Morning Sitting on Tuesday, or whether there should be an Evening Sitting on that day? His reason for asking the question was because his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had the first Notice of Motion on the Paper for Tuesday with reference to the Report of the Crofters' Commission.

MR. GLADSTONE presumed that the House would wish to adjourn after the Morning Sitting on Tuesday. If they met in the evening, and that incident were to happen which was not altogether unknown, there would be a necessity for the House to meet on Wednesday.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked whether the Army Estimates would be taken immediately after Whitsuntide or not?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was unable at present to fix another day for proceeding with the Army Estimates.

ARMY—SALE OF SITES AT SOUTHSEA.

MR. SCLATER - BOOTH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the War Department has recently disposed of a valuable piece of land at Southsea, on which it is proposed to erect a Liberal Club; if so, whether the land was sold by public auction or after invitation of tenders; and, whether the Department is prepared to offer similar facilities for the acquisition of sites for the erection of a Conservative or other political Club at Portsmouth?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A building called Hampshire House, at Portsmouth, being no longer required by the War Department, has been sold, on the recommendation of the General Officer Commanding at Portsmouth, at a valuation to Mr. Alderman King, who in his application stated that he wished to purchase the house on behalf of the Committee of a Club. There was nothing in the correspondence to show that this Club was to be of a political character. The Department has not offered special facilities in this case to any particular Association. They have sold the land at the price at which it was valued by Messrs. Clutton.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—EMPLOYMENT OF TURKISH TROOPS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether it was a fact that Lord Dufferin had been instructed to enter into negotiations with the Government of the Porte, with a view to obtain the assistance of Turkish troops for operations in the Soudan, either with or without the co-operation of English troops?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is true that the hon. Member gave me private Notice a short time ago of this Question; but it is not in my power to reply to it at present.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state how many miles the Russian Forces have advanced from the Caspian towards India, (i.e., from Krasnovodsk by road to Sarakhs) since Her Majesty's present Ministers came into Office?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Russian advance from Krasnovodsk had reached Kizil Arvat, a distance of 144 miles, in December, 1870. It ceased till 1877, when it was resumed. In 1879 it had reached Dengel Tepe, a total distance of 254 miles. Since then it has been continued as far as Baba Dermaz, a distance of about 375 miles.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether one of the Sarakhs was not now in possession of a Russian force?

MR. MACFARLANE said, that when Notice was given of the hon. Member's Question he had himself given Notice that he would at the same time ask the noble Lord whether he could state the comparative acquisitions of territory by Russia during the respective periods when the late Government and the present Government were in Office? Was the noble Lord now in a position to make such a statement, including the acquisition of the Port of Batoum and other territory in Armenia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE repeated the substance of the answer he had already given to the hon. Member for Eye. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Carlow, he had framed his previous answer so as to cover both the periods mentioned.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT gave Notice that he would call attention to the extraordinary inaccuracy of the noble Lord's answer in reference to the advance of Russia, and to a statement made by the official Russian journal of the Caucasus, containing the following words:—

> "If we desired we could undoubtedly conquer India; but our policy is to liberate Indians from the British yoke."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

Egypt—The Proposed Conference.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a further sum, not exceeding £3,468,550, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1885, viz.:—

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Great Britain:—	£
Houses of Parliament	4,000
Public Buildings	10,000
Public Offices Site	5,000
Furniture of Public Offices	3,500
Revenue Department Buildings	40,000
County Court Buildings	7,000
Metropolitan Police Courts	1,500
Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland	1,000
New Courts of Justice, &c.	3,500
Surveys of the United Kingdom	30,000
Science and Art Department Buildings	1,000
British Museum Buildings	2,000
Natural History Museum	- -
Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade	1,500
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	10,000
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	2,500
Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales)	- -
Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland)	1,000
Ireland:	
Public Buildings	35,000
Royal University Buildings	500
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin	- -
Abroad:	£
Lighthouses Abroad	- -
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	2,000

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

England:—	
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices	9,000
Treasury, including Parliamentary Counsel	10,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	11,000
Colonial Office	7,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	6,000
Privy Seal Office	50
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	10,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	200
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department)	6,000
Civil Service Commission	4,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	10,000
Friendly Societies, Registry	1,500
Land Commission for England	4,000
Local Government Board	50,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Mint (including Coinage)	5,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	7,000
Paymaster General's Office	4,000
Public Works Loan Commission	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	5,000
Stationery Office and Printing	90,000
Woods, Forests, &c. Office of	3,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	15,000
Secret Service	8,000
Scotland:—	
Exchequer and other Offices	1,000
Fishery Board	2,500
Lunacy Commission	500
Registrar General's Office	500
Board of Supervision	2,000
Ireland:—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household	1,000
Chief Secretary's Office	5,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	500
Local Government Board	20,000
Public Works Office	8,000
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	2,500

Class III.—Law and Justice.

England:—	
Law Charges	10,000
Public Prosecutor's Office	600
Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	60,000
Wreck Commission	2,000
County Courts	50,000
Land Registry	1,000

	£
Revising Barristers, England	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	3,000
Metropolitan Police	150,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	1,000
Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies	30,000
Prisons, England	40,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	70,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

Scotland:—

Lord Advocate and Criminal Proceedings	15,000
Courts of Law and Justice	15,000
Register House Departments	6,000
Prisons, Scotland	15,000

Ireland:—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	15,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,000
Admiralty Court Registry	300
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	300
Land Commission	10,000
County Court Officers, &c.	15,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	30,000
Constabulary	250,000
Prisons, Ireland	20,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	20,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,000

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

England:—	£
Public Education	100,000
Science and Art Department	20,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	1,500
National Portrait Gallery	200
Learned Societies, &c.	3,500
London University	2,000
University Colleges, Wales	- -
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	500
Transit of Venus, 1882	- -

Scotland:—

Public Education	50,000
Universities, &c.	2,500
National Gallery	- -

Ireland:—

Public Education	150,000
Teachers' Pension Office	300
Endowed Schools Commissioners	- -
National Gallery	500
Queen's Colleges	- -
Royal Irish Academy	600

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

	£
Diplomatic Services	30,000
Consular Services	40,000
Suppression of the Slave Trade	- -
Tonnage Bounties, &c.	1,000
Suez Canal (British Directors)	- -
Colonies, Grants in Aid	2,000
South Africa and St. Helena	- -
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies	9,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	- -

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	10,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	15,000
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	30,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland	- -
Friendly Societies Deficiency	- -
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain	500
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	- -

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Temporary Commissions	3,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	- -
Total for Civil Services	£2,028,550

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	200,000
Post Office	800,000
Post Office Packet Service	80,000
Post Office Telegraphs	260,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£1,440,000
Grand Total	£3,468,550

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he rose to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,500,000. The reason why he wished to reduce the Vote by that sum had connection with the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Egypt and the proposed Conference. As the Vote contained an item for Diplomatic Services, he thought it clearly and legitimately afforded, or should afford, an opportunity for the Committee to express its opinion, not only with regard to the Egyptian complications generally, but especially to the proposed Conference.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Motion I have submitted to the Committee has no connection with the affairs of Egypt.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: May I call your attention to the fact that there are items both for Diplomatic Services and for the Foreign Office?

THE CHAIRMAN: I see there is an item in Class I. for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: That is not the item I refer to. In Class V. there is an item for Diplomatic Services, and in Class II. there is another for the Foreign Office.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then I think the hon. Member will be in Order.

MR. GRAY said, he rose to a point of Order. He had no desire in any way to interfere with the course which the hon. Member for Greenwich proposed to take upon the Question before the Committee; but he wished to ask the Chairman whether, in putting the proposition of the hon. Member to the vote, it might not have the effect of shutting out a discussion upon other subjects which might arise in connection with the Vote upon Notices standing earlier on the Paper? He wished to ask the Chairman whether he was correct in the information he had received that the Motion of the hon. Member would have that effect, because if so there were other Notices of Motion; and, as a rule, he understood that those who had given Notice of Motion had priority over those who had not given Notice.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, upon the point of Order, asked whether it was not necessary that Motions for the reduction of special items in the Vote must be taken before Motions to reduce the Vote as a whole?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he would suggest, upon the point of Order, that if the Motion of his hon. Friend were carried any other reduction of the Vote might be made the subject of a separate debate.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no positive order as to the precedence of Members on such an occasion as this. The hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) rose in his place to speak to the Motion. As I saw him rise, and no one else rose at the same time, I called upon the hon. Member; and he is quite in Order in the course he is taking.

MR. GRAY said, he had only risen in the interests of other hon. Members who might wish to bring forward other questions. He was afraid, if the proposition of the hon. Member was carried by the Committee, that those who had given Notices of Motion upon other subjects might be shut out from discussing the questions in which they took an interest. In the event of that anticipation being correct, he would put it to the hon. Member for Greenwich that he might adjourn the discussion of the question he desired to raise until other hon. Members had brought forward their Motions relating to specific items in the Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) will not be prejudiced in any way in bringing his Motion before the Committee. The hon. Member, however, did not rise at the same time as the hon. Member for Greenwich.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether, if the Question was put from the Chair that the total Vote be reduced, it would not preclude other hon. Members from moving the reduction of any particular item in the Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. GRAY said, his only wish was to call attention to the matter. He was fully satisfied the Chairman would desire to afford reasonable facilities for the discussion of any question that might be raised.

MR. GORST wished to inquire, upon the point of Order, whether it was the fact that the putting of a Motion for the reduction of the gross Vote would preclude hon. Members from moving the reduction of any particular item afterwards?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH would point out that this was quite an unusual case. As a matter of fact, he was not aware that any similar circumstance had occurred before. No doubt the course referred to by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) was that which was adopted in the case of a discussion of the regular Estimates when the reduction of the entire Vote was moved. But the peculiarity in the present case was that they were dealing with a Vote on Account asked for by the Government, and not with the whole Vote in any single instance.

MR. RYLANDS understood the point of Order to be this. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had put the full amount of the Vote on Account which was asked for by Her Majesty's Government, and upon that Motion the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) proposed to reduce the amount by the sum of £1,500,000. What hon. Members contended was that if the Question was put upon the whole amount, and the Motion of the hon. Member were rejected, the full amount could not then be discussed again; and in that case it would be clearly most inconvenient for any hon. Member to take exception to any particular item.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Rule of debate is this—that after the Question has been proposed from the Chair for the reduction of the whole Vote, no Motion can be made for the reduction of any particular item. But in this case the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) would not be prejudiced or prevented from raising the question which he has put upon the Paper after the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) has been disposed of. If the original Vote in this instance should be reduced, the Question would afterwards be put upon either the original Vote or the reduced Vote, as the case might be, and the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) would then be in Order in making a new Motion.

MR. SEXTON said, there was one point which arose out of the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman which he did not understand—namely, whether it would be competent for any hon. Member to move the reduction of the Vote by a particular item after there had been a Division upon the whole Vote?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR would submit this consideration to the Chair upon the point of Order. If a Motion were made to reduce the Vote by more than £1,000,000, would it not be competent for any hon. Member to speak to that Motion, and bring forward any arguments relating to any portion of the Public Service? Surely, if that were so, it would introduce absolute confusion into the discussion; whereas, if reductions were moved in connection with specific items contained in the Vote, the discussion would be confined to the particular Service in question.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS, on the same point of Order, wished to say that he had given Notice of his intention to move the reduction of the Vote for the Charity Commission by the sum of £2,000. Would he be in Order in moving that Motion after a Division had been taken upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms)?

MR. SEXTON thought the hon. Member would not be able to do that.

THE CHAIRMAN: There can be no doubt that the hon. Member's proposition can be submitted to the Committee; but it would be more regular to take the discussion upon the particular items. The circumstances are these—the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) rose as soon as the Question was put from the Chair. I did not see any other hon. Member rise, therefore the hon. Member for Greenwich is now in possession of the Committee; and if he chooses to continue his statement I call upon him to do so.

MR. GLADSTONE: As I understand the matter, when the hon. Member for Greenwich has made his statement upon a particular subject affecting one or more items, every other hon. Member will be able to rise in succession and introduce any other question without any possibility of bringing it to an issue.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he had a proposition to make for the purpose of curtailing the time over which the Vote on Account would run. By limiting the amount voted, would he be shut out from raising that question, if they embarked in a discussion of the special items included in the Vote?

SIR ROBERT PEEL said, he would make a suggestion to the Committee, which he thought would facilitate matters. Would it not be better for the Committee to ignore the hon. Member for Greenwich altogether, and proceed with the Votes as they stood upon the Paper? That course would enable them to get over all the difficulty, if they would proceed with the Votes *seriatim*.

MR. GRAY said, he had no desire to stand in the way of the hon. Member for Greenwich; but there certainly was a question which he desired to raise, and if it were understood that he would have an opportunity hereafter of bringing that question forward, he was quite willing that the hon. Member should go first. The only desire on his part was to raise the question, and for that purpose he had given a specific Notice, which was on the Paper. He was in his place when the Motion was read by the Chairman; but he had not risen at the very first instance, because he thought it would not have been courteous to the Chairman to have done so. He had naturally assumed that as his Notice stood first on the Paper, the right hon. Gentleman would at once have called upon him. He had no desire, however, to contest the question of precedence, and if he were afforded an opportunity at any time before the Votes were decided for bringing forward his Motion, he would be perfectly contented.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The matter is one of considerable importance. The real fact is that the Rules, as understood, apply primarily not to Votes on Account, but rather to the ordinary form of Votes; and all the precedents we have in books, such as Sir Erskine May's, are precedents having regard to the general Votes in the Estimates. Now, the Rule in that matter is perfectly plain, and I think we should follow the spirit of the Rule in dealing with Votes on Account. Following the spirit of the Rule, if the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) is put first for the reduction of the general Vote, it will render it impossible for hon. Members to discuss particular items in the Vote. I think we should do what is customary in the case of the ordinary Estimates. I remember well, when I had more to do with these Votes than I have had lately, that when two Members wished to move Amendments, the one to reduce the whole Vote and the other to reduce a particular item, by the courtesy of the House the hon. Member who wished to reduce the Vote as a whole withdrew his Motion until those who wished to reduce individual items had had their opportunity. Of course, that could only be done by taking the Votes in regular order. What I would suggest to the hon. Member for Greenwich is, that he should carry out that which is the spirit in which we have always acted, and withdraw his present Motion until after the Motions of other hon. Members who wish to move the reduction of particular items have been dealt with. When they have been dealt with, the opportunity for the hon. Member for Greenwich will arise.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT hoped the hon. Member for Greenwich would not be deterred, by the obvious desire of the Government to shirk the discussion of this subject, from making his statement first.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH quite agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the new question which had sprung up was one of considerable importance: but he thought that in this case, seeing that it was simply a Vote on Account, the Committee might be disposed to deal with the Vote as a whole. It did not appear to him that such a course would interfere in any way with the course proposed to be pursued by other hon. Members afterwards in moving the reduction of particular items in the Vote. Suppose, for example, that his hon. Friend, instead of proposing to reduce the Vote by £1,500,000, proposed to reduce it by the whole amount, and the Committee had agreed to that Motion, it would thereupon become the Main Question; and, when put as the Main Question, hon. Members would have a perfect right to bring forward their Motions. Whether that was so or not, he was quite certain that there must be some opportunity upon a Vote on Account for attacking the Vote as a whole, and it did not appear reasonable that his hon. Friend, after having obtained precedence, should give way.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I do not propose to repeat what I said about our general practice; but I may point out to the right hon. Gentleman that if the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) carried his Motion, the lesser sum would have been absolutely voted, and no other Amendment could be put according to the Forms of the House. Therefore, I would point out again that the Rule should be, in discussing a Vote on Account, to deal with each specific item, and afterwards with the Vote as a whole.

MR. SEXTON said he should like to know, after the statement which had just been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what was the ruling of the Chair?

THE CHAIRMAN: I adhere to what I have already stated. The hon. Member for Greenwich has moved the reduction of the whole Vote; and in my view that does not preclude the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), or any other hon. Member, from moving a reduction afterwards.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS then continued. He was sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House would do him the justice to say that as long as he had had the honour of a seat in it he had never obstructed or attempted to obstruct Public Business; but he thought the question which he wished to bring before the Committee was one of such urgency that he was obliged to avail himself of this, the only opportunity he might have, for submitting it to the decision of the Committee. He did not propose to open up all the vexed questions connected with the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. Were he to attempt to do so, he thought the fears of hon. Members who thought they would not have a chance of discussing other questions would be well grounded, because he might, perhaps, be compelled on such a subject to make a speech that would compete favourably in length with the recent speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. Fortunately, he had no desire to do anything of the sort, and the reason why he would move the reduction of the Vote was that at that moment they were passing through a crisis of such danger and such magnitude that it was only due to the House of Commons that they should receive from Her Majesty's Government and the Prime Minister more detailed and accurate information than had hitherto been vouchsafed to them. The answer to a Question he had ventured to put to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as to the despatch alleged to have been sent to Lord Dufferin, suggesting that Turkish troops should be sent to the Soudan, was so eminently unsatisfactory that the impression it conveyed to both sides of the House was that the statement contained in the Question was not itself absolutely inaccurate. That constituted, in his opinion, a source of grave danger. The introduction of the Turkish element into the Egyptian Question must be a great danger; but there was also another matter agitating the country, the importance of which could not be overrated—he meant the question of the Conference. Some short time ago he ventured to ask the Prime Minister whether he could give, without detriment to the public interest, some assurance as to the limitation of the Conference. The answer he received was that the Conference would be confined to the financial question. Since that time various intimations had leaked out in the Press as to the statements of Ministers, which led the public to believe that the Conference would not be strictly limited to financial matters. He thought that people outside the House, and hon. Members within it, were justly entitled to demand from Her Majesty's Government that, taking into consideration the extremely unfortunate manner in which they had, up to the present time, conducted the affairs of Egypt, some sort of guarantee should be given before they found themselves engaged around the Conference Table with the other Powers of Europe, and that some explanation should be afforded by Her Majesty's Government, which should allay the alarm of the public, and re-assure the country as to the projects they intended to introduce at the Conference. The Prime Minister, in answer to a Question on a former occasion in that House, made a very vague statement in regard to the views expressed by France in reference to the Conference. They ought not to forget that the views and interests of France, and those of this country, in Egypt, could not be considered as equal and co-ordinate. Our interests in Egypt were different from those of any other State; and when we went to the Conference, if we submitted to the Conference those matters which were already within our power, we should be submitting to the arbitration of others matters which ought to be kept within our own administration. It was a fact, which it was impossible to deny, that our interests in Egypt were absolutely different from those of any other Power. The only Power which had any interest at all like our own was France. We must recollect that in all recent debates it had invariably been cast in our teeth that the Dual Control was the cause of all the misfortunes of Egypt. He did not wish to resuscitate that question; but he would simply state, in reference to the Conference, that they must not forget that Her Majesty's Government had ample time and means at their disposal, if they thought fit, for doing away with the Dual Control. As a matter of fact, it was not done away with by England; but it ceased at the precise moment when the French men-of-war steamed out of the harbour of Alexandria just before the bombardment of that city. The Dual Control was determined by the French, and not by the English. No doubt, there was now some anxiety on the part of the French Government to re-enact the Dual Control. Of course, it was impossible to measure the extraordinary ways of Her Majesty's Government. After having condemned the Dual Control to the utmost of their power, and after having cast on the late Government the whole responsibility for the state of Egypt under the Dual Control, nothing would surprise him less than to find Her Majesty's Government reconstituting a new Dual Control. He thought they might fairly ask this of the Government—to follow the precedents established by the Berlin Conference, and to give to the House not only the letters of invitation to the Conference, but also the answers of the Powers to those letters, so that the country might be in a position to know, to some extent, the basis on which the Conference was to assemble. The interests of England in the matter were so vast and so important that he could not conceive how the Government could have any right to withhold from Parliament an indication of what the reasons were which induced them to call the Conference. No doubt, the Government were under the potent spell of the Prime Minister, who was the Dictator of the Liberal Government; but he thought the time had not yet come when the Prime Minister, however potent or eloquent he might be, could possibly assume the character of Dictator of England. It was because he and others, who represented the people of the country, feared that Her Majesty's Government might adopt a tortuous and disastrous policy that he thought the moment had now arrived when the Prime Minister should clearly and distinctly state what his views were in regard to the Conference, so as to enable the House to judge how far the interests of England would be imperilled should the Conference meet. They already knew that the views of the Prime Minister as to the necessity of holding Egypt were not at all in accordance with the views of hon. Members on that side of the House. They would remember that when there was a talk about the Suez Canal, the Prime Minister suggested that the question was one of minor importance, and that it mattered very little, in a time of war, whether ships could go through the Canal or not.

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said anything of the kind.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: The right hon. Gentleman said he had never said that. He thought the words of the right hon. Gentleman were that the Cape route to India was quite as good as that by the Suez Canal.

MR. GLADSTONE: Never. I never said that the Cape route was quite as good, or anything of the kind. I stated the difference between them; but I never said anything like what the hon. Member has just attributed to me.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, that, of course, if the right hon. Gentleman said he had never made that statement, he would at once withdraw it; but he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman had made use, in one of his articles in *The Nineteenth Century*, of words to this effect—that in a time of war it was a matter of little importance whether ships went by the Suez Canal route or by the Cape. He (Baron Henry De Worms) was not one of those who thought the matter was not of importance. He was of opinion that it was of very great importance that they should preserve their communications through Egypt intact. He would ask the Committee to consider this. They knew perfectly well that at the close of the last Turkish War, after the Treaty of Berlin, the position of Russia with regard to Turkey was vastly changed. They knew, after some years of Office by the Prime Minister, that his sympathies were all with Russia, and that Russia had been induced since to make still further encroachments. That evening they had heard, as a geographical fact, that Russia had advanced her frontier 600 miles further since the advent to power of the right hon. Gentleman. Therefore it behoved everyone, seeing that the House was about to adjourn for 10 days, to obtain from Her Majesty's Government some specific declaration that if the Conference was to meet, English interests would not be compromised or sacrificed to that principle of non-responsibility which had been the origin of all their misfortunes in Egypt, and which he feared might end in the death or captivity of General Gordon. Her Majesty's Government originally employed General Gordon as their Agent, with a view of shifting their responsibility from themselves to his shoulders, and they had abandoned him now because he had failed. He ventured to think that unless the House exercised a vigilant criticism, the Government, with a view of shirking responsibility and in order to please their peace-at-any-price supporters, would endeavour to place upon the shoulders of the Great Powers, who were only too anxious to accept the responsibility, the interests which this country ought to safeguard in Egypt. Therefore, in order that the Government might have an opportunity of explaining to the Committee the basis of the Conference, he moved the reduction of the Vote. Not only the House itself, but millions of people outside the House, had a right to demand from Her Majesty's Government some explicit statement before the Government entered into obligations which the House would be unable to reverse.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a further sum, not exceeding £1,968,550, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885."—(*Baron Henry De Worms.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: It is with some diffidence and hesitation that I ask the attention of the Committee for a few moments, because I am aware that every hon. Gentleman who takes an interest in any one of the items on which we are now asked to take a Vote on Account is as entitled as I am myself to discuss the Motion of the hon. Gentleman; and I know, further, that hon. Members will also be able to go off upon any other subject whatever connected with any one of these Votes. That is the condition to which at present it appears the order of Business in this House is reduced. I am very sorry for it, but it is absolutely necessary that I should say one or two words in answer to the speech of the hon. Member before other subjects, just as relevant as the Egyptian policy, are introduced for discussion. I put aside in a lump the dishonouring imputations which the hon. Member thinks himself entitled to cast on Her Majesty's Government. He says that we have made a tool of General Gordon—that we have employed him to throw our responsibilities upon him, and that we abandoned him because he is no longer of use to us. The hon. Gentleman makes these dishonouring and foul imputations without the slightest attempt to prove them, and an attempt to make them without proof shows the unscrupulous character of those who make them.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Sir Arthur Otway, I rise to Order.

MR. GLADSTONE: Allow me to finish the sentence.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I wish to know if it is a Parliamentary expression for the right hon. Gentleman to say that unscrupulous imputations have been made by an hon. Member, or that any hon. Member is unscrupulous?

THE CHAIRMAN: I believe that the word has frequently been used before in debate. I do not know that it is un-Parliamentary.

MR. GLADSTONE: I observe, Sir, on this occasion, that those who are most ready to cast dishonouring and even base imputations upon their opponents, are themselves the most extraordinarily sensitive to any charge made against themselves. But, Sir, I wish to pass by the whole of these statements of the hon. Gentleman as perfectly and absolutely worthless. I will only deal with those portions of his speech which appear to be directed towards some points of an intelligible character. The hon. Gentleman is greatly alarmed at the introduction of the Turkish element. What does he mean by the introduction of the Turkish element? Is it this—that a Question having been put to my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs without Notice, my noble Friend asked for Notice——

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I gave Notice.

MR. GLADSTONE: When was that Notice given?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I sent it to the noble Lord at 1 o'clock.

MR. GLADSTONE: Two hours' Notice!

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I received it at half-past 2.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Notice was received at half-past 2, and that I do not call a Parliamentary Notice at all. My noble Friend would probably have to refer to documents, and to consult other persons, and these things cannot be done always at the very moment when it may suit the convenience of hon. Gentlemen who avoid the regular and understood methods of proceeding, and adopt others of a much less convenient and efficient character. Upon that fact of my noble Friend requiring Notice, the hon. Member said it amounted evidently to a proof that the whole imputations conveyed in his Question were true. I am astonished at the degree in which prejudice can divert an honest mind from the path of reason, and at the slightness of the foundation on which a most enormous structure can be raised by an overstrained and portentous ingenuity. The hon. Gentleman says he wants some statement as to the Conference, and he puts certain Questions, two of which I will venture to answer. He wishes to know whether anything of a very formidable character is to happen within what he calls the 10 days of the Whitsuntide Recess? I wish there were 10 days, but I am afraid they do not quite amount to that number. In that Recess I do not think it is likely that anything of a very portentous character will happen. I hope that statement will convey some comfort to the mind of the hon. Gentleman. [Baron HENRY DE WORMS dissented.] If my assurance to that effect conveys to him no comfort at all, what was the use of asking for it? I believe a man in a Court of Justice ought never to discredit his own witness. The hon. Gentleman asked me to make an assurance about what is to happen in the course of 10 days, and when I make it he seems to signify that it is of no account. He then asks whether the interests of England will be prejudiced in the Conference? According to our view, conviction, aud expectation, there is not the slightest apprehension that the interests of England will be prejudiced in the Conference? The object of the Conference is to consult the interests of Egypt in a manner conformable to reason, and to the interest of all the Powers. I know the hon. Gentleman has given the opinion that there is some essential variance and discrepancy between the interests of England in Egypt and those of other Powers. I need not discuss that opinion on the present occasion; but I would put it to him as regards the narrower question of the settlement of Egyptian finances, that even probably he would not think it necessary to assert that there must be necessarily a great divergence or any conflict between the interests of England and of the other Great Powers. Europe has an interest in the settlement of Egyptian finance as well as England; and I do not think there can be anything like discrepancy in the interests of the several Powers in the settlement of the matter. Of course, the plans that England may propose and that the Conference may adopt will be subject to the control of this House. If they touch money matters, the hon. Gentleman is well aware they cannot possibly take effect without the assent of this House; and I should have thought there was no subject with regard to which his susceptibilities have so little need to be excited, as they appear to be at this moment, as the discussions of the Conference, which is going to deal with the financial question in Egypt, because, if we make propositions prejudicial to England, or propositions which, although not prejudicial to England, may affect the Prerogatives of this House, in regard to public money, the hon. Gentleman is perfectly aware that the matter must come under the cognizance of this House, and that no Executive Government is able to pledge this House with respect to such a subject. For instance, if I go back to the transactions of the Suez Canal, the sum of money voted as a commission on that occasion this House was free to reject if it had thought fit. It passed the Vote; but its jurisdiction was unquestionable, and in every money transaction that fact is perfectly well understood and known over the whole world. But I really want to get at the object of the hon. Gentleman, and, so far as I can, to meet him. I have said that, as respects finance, it appears to me he ought to feel perfectly secure, not from his confidence in the Government, but from the limitations under which every Government must necessarily act. But I suppose his object really must be to ascertain whether I hold to what I previously stated in regard to the limitation of the Conference. Am I right in that? If I am right in that, I will do what I can to meet him. In passing by, somewhat summarily, what I thought were dishonouring imputations, I did not mean to include the imputation the hon. Member made on me as to the airs of a Dictator. That is quite within the limits of good-humoured criticism, and I understood entirely its object. I hope it is not necessary for me to disclaim that imputation, and I am not aware of any facts or evidence, even colourable, by which it can be supported. It was my duty to state the limitations of the Conference to the House, but that did not imply that the limitations of the Conference had any special reference to any view of mine. It was the product of the united deliberation, and it represented the united decision, of the Cabinet. That limitation is established, and cannot possibly be presented to the House in a better form than in the letter of invitation which the hon. Gentleman has seen. He says—"Will you not lay before the House the letters you have received in reply?" It would not be in accordance with precedent that we should do so. The case of the Treaty of Berlin stands upon a totally different footing, because in relation to that Treaty the Government had made it an important financial measure, and asked the House for a very large Vote of money, making the House in that way a partner with the Government in the proceeding hand in hand, and the whole matter required that the Government should lay before the House all the information in their power. We have asked nothing of the kind. What we shall propose to the Conference we shall propose without obtaining any special Vote of Confidence, without obtaining the support of £6,000,000 from Parliament. But we do not at all disguise from the House what the purpose of the Conference is, and I repeat what I have already stated in an answer which I gave to a Question the other day, that we adhere to the basis of the Conference as it was originally laid down. So far as my information goes, I am not aware that any of the Great Powers will endeavour to draw us aside from that basis. The letters, even if they were laid on the Table, I believe would add nothing to the information of the House. But it is the invitation to which we are pledged. That is our act, and for that, and for every act in the Conference, we shall always be ready to answer to the House at the proper time. I do not remember that there was anything else in the speech of the hon. Member which I ought to refer to. Yes, there was one other matter which I ought to refer to. He said it would not at all surprise him if we were to reconstitute the Dual Control. Well, Sir, I do not think that sentiment of his will ever be brought to an issue. I never heard that the hon. Member objected to the Control; but, whether he does or does not, I think he has very little reason to apprehend that the day will ever come when we shall propose the revival of an arrangement with respect to which, although I have always been glad to admit that it was adopted honestly and with good intentions, yet we consider that it has been productive of disastrous results. I have now endeavoured to answer the Questions asked with reference to the limitation of the Conference, and what may take place in the Recess in regard to the interests of England and the Dual Control, and I hope the Committee may now be allowed to proceed with its Business.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: I was glad to notice, in the concluding portion of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, that he slightly modified the somewhat heated tone which I think he very unreasonably assumed in the earlier part of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to intimate that my hon. Friend had made a charge of a very unusual character, and one almost unprecedented in the annals of Parliament.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I said "dishonouring."

Mr. J. LOWTHER: Well, I hope that "dishonouring" is an unusual charge to make within the walls of this House. If I were to take the liberty, for a moment, of criticizing my hon. Friend, I should say that he merely gave very effective utterance to sentiments which have been frequently expressed in this House, and which I may say have been largely repeated by the Press of the country, with the general approbation of his countrymen. That really appears to me to be the sum total of the offending of my hon. Friend; and I must entirely disclaim on his part the slightest claim to originality of sentiment in that respect. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that the answers that have been given in reply to Questions addressed to the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues have been perfectly adequate. The question is a very clear and plain one, and I must own I thought that the rhetorical powers of the right hon. Gentleman exceeded themselves in his attempt to evade a distinct issue. What does the right hon. Gentleman say? He says, in effect, that he considers the affairs of Egypt of no more importance to England than the affairs of remote portions of the globe in which we have no more concern than other Powers. He said that he would defend the paramount interests of England in Egypt, as he would defend them in all other parts of the world. That means that the paramount interests of England in, say, Morocco or Tunis are precisely, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, on all fours with the interests of England in Egypt. What other construction could be placed on the words of the right hon. Gentleman, when he went out of his way to compare our interests in Egypt with our interests with any other portion of the globe in which England cannot be said to possess those paramount, not to say exclusive, interests which, undoubtedly, we possess in Egypt? I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has still failed to answer the very plain question addressed to him. I will venture to repeat it; it is whether, in the event of any attempt being successfully made to enlarge the scope of the Conference beyond the mere question of finance, the British Representative will be instructed to withdraw? That is a plain question, which we are justified in addressing to the right hon. Gentleman, and in regard to which we are entitled to a reply before the Government are placed in a position of independence of the House of Commons for two months to come—for that will be the effect of this Vote, coupled with the assistance of "Counts-out" and the monopoly of public time which the Government have already acquired. As matters now stand, nothing can be done by the House unless the adjournment is moved. The Government decline to give us information as to what steps they are taking. The right hon. Gentleman has talked on several occasions about covenants entered into by their Predecessors in Office in regard to Egypt. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that any steps taken by the Government which may involve the expenditure of blood and treasure will be, as they put it, on account of covenants, and not because Egypt constitutes the highway to our Indian Empire? This is a point the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in mystifying; but I hope the Government will no longer decline to answer the very plain question whether, in the event of any attempt being successfully made to enlarge the scope of the Conference beyond the pure and simple question of finance, the British Representative thereat will be instructed to withdraw?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I need not detain the Committee a moment in saying that, as we enter into the Conference without information from the other Powers of their intention to attempt to enlarge the basis of it, it would be conveying an imputation on the honour of those other Powers if we were to give a pledge with regard to a contingency of that kind. The right hon. Gentleman will see that I should be guilty of a want of courtesy if I were to give a pledge on the subject. May I offer an apology to the hon. Member for Greenwhich (Baron Henry De Worms) as to a phrase from which a misunderstanding might arise? As the matter stands, it might be reported, and truly reported, that I appeared to speak of the hon. Gentleman as an unscrupulous character; but I had not the slightest intention of saying anything of the kind. My idea was that his argument was somewhat unscrupulous; and if the phrase is reported in a naked form, so as to suggest a personal application, the hon. Gentleman will understand that that was not intended.

Mr. BOURKE: I should like to say one or two words on this subject. I had not intended to say anything, and I should not have done so but for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. There were, however, one or two remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman which I think I ought to notice. I am sure that, on the whole, the remarks of the Prime Minister will have given the Committee more confidence that the deliberations of the Conference will be limited to finance. There can be no doubt that that is the great question agitating the public mind at this moment; and with respect to the precedent mentioned relating to the Congress of Berlin, when the invitation and the replies were laid on the Table, I wish to make one remark. The right hon. Gentleman said that was quite a different case, because there were military and other steps taken that came under the purview of the House of Commons. But that was not the reason why the invitation and the replies were presented to Parliament at the time. The real reason was that the great and burning question at the moment was whether the Treaty of San Stefano was to be laid in its entirety before the Congress or not, or whether the deliberations of the Congress were to be confined to certain points. Therefore, it was necessary for the Government to show to the country, who were anxious for information on the point, that by the invitation and the replies the whole Treaty of San Stefano was to be laid before the Congress. This is precisely the case at present. What the country is really anxious to know is whether the question of finance is to be the only question to be submitted to the Conference. I do think, after the declarations of the Prime Minister, the country will be more satisfied than it was before, that the questions to be brought before the Conference will be limited to finance; and I cannot but think, as I have thought all along, that the discussions in the House of Commons will give the the Government a great deal more strength in going into the Conference than they would have had if these discussions had not taken place. There can be no doubt that although the House of Commons may entertain Votes of Censure and criticize the Egyptian policy of the Government, at the same time I am quite certain that the House and the country are prepared to sustain Her Majesty's Government in asserting our position in Egypt and in maintaining the position that the Government have declared over and over again we are entitled to occupy by necessity, by Treaty rights, and by the circumstances of the last two years. I am very glad to receive the assurance that the scope of the Conference is limited. I have only one more remark to make with regard to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. He has referred to the invitation sent to the Powers. If we took the invitation simply as the basis of the Conference, I am afraid it might be open to some of the Powers to allege that the reference therein to the causes of the present condition of finance might be capable of a wider interpretation, and that the whole question of the Government of Egypt might be raised. I am afraid that, unless the Government are determined that nothing but finance shall be discussed, the invitation might be appealed to as offering an excuse for the introduction of other subjects. We must take the invitation now, not only as it stands, but also accompanied by the declaration of the Prime Minister, that the Conference shall be limited to finance.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee were made upon an assumption, drawn from the speech of the Prime Minister, which, in his (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's) opinion, was not quite correct. He did not understand the Prime Minister to say in any statement he had made to the House that the Conference was to be limited to the subject of finance. If it dealt with the subject of Egyptian finance at large, it was perfectly evident that would include the whole question of the present condition of Egypt, because the financial question was the Egyptian Question. If the Powers were allowed to go into the question of the practical bankruptcy of Egypt, it was quite evident that such an examination would raise the whole question of our relations with Egypt, our conduct towards Egypt, our tenure of power, and the length of time we proposed to remain in the country. He thought the Prime Minister had done better than speak of limitation to finance. He had said to the House that the invitation to the Conference was limited to a discussion of the Law of Liquidation. He hoped he was right in assuming that.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I did not say so; but the hon. Gentleman has seen the letter of invitation.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he was not basing this assumption upon the letter of invitation only, but on answers which had been given to Questions in that House. He had understood the Prime Minister distinctly to state that the invitation to the Conference was limited to the consideration of the Law of Liquidation. Beyond that they had not yet been able to draw the Prime Minister. When they asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government would refuse to enter upon the discussion of other subjects, supposing the majority of the other Powers assembled at the Conference were disposed to widen the scope of the discussion, the Prime Minister refused to bind himself to such a limitation on the ground that it was discourteous to the other Powers. He could quite understand, in the present awkward condition of our foreign relations, and the fear the Government had lest the Powers would not go into the Conference, that the Prime Minister might be unwilling to make any formal statement in that House that might give offence to the French or the Russian Governments, who were naturally averse to entering into the Conference in the limited sense of the right hon. Gentleman. He could quite understand that, while the right hon. Gentleman preferred not to make any formal statement as to the consideration of other subjects, he had fully determined in his own mind that no other subjects should be considered. If that were the case, and the Government were determined that the Conference should not extend its consideration beyond the Law of Liquidation, then he took it that the House and the country would be perfectly satisfied. But if the mind of the right hon. Gentleman was still in an irresolute condition; if he was still waiting for something to turn up; if he had not yet decided that the discussion of the Conference should be limited to the Law of Liquidation, then he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) said that they were entering on a course which was most dangerous, and which might probably be more disastrous to the interests of the country than any step the Government had yet taken. It was perfectly impossible that the Government could allow any co-partnership with any other Power in her dealings with Egypt. It was quite obvious that our interests in Egypt were paramount to those of any other country, and that they must remain free and untrammelled by the interests of other countries. That was the point upon which the whole country had decided. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: Oh!] The hon. Member said "Oh!" but he believed, if the country were polled to-morrow, that not one-tenth of the votes would be found in favour of allowing any other Power to mix up their authority with ours in the affairs of Egypt, whatever the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) might think. Just imagine the condition of Egypt with six foreign masters jealous of each other and intriguing against each other. He wished to say one word as to the statement of the Prime Minister that our interests were identical with those of the other Powers. The Prime Minister, and every Member of the Government, knew perfectly well that one of our main difficulties in Egypt for the past two years had been the intriguing of Foreign Powers against British influence. So notorious was that fact, that it was not necessary to demonstrate it further. While the Government professed, and perhaps rightly, a certain amount of confidence in the good intentions of other Powers, they were bound to take those statements for what they were worth. Sir Evelyn Baring, if he were asked by the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, could doubtless explain to the world that there was one Power which was always thwarting and embarrassing our purposes in regard to the administration of Egypt. This was the worst possible moment that could have been selected for submitting our policy to a Conference. Never had this country stood in a worse position with regard to European affairs and European feeling than at this moment. Every organ of the Press in Europe was criticizing our policy in the most severe terms, on account of its weakness and of the disastrous effects which that weakness was producing. He would not trouble the Committee with many quotations; but he should like to read a few words from a leading paper in France—*The République Française*—which showed the feeling entertained in that country. Commenting on the Prime Minister's speech upon the Vote of Censure, on May 15th, the article said—

> "To wait five months before sending aid to Gordon, when the fall of Khartoum is now only a question of weeks! What a decision! To glorify as an insurrection not dissimilar to the heroic rebellions of Greece or Italy the migration of a band of barbarians, led by a fanatic and a set of slave dealers, what a strange conception!"

The Neue Freie Presse of Vienna, the leading journal of Austria, wrote on the same day—

> "The English Government, says Mr. Gladstone, will not enter into a conflict with a people struggling for liberty. How very fine that sounds. It has a genuine Gladstonian ring, and puts us in mind of his enthusiasm for the Bulgarians. But, then, why combat Arabi Pasha? why bombard Alexandria? why fight the battle of Tel-el-Kebir? and, above all, why attack Osman Digna? What becomes of logic and reason in presence of such inconsistencies? In what fashion has England fulfilled her obligations to Europe? After nearly two years of English administration things have reached such an extremity that Europeans in Egypt

tremble for their lives and property. That is as great a disgrace for England as the sacrifice of Gordon."

That was the temper of the whole of Europe at this moment; and bearing that fact in mind, it was of paramount importance, if we went into the Conference at all, that we should go into it with a complete understanding that if the Powers of Europe endeavoured to extend the scope of the Conference the British Government would at once withdraw from it. That was the only security we had for our position. The Prime Minister told them that the Dual Control had been disastrous, and that it could not be revived. Now, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had never been enamoured of the Dual Control; but he had heard statements from the Bench opposite that up to the year 1880 it had been productive of great advantage. Not only the Prime Minister, but the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), had told them that the Dual Control had tended to mitigate the condition of the Egyptian people, and had proved of much advantage to that country generally. As a matter of fact, the evils which were supposed to have resulted from the Dual Control did not result so long as statesmen guided the affairs of the country. So long as the late Government were in power the administration of the affairs of Egypt was satisfactory; but the moment the late Government fell, and the feeble, vacillating, and inconsistent grasp of the present Ministry was applied to Egyptian affairs, then, indeed, the Dual Control became an engine of mischief, and a source of despair to that country. He failed to follow the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in regard to the Treaty of Berlin. The right hon. Gentleman told them that this was a case altogether different from that which preceded the Treaty of Berlin, because, forsooth, some months previous to the meeting of the Congress the Government had asked for a Vote of £6,000,000 in order to place the Naval and Military Forces of the country upon a stronger footing. But what were Her Majesty's Government going to do now? They were said to be about to ask for a Vote of £8,000,000 on behalf of Egypt—perhaps not in the name of this country; but everybody knew that when such an advance was made, it would be made more or less upon a guarantee of this country in reference to Egyptian finance. It was not certain whether the Government were going to make this proposition or not; but, if they did, he hoped there would be a perfectly clear understanding in regard to it. Under these circumstances, he thought the argument of the analogy between the Treaty of Berlin and the present position of affairs was complete, and that there was not such difference as the Prime Minister suggested. His hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) had raised a perfectly fair discussion, and, unhappily, the opportunities for discussing such Motions were indeed rare in that House. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members opposite objected; but he would repeat that the opportunities for considering important questions of foreign policy in that House were very rare. All the Morning Sittings, which belonged by right to private Members, had been taken from them. He would appeal to the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) whether he did not agree with what he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) said? What opportunity had the hon. Member or his Friends obtained for bringing forward the important question of the Congo Treaty? That was a most important question; but the hon. Member had failed to find a single day for calling attention to it. Under these circumstances, he thought the thanks of the House were due to the hon. Member for Greenwich for bringing forward the question. If he understood the Prime Minister rightly, the right hon. Gentleman was determined in his own mind that the Conference should not be allowed to deal with any subject beyond the Law of Liquidation. If that were so, he believed the majority of hon. Members sitting on that side of the House would be perfectly satisfied with that declaration; but if it should not prove to be the case, he should then undoubtedly attribute any evils which might befall the country to the nervelessness and vacillation of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he could not conceive what the object of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) was in bringing forward the Amendment. It appeared to be based upon the assumption that what was to be submitted to the Conference was not the liquidation of the Debt, but the present position of Egypt. That position was perfectly clear. Europe knew perfectly well that so long as the present Prime Minister remained in power there would be no attempt to carry out the bandit policy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that their object was simply to set Egypt on its legs again, giving them a fair start, and then absolutely to retire from the country. If there was anything necessary to prove that, it was to be seen in the Protocol—the self-denying Protocol signed by the Representative of Her Majesty's Government (Lord Dufferin) at Constantinople. In that Protocol they pledged themselves in common with the European Powers to derive no sort of advantage for themselves from their occupation of Egypt. With that pledge staring them in the face they should, as he thought the Prime Minister had stated in that House, disgrace themselves if they attempted to carry out the policy suggested by hon. Gentlemen opposite, which simply meant that they had gone there, that they had killed a certain number of Egyptian people, and spent a great deal of money in bombarding their towns, by means of which they had acquired certain rights, and among them the right of insisting that Egypt should belong to them. That was not the policy of Her Majesty's Government, nor would they long retain the confidence of hon. Members on that side of the House if it became so. There was only one point that he would urge at that moment, and it was this. He gathered from the Press that the Egyptian Government themselves were not to be represented at the Conference. Now the Conference was to be convened for the purpose of looking into the Law of Liquidation—that was to say, to see how far Egypt could be taxed for the benefit of the bondholders. He certainly hoped, if Egypt was not to be represented at the Conference, that whoever was there to represent Her Majesty's Government would consider themselves not only the representatives of the bondholders, but also the representatives of the taxpayers of Egypt. He thought it would be their duty to provide for the legitimate expense of the administration of Egypt, and after adequate provision was made in that respect then let them pay the bondholders; but do not let them, by any attempt to tax the Egyptians unfairly or to force them to contribute an illegitimate portion of their earnings, place the interests of the bondholders before the interests of the country. He hoped and believed that something in that direction might be done; and he trusted that whoever represented Her Majesty's Government would carefully inquire into the question, and would not allow the unfortunate fellaheen to be unfairly taxed.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he only wished to say one or two words upon this very important Motion. He regarded the declaration of the Prime Minister as being satisfactory as far as it went with regard to the position of the Conference; but he could not avoid noticing that the Prime Minister carefully abstained from saying a single word about the preliminary conversations, or whatever the Government might please to call them, now going on with France. Now, that was a question that was considered to be of very great importance by the whole of the country; so important that the country was still anxious to have some further declaration. He was sorry to see that the Prime Minister was at that moment absent; but he trusted to hear from the noble Lord who represented the Foreign Office in that House that, whatever understanding might be come to with France—although the Prime Minister said the Dual Control was not to be revived—that no Multiple Control, or, in fact, any Power, should be allowed to interfere in the management of Egypt. That was what the country wished to know. After their victories, and after the large amount of money expended in Egypt, they ought to receive a satisfactory assurance that no other nation should be allowed to interfere with the management we had obtained, and rightly obtained, in Egypt. That was the question they wished to have answered—namely, that no interference with their power in Egypt should be allowed to take place until they had finished the work which the Government admitted they had undertaken to perform — namely, the restoration of tranquillity and the establishment of good government in Egypt. The anxiety of the public had been excited by the uncertain answers which had been given by the Prime Minister to Questions which had been put to him. If the right hon. Gentleman had answered the queries put to him in the same spirit as the remarks he had made in regard to the Law of Liquidation—if he had only stated that the Government would not go one jot beyond that question—he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was sure the country would have been satisfied, which it certainly was not at the present moment. The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the absence of the Prime Minister, might be in a position to supplement what the Prime Minister had stated, and might say that no interference on the part of any Power would be permitted until the work we had undertaken in regard to Egypt should have been accomplished. Then, and not till then, would the country be satisfied that the Government did not intend to go beyond that which they had stated to be their intention.

Mr. MACFARLANE only wished to say half-a-dozen words upon this subject. He had already shown in a previous discussion which had taken place upon Egyptian finance that he had no particular sympathy for the bondholders. He had pointed out that a country which could not pay its working expenses and the interest of its Foreign Debt was a bankrupt country. Egypt was at present in that position, and the first duty of the Government of Egypt was to set aside the money necessary for carrying on the effective government of the country, and then to hand over what was left, if any, to the bondholders. His own opinion was that the best means of protecting the bondholders was to take that course—namely, to set aside all that was necessary for proper administration and good government in Egypt, and then to allow anything that remained to go to the bondholders. There was a time when the Israelites borrowed silver and gold from the Egyptians, and went off into the desert with it. The Egyptians had reversed that operation now, and had borrowed silver and gold from the Israelites, telling them to go into the wilderness without it. He thought the Statute of Limitations might be pleaded; but it was, perhaps, too late for that kind of revenge. He was firmly convinced, however, that this was the real and essential point for this country to consider—namely, that what was necessary for the good government of Egypt should be first taken, and then that what was left should be handed over to the bondholders.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to raise a point which he had endeavoured to bring forward in the form of a Question, but upon which he had certainly received no very great amount of satisfaction. He entirely sympathized with the views expressed in regard to the Conference by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He thought the public opinion of this country—at least its honest and genuine opinion—was that the Representatives of England at the Conference should have regard to the interests of the people of Egypt as well as the bondholders. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to find that that observation met with a considerable amount of assent from the other side of the House; but he would have been more pleased if hon. Members opposite had taken care of the interests of the Egyptian people a little earlier, and had opposed one of the most infamous, most unjust, and most wicked wars of modern times. In fact, he did not know whether in speaking of that war he ought to call it a Jingo war, or a war made from the motive that by waging it the bloodshed that would ensue might prove a good cry in justification of the annexation of the country. He cordially joined the hon. Member for Northampton in demanding that the Representatives of England should take care of the interests of the people of Egypt. He understood from the Prime Minister's statement that the Law of Liquidation would be the subject brought before the Conference, and he assumed that the meaning of that in plain language was that the creditors of Egypt were to be asked to take a smaller amount of interest than they were at present receiving from the overburdened people of Egypt. That, no doubt, was a very commendable object, but he should like to make one or two observations in regard to it. It was said to be a bondholders' war; but the bondholders incurred a good deal of the blame which ought to attach to other people. It was true that they obtained a rather large percentage, but they got it at considerable risk, which could not be said of other people—the loanmongers who had obtained millions of money without incurring any risk whatever. As a matter of fact, they had it in their pockets at that day, and their only regret seemed to be that they had not been able to obtain a larger share of the plunder. Now, he wished to tell the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that this was a point of view which would be very much pressed upon the Government. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton said it served them right; but, as a matter of fact, he believed that a large portion of the Egyptian Debt was now held by French and German bondholders, who had nothing whatever to do with the making of the war, and who were as innocent as the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in reference to it. Were these hard-working men to be asked to submit to the sacrifice of their money or their interest, which, in some cases, was their whole source of income and means of livlihood? Were they to be asked to submit to a large reduction in the value of their property, while the English loanmongers were allowed to keep every penny of their ill-gotten plunder? That was a point that would be pressed upon the attention of the Government with energy and frequency. He did not see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) in his place, and he did not mean to make any observations as to the right hon. Gentleman's share in these transactions until he was in his place; but he would give Notice that on the first opportunity he could obtain he would call the attention of the House and of the country to the part which the house of Goschen and Frühling had taken in the financial transactions of Egypt. Every penny had been obtained by these loanmongers at an usurious interest which would not have done discredit to a Hebrew house in the days of King John; and every penny obtained from the unfortunate fellaheen by means of the bastinado had been freely used in order to build up the fortunes of public statesmen. He was satisfied that this was a question which both Germany and France would force upon the attention of the Government. What would the representative of an important class of French citizens, who invested their money in the funds and in foreign loans, say to the noble Lord, or to anybody else representing England, when it was proposed that the French *rentier* should give up a portion of his interest in order to make the rule of England in Egypt a little easier? What would Prince Bismark say when it was proposed that some hard-working German peasant or shopkeeper should give up a portion of his income for a similar purpose? The Representatives of both of those Powers would be able to say that it was the duty of England to look first at home, and to insist upon a large sum of money being returned to Egypt, the extortion of which was one of the main causes of the difficulty. He certainly intended to press this upon the attention of the Government, and it was only the absence of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) which prevented him from doing so at once. He intended again and again raising the question, until the people of France and Germany, if his voice were able to reach them, should learn who it was who were really responsible for the bankruptcy and miserable condition of the Egyptian people.

MR. GREGORY said, they were now asked to pass a Vote on Account. They had already passed one, and this was the second in the course of the present Session. He thought they ought to have some assurance from Her Majesty's Government that it would be the last Vote on Account that would be asked for, and that, having passed it, the Estimates would be voted in regular and proper course with a full discussion upon the balance of the money yet to be obtained. He hoped the House would not be prejudiced, in raising any question which might be properly asked upon the balances, by anything which might have previously occurred. He thought an assurance of that kind on the part of Her Majesty's Government would facilitate the discussion on the present occasion.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS quite agreed with what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory). He had intended to move the reduction of the Vote so as to give the Committee an early opportunity of proceeding with the Estimates; but after the discussion which had taken place on another matter, he would not take up the time of the Committee. He trusted, however, that they would have some such assurance as his hon. Friend had asked for at the hands of the Government. He was sure that such an assurance would give great satisfaction.

Mr. GORST said, it was all very well to talk of having no more Votes on Account; but, according to the way in which the Business of the House was now transacted, there must be Votes on Account at certain periods of the Session, because the discussion of the Civil Service Estimates was now spread over the whole of the Session, and by the time they reached the month of August they had seldom got through one-half of the Votes. So long as the Business of the House was conducted in that fashion, it only stood to reason that the Government must have Votes on Account every few months. He wished to make a suggestion to the Government on another point. He had no doubt they were as anxious as he was to secure that every part of the Civil Service Estimates in its turn should be properly and fully discussed. According to the present system they discussed in minute detail Class I. of the Civil Service Estimates, and sometimes Class II.; but all the remaining Classes were never discussed at all, simply because it was impossible to bring them on until the month of August, and by that time the patience of the House was exhausted. Hon. Members were looking forward to the Prorogation, and it was practically impossible to secure anything in the nature of a real discussion. He wanted to know if it were not possible to introduce some change? For instance, could not Her Majesty's Government bring forward the Civil Service Estimates in a different order in succeeding Sessions? Why not bring forward next Session Classes IV. and V. in the first instance, so that those particular Classes should receive adequate discussion? As it was, they had the earlier Classes of the Estimates discussed *ad nauseam* after long speeches made about the Royal Palaces and Public Buildings, and the arrangements of the Office of Works. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit that there were very important Votes which appeared later in the Estimates — such, for instance, as Votes in aid of the Colonies, which raised important questions of Imperial policy— that were practically never discussed at all. His suggestion, assuming that these Votes on Account could not be prevented, was that the Civil Service Estimates should be presented in a different order in different Sessions.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Of course, it is impossible to give any pledge upon this subject, which is a very difficult one; but I will do all in my power to avoid the inconveniences that have been referred to. The Committee will, however, bear in mind the great change that has taken place in our circumstances of late years. The Supplementary Estimates have now assumed such a character that they take nearly as much time in debate as I have often known the proper Civil Service Estimates for the year to take, so that, in fact, the whole of the available time before Easter for Supply is occupied in discussing them, leaving no room for the discussion of the Civil Service Estimates themselves until after Easter. Then there is is the new invention, which I shall never cease humbly and respectfully to protest against, of spending three weeks in discussing the Address, instead of disposing of it in one night. However, with regard to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), we will do the best we can to give effect to it.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor) said, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the House itself was placed in a somewhat awkward position in regard to the Estimates. Formerly, any private Member who had a question to bring forward could always find an opportunity for doing so on going into Committee of Supply. The result of that was, that if any hon. Member had a grievance to complain of, if he only stopped in the House long enough, he was sure to have an opportunity of getting the matter disposed of before the end of the Session, when Government wanted Supply; and it was to the interest of the Government in those days to enable him to do so, because they knew that if it was not disposed of before, it would be brought forward in August, when it would be most inconvenient to them to deal with it. It was, therefore, of importance to the Government that it should be disposed of at a proper time. Nowadays, the Government took Mondays and Thursdays for Supply without discussing any question on the Motion for going into Committee, and private Members were consequently prevented on those days from bringing Motions forward. This course was taken because it was thought that it gave more time for debating the Estimates themselves; but there were some questions—such as that in regard to Zululand, of which his hon. Friend the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) had given Notice—which might be satisfactorily dealt with on going into Committee of Supply, instead of being put off until the end of the Session.

MR. MONK said, there was one suggestion he should like to make, which he thought was worthy of consideration. Under the present system, it was perfectly clear that Votes on Account must be taken; and even if the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) were adopted, that other Classes of the Estimates should be taken before Class I., still they would never be able to get through a single Class of the Estimates before the time arrived for taking Votes on Account. The suggestion he would make to the Prime Minister was this. The Prime Minister was of opinion that the Standing Committees on Law and Trade were an excellent institution; he (Mr. Monk) believed so himself; and what he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman was that when he revised again the Rules of Procedure he should provide that there should be a Standing Committee to examine the Estimates, that being, he thought, the only way in which the Estimates could be properly considered by the House. Under the present arrangement, when the Estimates were under consideration, there were rarely 40 Members present; and if they were considered by a Standing Committee of 60 or 65 Members upstairs, it would be far better for the interest of the country, and the Estimates would be more carefully considered than they were now by the Committee of the Whole House.

MR. WARTON said, with regard to the suggestion which had just been made by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), it was perfectly true, as the hon. Member stated, that very often, on considering the Estimates, there were only 30 or 40 Members present; but the hon. Member seemed to have forgotten the fact that in a Grand Committee there might be fewer than 30 or 40 Members present, and that by taking these subjects out of the control of the House, and only affording to a few Members the right of discussing the Estimates, they would prevent Army men from dealing with the Army Votes and Naval men from dealing with the Navy Votes. That was a consideration which ought not to be entirely forgotten. A Grand Committee of 60 or 80 Members could not have upon it all the military Members of the House as well as those who represented all the different interests that were represented in a Committee of the Whole House. He, therefore, thought it would be a mistake to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for Gloucester. The Prime Minister, in the remarks he addressed to the Committee a short time ago, spoke of the Supplementary Estimates. He begged to remind the right hon. Gentleman that he himself was responsible for the Supplementary Estimates, about which complaints were so justly made, taking up so much of the time of the House in an early period of the Session. He desired to enter his protest against these Votes on Account, because they enabled the Government to omit doing that which was right, and to do that which they ought not to do. He thought the House ought to have ample time for the consideration of the Estimates. He was afraid that all Governments fell into a great mistake, and committed a cardinal sin, with regard to the functions of Parliament. The primary duty of Parliament was not to pass so many hundred Bills in the course of a Session, but to consider the Estimates with due regard to economy and efficiency. It was perfectly disgraceful that they should have to wait until the last week of August, as was the case last year, before they could discuss 19 out of the 25 Army Votes, and that the subject of Indian finance should be postponed until the last week of the Session. It was perfectly absurd to flood the Order Book with a large number of Bills, and he was afraid that therein lay the real evil. He was not casting special blame upon Her Majesty's Government; on the contrary, he blamed all Governments more or less, because they all set out a false principle. At the beginning of the Session, they found in Her Most Gracious Majesty's Speech an ambitious programme—a programme so ambitious that the most sanguine Minister could not expect to carry it out. What was the use of putting a dozen measures into the Queen's Speech, and only one little line about the Estimates? With regard to the conflicting duties of legislation and the consideration of the Estimates, what had the Government themselves done only as recently as Friday last? They did not apply for one penny of money, although early in the evening, before 12 o'clock, the Motions were all disposed of. Instead of going on with the Votes, they contented themselves with bringing in two trumpery wretched Bills which might very well not have been introduced at all. That showed the sincerity of the Government. He should always contend that the primary duty of the House was to look after the Estimates, with the object of securing due economy and the efficiency of the Services, both of which objects were too much neglected. His own opinion was that the Services of the country might be rendered much more efficient than they were, and that less money might be spent upon them. As to the particular matter now before the Committee, he was glad to find the Prime Minister was able to go as far as he had done. He fully admitted that the Prime Minister himself observed courtesy towards Foreign Powers. The conduct of the Government must, however, be judged by the past, and if they were going to turn over a new leaf, he hoped the time would soon arrive when the power and word of England would again be esteemed and respected. He trusted that the deliberations of the Conference would be strictly limited to the Law of Liquidation; but he was afraid that if they were extended to the general subject of finance, an ingenious foreign Representative would find himself able to introduce any subject whatever. For instance, it might be asked—"What are you going to do with the British Army, and are the Egyptians to pay for it?" He therefore earnestly hoped that Her Majesty's Government would persevere with their intention that there should be nothing but the Law of Liquidation referred to in the Conference. His own opinion was, that if the Government had adopted a better policy in Egypt, and had boldly assumed a Protectorate, the guarantee of England's wealth and interest would have prevented the country from getting into its present difficulty.

Mr. SALT said, he rose to add his voice to that of other hon. Members in the request that the Government would not find it necessary to have another Vote on Account this year. The inconvenience of Votes on Account was so very obvious that he would not trouble the Committee by recapitulating them at that moment. He wished also to say a word with regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) as to referring the Estimates to a Grand Committee. He thought the House itself was the only Body that could exercise a proper control over the Estimates. He would not pursue that argument further, and he trusted that his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) would be satisfied with the discussion he had raised, and would now withdraw the Motion.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, that, with the leave of the House, he would withdraw the Amendment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to call the attention of the Committee to a ruling which I gave a short time ago. I said that the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) would not preclude other hon. Members who had Notices on the Paper with regard to certain items in the Estimates, or, indeed, those who had not placed Notices on the Paper, from raising discussions upon those points, and taking a vote of the Committee—that is, taking a vote in reduction of the general sum asked for, but they would not be able to take any vote upon a particular item. If, on the other hand, I had called upon the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), whose Notice appeared first on the Paper, and who proposes to reduce the Vote by a particular item, that particular item being one of the last Votes in the Estimate, I should have precluded all other hon. Members who desired to raise a discussion, and to move a reduction in other Votes.

Post Office—Royalties from Telephone Companies.

Mr. GRAY said, that in rising to arraign, as he desired to do, the policy of the Department over which the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General presided, so far as it related to the treatment extended to Telephone Companies, and that portion of the public interested in the development of the telephone system, he felt that he laboured under a serious disadvantage, inasmuch as he was connected in a prominent manner with the Irish Telephone Company. The House was naturally and properly intolerant of Members bringing before it matters in which they had a personal interest. But his personal interest in the question was of the slightest. He should not have brought forward the subject had he not thought it necessary to do so in the interest of the public. In 1869 the Post Office was given, by Act of Parliament, a complete monopoly of the telegraph business of the United Kingdom. At that time the telephone and the wonderful results obtainable by that mode of applying electricity were absolutely unknown; and Parliament certainly did not contemplate handing over to the Department an invention which was then non-existent. In 1876 the telephone came into considerable public use. When, in 1878, the Department promoted a Telegraphs Bill, some of its more astute advisers foresaw the possible results of that invention, and the Department introduced into the Bill, and succeeded in passing through the House of Lords, without attention being directed to it, a clause which gave them control over the telephonic system throughout the country. With the permission of the Committee, he would refer to the 3rd clause of the Bill, as it passed the House of Lords and came to that House; and to that clause he asked the particular attention of the Postmaster General, who, at the time the Bill was passed, was not at the head of the Department. The clause was to the effect that, in the construction of the Telegraphs Act of 1869, the term "telegraph" should, in addition to the meaning assigned to it by that Act, include "any apparatus for the transmission of messages by the aid of electricity, magnetism, or any other like agency." Now, that was inserted for the purpose of covering the telephone; he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman would venture to assert that it was not introduced deliberately for that purpose. The Bill came down from the Lords, and the clause was struck out in that House; the hon. Members who opposed the Bill saw the intention of the clause, and believed that by getting it struck out they had protected the invention from the control of the Department of which the right hon. Gentleman was the head. They struck out the clause deliberately; and, therefore, he maintained that the clear and distinct intention of Parliament was to leave the new invention free and open to public and private enterprize. But the Department subsequently sought to interpret the Act as covering the telephone. The telephone, which was originally the invention of Mr. Bell, and had been improved by various other inventors, became, as to its patent rights, vested in a Company about the year 1880, and that Company established in London and elsewhere Telephone Exchanges, with the nature and object of which hon. Members would be acquainted. Those exchanges were watched with the greatest anxiety and jealousy by the Department; but they took no action for some time, being in doubt, probably, in consequence of the striking out by the House of Commons of the clause he had cited. But, eventually, they raised the question as to their right to control the invention on an application for an injunction to restrain the Telephone Companies from making use of their telephones in the manner described. Judgment in the case was delivered by Mr. Justice Stephen, who held that the contention of the Department was correct, and that the words of the Telegraphs Act of 1869 were sufficiently wide to include the telephone, although the telephone at that time had not been dreamed of, or, at least, had no existence. But Mr. Justice Stephen went further, and said that the words of the Telegraphs Act of 1869 were so wide as to include, on the one hand, any system of signals, even by means of common bells, if those bells were operated upon by wires; and, on the other hand, any system of communication by means of electricity, even if such communication could be carried on without the aid of wires. That judgment, he (Mr. Gray) believed, included everything in the nature of communication, even that of a person pulling the bell at a hall door for the purpose of making a specific signal; at any rate, he had given the words of Mr. Justice Stephen. The net having been spread so wide by the Act of 1869, the Department found that the clause attempted to be inserted in the Bill of 1878 was unnecessary to enable them to control the telephonic system of the country, although Sir William Thompson had said that—

> "When the Telegraph Act was passed the telephone had not been invented, and no one concerned in that legislation had the slightest idea, nor had anyone living the slightest idea, that it would be possible so to extend the power of speech as to enable persons at a distance to converse with each other."

Now, whether, in the face of these facts, the Department had any reason to be proud of availing themselves of powers which Parliament never intended to confer upon them in order to interfere with public and private rights in this matter, he would leave altogether to the conscience of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, however, who represented and spoke on behalf of the Department, when judgment had been delivered, and when it was suggested that great inconvenience would result if the precise terms of the judgment restraining the Company from carrying on its business were acted upon, said he believed that it was merely a question of licence between the Companies and the Department. And there it rested. The Department, having asserted its control, granted to the Telephone Companies licences on certain conditions; the main condition being that 10 per cent of the gross receipts should be paid to the former by way of royalty. The 10 per cent was, of course, a tax upon the public, and it had to be charged to them by the Companies. However, so enormous were the advantages and facilities offered by the invention, and so determined were those who had tried them not to abandon them, that the business of the Company spread with great rapidity, there being 3,000 or 4,000 subscribers to the Exchange in London alone, and large numbers to those in Dublin, Glasgow, Manchester, and other places. From this it would be seen that, although the Companies had considerable reason to complain of the petty vexation and annoyance to which they were subjected by the Department, they had been able to carry on their business. But recently the policy of the Post Office had changed. He distinctly charged it upon the Department that about two years ago they arrived at a determination, not openly, but indirectly, to strike at all future development of the telephonic system; and in order to sustain that, to his mind, serious charge, it was necessary to explain the precise relations between the United Telephone Company and others established in the United Kingdom. That Company had brought various actions for the purpose of restraining infringements of its patent rights; but, not wishing to work all the telephones in the Kingdom, they gave concessions to various subsidiary Companies in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The arrangements with those Companies were that the United Telephone Company should give them a user of its telephones for their districts, they contracting, on the one hand, to pay the United Telephone Company a certain rental per instrument, and that Company contracting, on the other hand, to give to the local Companies a monopoly of the use of the instruments in their respective districts, and not to sell or permit to be used therein any other telephones than those supplied to the Companies. As he had remarked, the Postmaster General, up to a certain date, had granted licences to Companies who paid him a royalty. Suddenly, however, the right hon. Gentleman changed his policy, and said he would grant no further licences unless the Companies entered into a contract to sell to him, on terms to be fixed by arbitration in default of agreement, as many telephones, to be used for any purposes, as he might think fit. Such a condition, he believed, had never before been imposed by a Public Department upon private enterprize; he would go further, and say that the condition was imposed by the right hon. Gentleman, or by those permanent officials in the Department whose action he had adopted, with a full knowledge that it was beyond the power of any of the Companies to consent to it, and that it was an absolute prohibition of the further development of the telephone system. If the chief Company had attempted to sell a single instrument, it would have thereby violated its contract with the subsidiary Companies, who would have obtained damages for breach of contract; if any one of the subsidiary Companies had attempted to sell instruments, it would not only have violated its contract with the chief Company, but would have committed robbery. Now, the right hon. Gentleman had a knowledge of these facts, because, prior to the granting of any licence, he had always insisted upon having in his possession the terms, in black and white, of the contract between the United Telephone Company and the subsidiary Company applying for the licence. He (Mr. Gray) had that day asked the right hon. Gentleman how many licences had been applied for, and how many had been granted since the new condition had been imposed; and he believed the reply was that eight licences had been granted, out of 78 applied for. In that way he had at last forced from the right hon. Gentleman practically this acknowledgment, that the terms of the new condition must be reconsidered, because they were manifestly unjust. In August, 1882, the Postmaster General made a speech in that House upon the Estimates, in which he said he wished to warn those connected with Telephone Companies against anything like the Utopian notion that the Government were going to buy their property in them. The inference from that was certainly that the Government would let the Companies alone; but the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Department had adopted the principle of free competition, not only between the Companies themselves, but between the Companies and the Department, and his statement was received with satisfaction by the Companies, and also by the House and the public. The public saw, in the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman, the best guarantee that they would be well served, and at the cheapest rate. At that time the right hon. Gentleman erroneously believed that another Company had succeeded in bringing out some instruments which evaded the patents of the United Company, and from which he believed the Post Office would derive some advantages. Since then, however, the former had been restrained from using the instruments, which the right hon. Gentleman thought he might be able to apply to his own purposes. Immediately after that, and as soon as the property of the United Telephone Company was confirmed to them, the right hon. Gentleman adopted the policy of strangulation he had described; at any rate, what he (Mr. Gray) called a policy of strangulation was adopted about two years ago. Not only had the various Companies applied in vain to the right hon. Gentleman for licences based on practicable conditions, but local authorities, Members of the House, and deputations from various towns had waited upon him, and, as in the case of the Companies, waited upon him in vain. He remembered reading that a deputation from Plymouth had waited upon him, a short time ago, doubtless with the object of ascertaining why they should be refused facilities which were granted in the case of Dublin, Newcastle, and Manchester. But the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was, in effect—"I have given certain concessions to certain towns, and the other parts of the Kingdom must remain out in the cold." Now, he submitted that this was a position which the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have taken up; and in spite of the ability of the right hon. Gentleman, and in spite, of course, of the fact that if he (Mr. Gray) attempted to divide the House against his views, he should be put in a minority, he ventured to say that it was a position which would be found to be untenable, because the public would not tolerate action of the kind. He could understand the right hon. Gentleman saying—"Here is a dangerous rival to the telegraph system; I will strangle it. I do not mind the inconvenience to the public; I am going to keep that monopoly, and telephones I will not tolerate." He could understand that policy, and it might be that the House would adopt it; but he did not understand the right hon. Gentleman saying that Manchester and Dublin should have what was denied to Bristol and Cork. The right hon. Gentleman had taken up a position in this matter which he believed his sense of fair play would induce him to abandon before his perception of public opinion compelled him to do so. The principle upon which Parliament, in 1869, gave the monopoly of the Telegraph Service to the Government was that of securing uniform facilities and uniformity of charge throughout the Kingdom, as in the case of the Postal Service; and, in the face of that, what became of the condition imposed by the right hon. Gentleman—that Manchester and Dublin should have telephonic communication, and that Bristol and Cork should not?

What had the inhabitants of the latter towns done that they should be permanently subject to this disability? Because certain individual Companies carrying on business in their own way did not think fit to make application to the right hon. Gentleman before a certain date, why should the towns referred to suffer? The right hon. Gentleman said he had acted in order to protect the public against monopoly. But he had put some Questions to the right hon. Gentleman with the view of ascertaining whether there was any necessity for the Department to retain this control over the telephone system; and he found that while the Post Office had been working the telephone during the last two or three years, they had only obtained 700 subscribers at their various Telephone Exchanges. He ascertained, also, that the Post Office had in its possession over 5,000 telephonic instruments for the use of that number of subscribers; and so far was the Department from being apprehensive of the supply of instruments running short, that they had been trading in them, and reselling, presumably at a profit, instruments which they had obtained by means, in his opinion, by no means creditable to those concerned. He had further ascertained that the Post Office, on a contract binding upon the United Telephone Company, had a right to call upon them to supply 15,000 more instruments—that was to say, they had under their control no less than 20,000 instruments at a time when their subscribers only numbered 700, and those being mostly in Newcastle. He did not think that the Postmaster General would venture to assert that he had any expectation of the Department being able to find use for all these instruments before the patent rights expired in six or seven years hence. What became, then, of the excuse of the right hon. Gentleman, that he was doing all this to protect the public against monopoly? The answer to that was that it was not to protect the public at all, but to destroy the property of the Telephone Companies. The Companies earned their profits by making their own instruments, and giving the use of them to their subscribers. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General stepped in and said—"I may buy as many instruments as I like, and do what I please with them." The right hon. Gentleman demanded the right to buy and sell them at a cheap rate, and utterly destroy the patent right; in fact, in his zeal for the public service, he wanted to obtain the property of other people without paying for it. To come to another matter, what were known as trunk lines were an enormous convenience; but, owing to the action of the Post Office, their usefulness was not fully realized. It was perfectly practicable for persons in London to converse with others in Liverpool; in fact, people in Liverpool did now converse with people in Manchester, and people in Sunderland, since the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) called attention to the subject, were able to hold a conversation with people in Newcastle. One of the favourite tactics of the Department was to weary the Companies by long and unnecessary delays. After about two years' negotiations, the Postmaster General laid down the terms on which he would grant facilities for trunk lines between town and town. The right hon. Gentleman said—I will not permit the Companies themselves to run wires between town and town; but I will run them for them, the Companies paying to me a minimum annual rental of £10 per double wire, and giving to me one-half the revenue over that sum which they may derive, the Companies charging whatever rates they choose." Such were the conditions which the right hon. Gentleman laid down in a formal letter, dated April 18, 1883, and addressed to the Lancashire and Cheshire Company. Now, the Lancashire and Cheshire Company accepted this condition, although it was exceedingly onerous. In their letter accepting it, they stated that, in order to serve their customers, they intended to bear the whole expense of the trunk wires—that they would not charge their customers anything, trusting to recoup themselves by a development of business. In other words, they intended to run the trunk communication between the towns they served free of any charge to their customers; but the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General said that, although that was, no doubt, what he stated, it was not what he intended they should do; and he forthwith imposed a new condition on the Company—a condition which was of a most extraordinary character. The right hon. Gentleman said—I will not permit you to serve your customers on these favourable terms; you must charge your customers a rate of 10*s.* per mile, whether you like it or not. Now, he (Mr. Gray) begged hon. Members to consider how such a condition worked out. A trunk wire could be established with great facility between London and Brighton, and if one were established, there were many gentlemen living in Brighton who would use it, and thus very often save themselves the trouble of coming up to town to transact business. Frequently, a few minutes' conversation over the wire would be all that was necessary for a business man living in Brighton to have with his correspondent in London. The convenience of such wires would thus be easily seen. But a charge of £25 to the subscribers to the Company for the mere occasional use of the wire would be very excessive; in fact, he doubted very much whether many gentlemen would be found to subscribe upon such terms; and, therefore, the action of the Department in compelling Companies to charge this excessive mileage was preposterous. It was, no doubt, intended to prevent the Company developing their business and giving to the public those facilities which were wanted. Not only were there these larger grounds of complaint against the Post Office, but the Telephonic Companies contended that every kind of annoyance which could by any possibility be devised by the Post Office was adopted for the purpose of wearying, impeding, and obstructing them in carrying on their business. Would it be believed by any Gentleman conversant with telephonic work that such a condition as he would now describe could be imposed by the Post Office? Supposing a man whom he would call Smith was a subscriber to a trunk wire, and he, being in Liverpool, wished to speak to Brown in Manchester, he could do so provided that Brown happened to be in his office at the moment, and could at once reply. But if Smith wished to ask a question which Brown could not answer on the instant, the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General laid it down that Brown should not be at liberty to reply to Smith, unless Brown himself was a subscriber to the trunk wire. That was a sample of the conditions laid down by the Post Office Department for the purpose of worrying and annoying the Telephonic Companies. As he had already said, one of the favourite tactics of the Department was delay. For instance, the Irish Company addressed a formal letter, on the 12th of December last, to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett). Three or four weeks afterwards, a letter was received by the Company to the effect that the matter would have the most careful attention of the Department. As a matter of amusement, he had waited patiently to see how long it would take the Department to reply to the letter in detail. This was the 22nd of May, and they had not yet replied. He simply mentioned this circumstance as an instance of the deliberate intention of the Post Office to throw impediments in the way of everything concerning the development of telephonic communication. The policy of the Post Office was a policy of delay and procrastination. The proposal of the Dublin Company which the Department treated so indifferently was a very simple one. It was suggested that, in order to add to the public facilities, what were called talking stations, or call offices, should be set up, so that any member of the public could come in and speak to any subscriber to the Telephone Exchange, and obtain an immediate reply. It was suggested that a moderate charge should be made for this convenience; and the Company even went so far as to tell the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General that if he was apprehensive that the telegraphic business would be thereby interfered with, the Company, in order to serve the public, would give him a guarantee that if the revenue from telegraphs was diminished in consequence of the increased facilities given to the public by means of the telephone, they would make up the loss. One of the Directors of the United Telephone Company had written several letters to *The Pall Mall Gazette* and other papers, pointing out the marvellous facilities which could be given by these talking stations to the whole of the London public. There were some 3,000 or 4,000 houses connected with the Telephone Exchange; and the gentleman in question wrote to say that the Company would be willing to put up, in convenient parts of London, call stations where any number of the public could come in and hold a conversation with any one of the subscribers for a charge which he estimated at 1*d.* But the Post Office said—"You shall do nothing of the kind." They did say, in Manchester—"You may open these offices if you like; but whether you think it advantageous or not, you must charge the public 1*s.* The Director of the Telephone Company, to whom he (Mr. Gray) had before alluded, could not believe it possible that the Post Office, especially when it was presided over by a distinguished political economist of the liberal and enlightened views of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett), could think it to the interest of the public to obstruct the Public Service in the manner they did; and he wrote to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to say he was desirous of establishing experimental call stations, for the purpose of seeing whether the public would avail themselves of them. The right hon. Baronet forwarded the letter to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, who replied that, on no conditions, would such stations be allowed, not even as an experiment. Did not these things show that the deliberate intention of the Post Office Department was to prevent the public reaping the advantages of the new discovery? The Department could not use the discovery themselves to any great advantage. They had tried to use it, and, except in one town, they had miserably failed to achieve any success. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General was kind enough to give him a Return, a few days ago, of the number of telephones which he had himself in use in various towns. From that Return, he (Mr. Gray) noticed that there were only 10 telephones by the Post Office in use in Exeter, eight in Falmouth, six in Londonderry, 11 in Waterford, and so on. Indeed, if they took away Newcastle-on-Tyne, where there were 362 instruments in use, there were less than 400 distributed over the United Kingdom. In short, the telephonic business was one which the Post Office was incapable of carrying on, because it involved a great deal of individual labour, individual canvassing and explanation, which a Public Department could not carry on. In 1882 the Postmaster General said that when free competition showed whether the public were better served by the Post Office or private Companies, he would only be too delighted to allow the Companies to do the business if they did it better; but he had since changed his policy, because now he would be only too delighted if he could strangle the Telephone Companies. The right hon. Gentleman had fallen between two stools, because one day he said he wished to encourage the new invention, and another day it was evident he wished to destroy it. But the public had already sufficient knowledge of the advantages of the telephone not to permit the Department to strangle the Companies; and he trusted that, eventually, the right hon. Gentleman would be induced to reconsider his position; and, while taking reasonable precautions for the protection of the Public Revenue, would afford to the public reasonable facilities for being served by this new invention. When a discussion on the Post Office Vote was raised, some time ago, the right hon. Gentleman commenced his speech in reply by saying he would be sorry to consider that the only function of the Post Office was the earning of Revenue, because it had some higher object, meaning, he (Mr. Gray) supposed, the service of the public. A good many people were very doubtful as to the result of vesting the telegraphs in a Department of the Crown They feared, and he believed the result had more than justified their fear, that to give to the Department a monopoly would tend to restrict the introduction of improved methods of telegraphy. In a very remarkable address, delivered a few years ago, before one of the Scientific Societies, the late Sir William Siemens expressed the opinion that the result of the acquisition of the telegraphs by the Post Office Department had been to seriously interfere with the progress of scientific discovery and improvement in telegraphic apparatus, so far as the United Kingdom was concerned; and he asked how it was that so many great inventions in connection with telegraphy were perfected in England before the Post Office got hold of the telegraphs, and that subsequently all the great inventions, including the telephone, had been perfected in the United States, where the telegraphs were free?

In an article in one of the Reviews by Mr. H. Spencer, the writer alluded to the observation of the late Sir William Siemens, who was probably the greatest authority on such a subject in the United Kingdom; and he pointed out that the Post Office was adopting precisely the same policy now in reference to the telephone—that was, they were endeavouring to prevent its development. He (Mr. Gray) feared he had occupied too much of the attention of the Committee already; but he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General would recognize that this was a very important question, and that it was very necessary the Department should lay down some clear and distinct line of action; that they should not be chopping and changing about; that every petty application of any one of the Telephone Companies should not be a subject of long and tedious negotiations; and that one set of conditions should not be conceded to one town to-day, and refused to another town to-morrow; while a modified set was made for a third town the day after to-morrow. He had contended that it was impossible for the different towns of the country to comply with the conditions laid down by the Post Office; but the right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, in his reply, remind the Committee that Newcastle had already complied with the terms of the Department. Now, he maintained that the Newcastle contract was about the most immoral—of course he used the phrase in a political sense—of all the immoral transactions of which the Department had been guilty throughout this business. The right hon. Gentleman had official knowledge that the Newcastle Company did not own a single telephone; and yet he forced upon them a contract agreeing to sell to him instruments which they did not own. The Postmaster General knew that that contract could not be carried out, and he (Mr. Gray) challenged the right hon. Gentleman to attempt to carry it out; he challenged him to test, in a Court of Law, whether he could enforce his own contract; he challenged him to take the opinion of any Judge of the land as to the morality of the contract. The Postmaster General had instanced the Newcastle case as a justification for his refusal to grant licences which had been applied for by 78 other towns in the Kingdom; and when it was asked the other day, in the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), why Cork was refused facilities which were granted to Dublin, the right hon. Gentleman said—"I have merely imposed on Cork conditions similar to those which were imposed on other towns, and which were accepted by Newcastle-on-Tyne." In what way were the conditions accepted by Newcastle-on-Tyne? What was the contract which the right hon. Gentleman had not dared to seek to enforce, and which he would not attempt to enforce even after his (Mr. Gray's) invitation? What was the contract which the right hon. Gentleman was not ashamed to enter into, and then plead it as an excuse for refusing proper and necessary telephonic facilities to other towns? How did the Department acquire control of the 20,000 instruments, which the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged he had now at command? He (Mr. Gray) would tell the right hon. Gentleman, if he did not know. The United Telephone Company, or its predecessors—he was not sure which—entered into a contract with certain individuals named Scott and Wooleston to sell to them 20,000 instruments at a price; but a condition was that the instruments should not be used for ordinary exchange or *quasi*-public purposes, but merely for private purposes. The Post Office were exceedingly anxious to get hold of telephone instruments; but they could not, because they happened to be the property of other people. A rather cute Yankee, who knew something about telephones, was over here, and he looked into the matter. He found that, on the one hand, the Post Office wanted to get instruments they could not get, and that, on the other hand, Scott and Wooleston had at call a lot of instruments, the use of which was restricted by certain conditions. Gower, for that was the Yankee's name, was skilled in Company-mongering; he constituted a Limited Liability Company—a Company consisting of seven persons, who each owned one share of £5—and this Company bought from Scott and Wooleston the rights over the 20,000 instruments they had purchased from the United Telephone Company. This bogus Company then sold their rights in the instruments to the Post Office, and the Post

Office was not ashamed to enter into a contract with them. The result of the interposition between Scott and Wooleston, the original purchasers, and the Post Office, the ultimate receivers—he did not say of stolen goods, but of goods they were not morally entitled to—was, as the legal advisers of the Post Office advised the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett), that the Post Office were not bound by the original conditions, because they had purchased from a second party. The right hon. Gentleman, or his Department, was not ashamed to get possession of instruments in that fashion, a fashion which was more characteristic of American log-rollers than of an English Department; the right hon. Gentleman was not ashamed to get possession of the instruments in this way, and then to use them for purposes for which the original contract prohibited their being used. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman himself whether, if he was acting in his private capacity, anything in the world would induce him to be connected with such a transaction? Was the right hon. Gentleman bound, when representing the Government of Great Britain, to stain himself with transactions which he would shrink from in his private capacity? He (Mr. Gray) ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman was not called upon to do anything of the kind. It would be much better for the right hon. Gentleman to adopt a straightforward course. He ought to say at once that the Post Office was determined to put an end altogether, so far as it could, to the use of the telephone in the United Kingdom, or he ought to say frankly—"I will give any reasonable telephonic facilities; but I will protect the public by getting a royalty." Either of those courses would be a straightforward one, and the latter would not be an unreasonable one. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that public feeling on this matter had risen with greater rapidity than he thought; and although, of course, the right hon. Gentleman would succeed in defeating any attempt which he (Mr. Gray) made to force upon the Government a recognition of its duty, he would not succeed so easily in appeasing public opinion out-of-doors. As a private Member, he (Mr. Gray) was quite powerless in the matter. He was not to-night in a position by the Rules of the House to bring to a Division a specific Motion; but he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman, whose administration of the Post Office had been distinguished in many ways by a liberality and breadth of view, and by a desire to serve the public without too narrow ideas on the subject of preserving the Public Revenue, to extend the policy which had characterized his administration in other directions to the telephone, and not to punish the public because, under a technical judgment, he had obtained a right of control which never was contemplated by Parliament. It must be recollected that, in 1878, Parliament deliberately struck a clause out of a Bill then introduced, in order to free the Telephone Companies from the shackles which the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had now succeeded, by technical possession, in imposing upon them.

Mr. SLAGG said, the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had certainly no warmer admirer than he (Mr. Slagg) in regard to the general administration of the Post Office; but he was bound to say that, in relation to the control which was exercised in the matter of telephones, the right hon. Gentleman's conduct did seem to be out of harmony with those traditions which had made him famous. The complaints on this subject in his (Mr. Slagg's) district were loud and frequent. It was a matter of extreme importance to the large commercial towns of Lancashire and Cheshire that they should have the very fullest facility, which they certainly had not at the present time, of availing themselves of telephonic communication. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gray) had gone so ably and so minutely into the subject, that it was hardly possible for him (Mr. Slagg) to add anything to the force of his arguments; he might, however, say that in regard to one or two points to which the hon. Gentleman had called attention, his (Mr. Slagg's) own constituents felt very special grievances. It had always surprised him that the Law Courts in this country should afford to the Post Office what really constituted a monopoly in regard to a great natural force. A monopoly in telephony was, unfortunately, allowed the Post Office, but on what principle of law it seemed impossible to understand, because, when the Telegraphs Act was passed, telephones were never even thought of. Surely, under the circumstances, they could consistently call on the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General to use the powers he had gained with moderation, and with the fullest measure of convenience to the commercial community. He was afraid there was ample evidence to show that was hardly done. He would refer, very briefly, to a case to which the hon. Gentleman had alluded. In Manchester it would be an enormous convenience if call offices existed. He believed that in a great number of Continental towns facilities were afforded to passers-by in the street to call at certain offices and send telephonic messages at a very small cost. One would think that in a great commercial country like this, and in great commercial centres like Manchester, equal facilities for telephonic communication would exist; but as soon as a Company improved their service in that way, the Department came down and charged them 50 per cent upon their gross receipts. Well, then, there was the question of trunk lines. There were one or two very important centres of cotton manufacture—there was that, for instance, of Oldham, to which constant communication was most desirable from Manchester; but when the Company tried to establish trunk lines, they were met by restrictive regulations on the part of the Post Office. It was well known to all who were familiar with this subject that the radius allowed to Telephone Companies was four miles from the centres of such towns as Manchester and Liverpool; but a great number of the merchants lived much beyond that radius, and it would be a great convenience to them to be able to communicate between their business places and their homes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Companies should not go beyond that distance without paying a tax; and the policy was to impose perpetually-increasing taxation on every attempt to subserve the convenience of the public. Of course, the Post Office had in its hands a very important business—that of the telegraphs—which it was bound to defend and safeguard in every way; and if it could be shown that the development of telephonic enterprize would interfere seriously with the telegraphs, he should be more willing to admit that restrictive action should be adopted; but that was not the case. As a matter of fact, he believed that if the telephonic interest was developed, there would be a large increase in the receipts for telegrams. He would take the case of America in this respect. In that country there was an application of telephonic power, in comparison with which the facilities existing in this country might be described as positively trifling; but, notwithstanding that development of telephonic communication, there was side by side with it a great increase in telegraphic communications; so that the Government need not have the slightest apprehension as to giving facilities to the Telephonic Companies. The commercial public were under great obligations to these Companies for having planted these lines in the country; and he thought the Post Office ought to treat them in a more liberal spirit. It was possible to conceive that it was the intention of the Government by this policy to gradually obtain possession of the telephone system; and if the right hon. Gentleman would only state that to-night, he would, no doubt, relieve the minds of a great number of persons who were in uncertainty as to the future. It might reasonably be urged that it was not desirable that the Government, when it came to acquire this great system, should have to pay such high premiums as they did in obtaining possession of the telegraphs. But, whatever might be the object or the policy of the Department in this matter, he claimed, on behalf of the public, more reasonable treatment of these Companies in the meantime; and he thought it was only fair to ask the right hon. Gentleman to fix some system of payment for royalties, by which the public might be relieved from these constant changes of taxation and policy.

MR. FAWCETT said, that, although strong observations had been made by the hon. Member for Carlow and the hon. Member for Manchester, he should not say anything that could for a moment separate himself from the permanent officials in his Department. He, and he alone, was responsible for everything that had been done; and he should greatly regret it if there should be any reason to suppose that any atom of blame for whatever had taken place would be transferred from himself to the shoulders of those whom he believed to be trustworthy and zealous. All sorts of charges were made against the officials of the Post Office, as if they had some private motive to serve. They had no motive except the interest of the Department, which in their view was the interest of the public. Now, he was bound to confess that in his official experience of all the many questions he had to deal with in connection with the administration of the Post Office, none, to his mind, had been beset with a tithe part of the difficulties which had had to be considered in connection with the telephone question. Of course, it would be idle now to go over the question which had been settled, and to enter into the controversy whether or not Parliament was wise or unwise in purchasing the telegraphs at an enormous price, and so establishing a monopoly. But that was done by Parliament; and it was not for him to express an opinion as to this or that Act. All he, or anyone else similarly placed at the Post Office, had to do was to faithfully administer the Acts which Parliament had passed; and, therefore, he had nothing to do with the policy of the telegraph monopoly. He found the telegraph monopoly created, and he was bound to administer it in the best way he could, not only in the interests of the Revenue, but in the interests of the public. When he went to the Post Office he found that this question as to whether or not the telephone was an infringement of the telegraph monopoly was about to be raised in the Law Courts. Of course, nothing would be more unwise on his part than to say a single word about the decision which was given in regard to the telephone. The case was heard before two able Judges; the case was argued with consummate ability on each side; there was an elaborate judgment; and that judgment left no doubt whatever that, in the opinion of the Judges, the telephone was a direct and a distinct infringement of the telegraph monopoly, in purchasing which Parliament or the Government had spent £10,000,000 of the taxpayers' money. In the course of that case it was particularly urged upon him, as representing the Post Office, that he should not deal harshly with the Telephone Companies; that he should not act on the assumption that they had consciously done an illegal act in the establishment of Telephone Exchanges; that, although the Court had distinctly announced that the Companies had committed an act of illegality in every instance in which they had established an exchange, he should not exercise his full rights and confiscate their property, but should deal with them in a generous and liberal spirit. All he could say was, that had been his object from the first. After giving the matter great consideration, he said that in any case where a private Company had established a Telephone Exchange, he would assume that that establishment was a *bonâ fide* transaction, and that it was not done with the knowledge that it was an act of illegality; that, consequently, nothing should be done that would interfere with their business, and he would enter into arrangements with them by which they would be able to carry on their business. Consequently, in all those towns in which, at the time of the decision, Telephone Exchanges were established, licences were immediately granted to them on certain conditions, upon which an agreement was come to between the Telephone Companies and himself. The hon. Member had again and again repeated that throughout all these affairs he (Mr Fawcett) had been actuated by an intention and a desire to strangle the Telephone Companies. Far from that being his desire, he had allowed them to establish businesses in almost every large town in England; and he could only repeat most positively the assertion he had already made, that nothing was further from his desire than to do anything that was unfair to, or severe upon, the Telephone Companies, or anything that was likely to strangle them. He was anxious that the public should obtain a supply of telephonic communication, either through private enterprize or through the Post Office, according to which could supply it to the public most efficiently and on the most reasonable terms. That had been his policy hitherto, and that was his policy at the present time. But in granting these licences to private Companies, he was, of course, bound to see that the arrangement made should not prejudicially affect the Revenue. The officials of the Department were often attacked as if they had some personal interest to serve. They had to administer a monopoly, bought by £10,000,000 of the taxpayers' money; and he was bound to see that this large investment was guarded with adequate precautions. His position was exactly that of a trustee. If a commercial man bought an invention or a patent, for, say, £100,000, and he appointed a manager to administer it for him, and suppose someone else made another invention, and it was decided by the Courts that that invention was an infringement of the patent which had been bought for £100,000, and that the use of it was equally an infringement of his patent, would not that manager be faithless, and not properly careful of his trust, if he did not see that the use of the second patent should only take place under conditions which would properly safeguard the interests of the man who employed him? That was exactly his position; he was nothing more than the trustee of the public. This policy of granting licences to all the towns in which Telephone Exchanges had been established went on until about two years ago. He was then met with another difficulty. He received numerous applications from other Companies, stating that if he did not extend the granting of licences to other Companies in other towns, he should be constituting a private monopoly. They said it was all very well for the Government to have a monopoly; but if they abused the monopoly, a Motion would be brought forward in the House of Commons. They said they would have the Government under their control; and if the monopoly was not properly used, it would be the fault of the people if they submitted to the misuse of the monopoly. He was pressed on all sides not to allow a private monopoly to grow up, and be vested in a private Company, which could not be controlled in the same way by Parliament. He therefore decided, two years ago, that he would, to a certain extent, change the policy which had been adopted, and would no longer confine the granting of licences to those towns which happened to have exchanges at the time when the legal decision was given; but would grant licences to all towns and to all applicants on certain conditions. These conditions he considered most carefully; he had considered the condition to which the hon. Member had referred; and his sole object in insisting upon that condition was that he thought it was of great importance that the Department should have some larger control than it then possessed over the use of all telephone instruments, in order to have the power of interposing, not primarily for the sake of making money, but in the interests of the public, if those interests required such an interference. That plan had gone on for a couple of years. After it came into operation, a decision was given in reference to certain patents which were claimed by a Company. That Company had obtained a licence, and the effect of the decision was adverse to that Company, and that Company had found the difficulty of carrying on its business greatly increased. He was free to confess, as he had stated that afternoon—and he should almost have thought that the statement he then made would have rendered it unnecessary to bring on the question now—that it had been shown by experience that the new condition which he had thought necessary in the interest of the public to impose two years ago had checked the development of private telephonic enterprize. He never intended that effect to be produced; and, having ascertained that that had been the effect, he had been considering for some months past—and it was a question beset with difficulties—whether he should modify that condition in such a way as to get over the difficulty, while, at the same time, properly guarding the interests of the public. He had now to state that he meant to adhere to that policy. Nothing was further from his intention than to unduly extend the functions of the Post Office. He thought that what the Post Office ought to do was to supply facilities where those facilities could not be so well supplied by private enterprize; but with regard to the particular case of telegraphs and telephones, the telegraph monopoly had been purchased at an enormous cost, and he should be guilty of faithlessness to his trust if he did not do all he could to safeguard the Telegraph Revenue. But in safeguarding that he had been, and should continue to be, most scrupulously careful not to throw any unnecessary impediment in the way of the development of private enterprize. This subject was engaging more of his attention than any other; and he hoped he might be able, without giving any positive pledge, soon to be in a position to announce that he could see his way to proposing some modification of the particular stipulation in these new telephone licences to which the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) and the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) objected. Under those circumstances, he thought it would, perhaps, be better not to continue this discussion on the present occasion.

Mr. GRAY said, he wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his courteous reply, and he would willingly adopt his suggestion as to not prolonging the discussion; but he wished to say a few words in reply to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. He should not imagine that the right hon. Gentleman or any of the permanent officials of the Post Office had any personal interest or pecuniary interest, or any personal object to gain in connection with the policy which they adopted. That was the furthest thing from his thoughts; but permanent officials, and even officials who were not permanent, had a proper and laudable ambition to make their Department appear as favourably as possible; and there was a certain *esprit de corps* which could be pushed to extreme limits which constantly induced the permanent officials to adopt a principle or a policy that was contrary to the interests of the public, under the mistaken notion that their particular Department comprised the whole universe, and that everybody must be subject to their Department. It was in that sense alone that he characterized the action of the Department. The right hon. Gentleman now contended that he was bound to protect the Public Revenue of which he was the trustee, and talked about the large sum paid for the purchase of the telegraphs; but he was amazed that the right hon. Gentleman had made no allusion to the deliberate expression of opinion by Parliament in 1878 on that subject. The right hon. Gentleman did not venture to assert that when £10,000,000, or whatever was the sum, was paid, the purchasers contemplated the purchase of a thing which had no existence, like the telephone; nor did he deal with the most important matter to which he had alluded—that when the Department in 1878 inserted in the Bill a clause intended to give them control over telephones they then doubted the extent of their power, and that Parliament struck out or rejected the clause. Therefore, Parliament expressed the opinion that the Department ought not to have that power of control. The right hon. Gentleman had promised to look into the whole matter; and he was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman not only promised to look into the matter upon which he had laid stress, but also into the subject touched upon by the hon. Member for Manchester — namely, the conditions under which trunk wires were dealt with. The right hon. Gentleman said the Post Office did not want to simply make money. It was already making £15,000 a-year by the telephones without any expense; and he hoped it would make more; but it seemed to think it a portion of its mission to insist on Companies making money in a certain fashion, and charging to the public sums which they did not desire to charge. Surely the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to say that it was to the interest of the public to tell a Company it must charge so much per mile which the Company did not wish to charge. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider that matter, and the extremely objectionable course which the Post Office took with regard to the Company in minor matters. He also hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to announce his decision within a reasonably short time; because, although he was ready to accept the right hon. Gentleman's assurance that he had not intended that the result of his action should be what it had been, still, the Companies and the Post Office being competitors for the public business, every day's delay in the announcement of his decision placed his own Department in a position of most unfair advantage over the private Companies. It was in this way that they had derived an advantage in Newcastle and other towns; and although the right hon. Gentleman desired to act fairly any delay would be unfair to the competitors of the Post Office.

Mr. FAWCETT assured the hon. Member that, so far as he was concerned, not one hour would be lost in coming to a decision. He had mentioned that the particular point which had been for some time past and still was engaging his attention was the clause in the Telephone Exchange Licences which the hon. Member for Carlow had drawn his attention to—namely, a general user of the telephone instruments; but what he had said did not apply to the question raised by the hon. Member for Manchester—namely, that of trunk wires, because that question had been for the present settled between the Companies and the Post Office.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—GENERAL POLICY OF THEIR SCHEMES.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, that when he moved the reduction of Vote 11 he should do so with the view of bringing before the Committee the policy of the Charity Commissioners with regard to the work that Parliament had intrusted them with. Dissatisfaction with the action of the Charity Commissioners was, he ventured to say, increasing both in depth and extent throughout the country; and it was difficult to bring that action under the notice of the House except in a manner such as this, seeing that the Commissioners had no Representative in Parliament save the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella). The policy of the Commissioners was one of profound distrust of the people, so far as the management part of the schemes was concerned. It might be described as a policy by which the property and endowments of the poorer classes, and of the public generally, were taken away by schemes formed mainly, and oftentimes wholly, in the interests of the richer classes. Up to the present time, or up to quite recently, the schemes of the Charity Commissioners were accepted—especially in the poorer districts, where public opinion was powerless—as a matter of course. In nearly all cases, however, there had been a great sense of wrong, and a great sense of injustice on the part of those who had been the victims, if he might so term it, of the action of the Charity Commissioners. Now, there were three branches connected with the work of the Charity Commissioners—first, their action in regard to the working of the Charity Trusts Acts. That he would not speak of, because, as hon. Members were aware, that part of their work had been recently referred to a Select Committee appointed by the House to go into the whole working of the matter. Another branch of the operations of the Commission was the working of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882, of which he had already spoken, and of which, he ventured to say, further examination would show grave neglect on the part of the Commissioners. That, also, had been referred to the Select Committee now sitting, consequently he need not detain the Committee on that subject. Before, however, passing away from the question of the Charitable Trusts, he must refer to one matter which came immediately under his notice; and his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council was, to his mind, rather too much a champion of the action of the Charity Commissioners in this affair. He would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman for a moment to this case, and it was the only one he would speak of with regard to the Charitable Trusts part of the work of the Commissioners. There was a Charity in Birmingham called Lynch's Trust. The Charity Commissioners had recently appointed a new body of Trustees, 17 in number, and they had allowed four of those to be elected by the Town Council. It was considered a great affair, having so large a body as that directly representative. But what had the Commissioners done? They had imposed a property qualification of £60 ratal, which meant about a £75 rental, so that the representative Trustees elected by the members of the Town Council must live in houses worth £70 or £75 a-year. Now, when he remembered that the Birmingham Town Council was, perhaps, one of the most democratic in the country, and that a considerable number of the most highly respected members of it belonged to the working classes; when they knew that the ratepayers had shown great confidence in these men, and had intrusted them with the expenditure of enormous sums of money, it seemed absolutely an insult to the borough to say—"You may elect four men, but you must pass over every one of those connected with the working classes, because they are not rated at £60." The Vice President of the Council, he knew, was very anxious to do away with property qualification in regard to municipal elections. He need not say that the Birmingham Town Council refused to have anything to do with such a scheme, and declined to insult anyone of their number by attempting to elect anyone under such conditions; and the consequence was that they had no representatives at all on the management, and did not wish any on the terms laid down by the Commissioners. What he wanted to point out was that if in Birmingham, where they thought they could take care of themselves pretty well, the Charity Commissioners imposed these conditions in respect of the Charitable Trust, what would they not do in a small district where no public opinion obtained? The Commissioners, in that high and mighty tone which they assumed towards all those with whom they had occasion to communicate, wrote a letter in which they said that if the Town Council of Birmingham had objected they should have objected in time. As a matter of fact, the Birmingham Town Council knew nothing about the matter; but the Commissioners said they put the usual notices on the Town Hall door by advertisement. But, on the other hand, it was said—"Why did you not communicate with the Governing Body in the town in such a matter?" and the Commissioners, in reply, said—

> "It is the opinion of the Board that they were not under any obligation to give direct notice in this matter to the Corporation of Birmingham, or to any body other than the Trustees of the Charity."

Probably they were not under an obligation; but, surely, they might have given notice even if they were not exactly under legal obligation to do so, seeing that the Town Council was affected by the Act—inasmuch as they would have to elect four Trustees. Then they said—and this he would call the attention of the Committee to, as showing how far behind the age and how out of touch with everything modern these gentlemen seemed to be—

> "It seems to me the intention of the Legislature to sever rather than to strengthen the connection between these Corporations and the Charities administered within the respective boroughs which they represent."

He would like to ask the Vice President of the Council whether it was the intention of Parliament to lessen more and more and make less and less the connection between the Corporations and these public Trusts? On what did the Commissioners base their contention? They referred to legislation of the time of William IV.—they evidently referred to the old Close Corporations. It might, possibly, be to the advantage of the community that the Corporations should have no power of this kind; but they took this Act of William IV. as a proof that it was the intention of the Legislature of the present day to sever the connection of such a Corporation as Birmingham with the work affecting the community over which the Corporation were elected to govern. In speaking of these Charities, he admitted as much as anyone the need of reform in the Charities and Endowments of the country; but the question was as to the principle on which the reforms were to be carried on. He contended that it was not a reform, and that it would not be submitted to long as a reform, that the property of the poorer classes and the lower middle classes should be taken away from them altogether, or placed in such a form that these people could not take advantage of it—that was to say, that it should be given to a different class of people altogether, and, very often, to people of a different locality. That was the principle which had been adopted, but which, he was sure, would not be long submitted to. He quite admitted that the Charities and Endowments must be administered in accordance with modern ideas; but those ideas must contemplate, in some form or other, the benefit and advantage of the people to whom the Endowments belonged. They should not be given in the form of relief to the rich. Then, again, they had this settled principle on the part of the Charity Commissioners, they had a positive hatred to free schools. Wherever they could find one they never rested until they could destroy it. That, he thought, was against the feeling which had been growing for some time, and which was very generally experienced in the country, that schools should be free. What was being done now in Rochdale? Why, there was a free school there well conducted and well reported on by the Inspector. He was not going into the question as to whether or not it needed reform; but the Charity Commissioners had sent in, or were about to send in, a scheme by which they would either abolish the school altogether or certainly abolish it as a free school. What reasons did they give? He would tell the Committee—and he wanted hon. Members to listen to this letter, addressed to the Rochdale Trustees, dated only in March last; the right hon. Gentleman, who so ably presided over the Committee of Council on Education, he also desired to listen, that he might say to what extent he and his Colleagues agreed with the doctrine.

> "They cannot admit that it is a proper use of the funds of an educational endowment to employ them, as they understood they were employed to a large extent, in paying the elementary education fees of children of poor parents. Even in the case of the poorest, who might be unable to pay the fee, the law has now made other provision, chargeable upon the rates."

Now, what did that passage mean? It meant that those children who had had their school fees paid——

MR. CROPPER: May I ask, Mr. Chairman, if this is in Order, seeing that the whole subject is under the consideration of a Select Committee?

THE CHAIRMAN: If the matter is under the consideration of a Select Committee appointed for the purpose, it seems to me to be very irregular to enter into a discussion of it at this moment.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he should be only too happy if his hon. Friend and the Chairman were correct, and the Endowed Schools part of the work of the Charity Commissioners were under the consideration of the Committee. If his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council would get up and say that the whole action of the Commissioners with regard to Endowed Schools should be brought also within the scope of the inquiry of the Select Committee that would put another complexion on the matter altogether. The reason why he must bring these cases forward was to show the necessity of that which the Charity Commissioners shrank from, and which the Government themselves were not eager to do—namely, to place the whole Department of the Endowed Schools Act within the scope of the inquiry of the Select Committee which had been recently appointed. That being so, he thought that not only was he in Order in referring to the action of the Commissioners with regard to School Endowments, but that it was absolutely necessary for him to do it, in order to show why, in the interests of religious equality and liberty as well as in the interests of the poor, that action should come within the scope of the inquiry of the Select Committee. What he wanted to ask was, whether it was the policy of the Vice President of the Council that persons who possessed property in these Endowments—who had the right to have the school fees of their children paid—should be unable to avail themselves of any such right without becoming what they considered to be paupers, and getting the Boards of Guardians to pay the fees for them? Could they imagine anything more insulting to the poor of a parish where there was an Educational Endowment giving free education? The people did not wish to become paupers, and yet, to their minds, there was pauperism attached to the making of an application to the Board of Guardians. They were told their property was to be taken away from them, and they could apply to the Guardians of the Poor to have their fees paid. If all the education in the country were free, then no difficulty would arise; but, by taking away these Endowments, they made the poor pay 2*d.*, 3*d.*, 4*d.*, or 6*d.* a-week for the education of their children—and hard work, indeed, it was for many of them to do it—or they made them go to the Guardians of the Poor and practically become paupers by asking to have the fees paid for them. Well, he had put a Question down on the Paper that night to the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council as to the scheme at Tonbridge. He was aware there was a difference of opinion about that; and, seeing that the scheme was an accomplished fact, he should not have alluded to it were it not that schemes of a similar description were being carried out in various parts of the country, and that it was necessary to show what had been done in order to arouse public opinion in opposition to what was contemplated. This Grammar School in Tonbridge had been for something like 200 years, some said, wholly free, and some said partly free. At any rate, it had been open to all classes in the town of Tonbridge to obtain its benefits. In 1875 the Charity Commissioners published a draft scheme. There was a high school established with a fee of something like £18 a-year; but, in order to secure some equivalent, some benefit to the commercial and poorer classes, the Charity Commissioners proposed to give a second school, or establish a school within the reach of the less wealthy classes. The Skinners' Company, in order to bring that about more completely, offered £20,000 to the Charity Commissioners.

Mr. MUNDELLA: No; £10,000.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, his right hon. Friend said only £10,000; but he said £20,000. £10,000 was to come out of the Charity. He regretted such technical quibbles as this—if he might call them so—very much. He would tell the Committee what that correction meant. There was £10,000 taken from the existing Charity. He supposed he was right there; and there was £10,000 given from the funds of the Skinners' Company, which made £20,000. That was proposed to be given to the Charity Commissioners on the faith that a second class school would be founded in Tonbridge. That was the understanding; but because the scheme then before the public in 1875 said "Tonbridge, in the town or in the neighbourhood of the town," in 1880 they brought in an amended scheme, in which they curiously altered the words to "in or near the parish or the town." That was complained of by the Skinners' Company, and every effort was made to get it altered; but the reply was this—and he was quoting from the letters of the Charity Commissioners—

> "We put in 'in or near the parish of Tonbridge,' in order that you, the Skinners' Company, who will be Governors of the school, will have a larger latitude of choice for a site for the school."

That was their letter—not a word said in it about moving the school. That went on until 1882, two years after the scheme was for the first time proposed, and then the inhabitants of Tonbridge learnt that the school was to be removed to Tonbridge Wells, five miles off. Hon. Gentlemen might say that was within the radius of Tonbridge. It was true, but it practically shut out the town of Tonbridge, so far as the lower middle classes could avail themselves of the advantages of the school. Then, it might be said that Tonbridge Wells was a more populous place than Tonbridge; but Tonbridge had a population of 10,000, and the school was only a school to accommodate not less than 200 boys, so that there were children of the class to be benefited sufficient in Tonbridge to fill twice the amount of accommodation the school afforded. His contention was that it was not fair, having made a perfectly well-understood arrangement with the Skinners' Company that the school should be established "in or near the town of Tonbridge," to remove it five miles away. He really did not see how it could be justified in any way. The result was this—that the people of Tonbridge were ousted from their school altogether, because there were very few who could pay £18 a-year to the Grammar School, and very few of the poor classes who could afford to send their children five miles to take advantage of the lower school. He was aware the Education Department thought great things were being done in the interest of education by the making of these arrangements. They vaunted what was being done in connection with the great foundation in Birmingham; but he (Mr. Jesse Collings) ventured to say, as a Governor of that foundation, which had £30,000 a-year at its disposal, that they were doing comparatively little to advance education in the borough, over and above what would be done there if the school were not in existence. He was prepared to prove that statement. The institution had an income of £30,000 a-year; but fees of a very high character were charged — namely, £9 a-year and the cost of books, which was very considerable, in the case of the High School, and £3 a-year and books in the Grammar School. One-third of the whole number of places were free by examination—that was the salve the Commissioners placed over their consciences for having taken away an old free school from all classes of the community. They said they gave a third of the places free by Scholarships to be won by examinations; but what was the result? Everyone knew that children whose parents could afford to send them to private schools had an immense advantage over the children of the poor in the matter of obtaining Scholarships. What did they find? Why, that only some 60 children from the elementary schools were able to derive any benefit from this enormous property of £30,000 a-year. That was the fullest extent to which the lower, middle, and working classes could avail themselves of a foundation which belonged to the whole community. All the rest was appropriated by the wealthier classes of the borough. But the Charity Commissioners said—

> "It is such a demoralizing thing to give free education to the poor."

It was supposed to be demoralizing to give children free education for which they now paid 3*s*. a-week; but it was not demoralizing to give 300 children of Birmingham an education costing £35 a-year for £9 a-year. That did not seem demoralizing at all. It was not demoralizing to give in the Grammar Schools an education worth £12 a-year to the middle classes for £3 a-year—to give this great reduction to a class which could well afford to pay for its education. It was only demoralizing when they came to the very poor, who could not afford to pay 3*d*. or 4*d*. a-week for the education of their children, to relieve them of that payment; but it might be said that the establishment at present accommodated as many children as there were of the poor classes who could avail themselves of this middle and upper education. But, as a matter of fact—and here he would like the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to give him his attention—at a time when they were spending all this money on the wealthier classes, every half-year's examination they were turning away large numbers of poor class children who had shown by their examination that they had brains and capacity sufficient to enable them to take advantage of the better education if they could afford to pay the fees. They were turning away large numbers every year simply because they could not pay the fees. He held that the school belonged to the whole of the people of the borough, and that it was not fair that it should be monopolized by certain classes, or rather that barriers should be put up by the schemes of the Charity Commissioners by which the poorer classes were kept out of the privileges of the endowment. He would not say to what extent the Commissioners interfered with the management of the school. They had on the Board of Management two or three Members of Parliament, two or three ex-Mayors, and some of the leading people of the borough; and yet they could not do the slightest thing without coming to London to consult five or six gentlemen, who, perhaps, had not been in Birmingham in their lives, and knew nothing whatever about it, and who yet put themselves in authority over the Local Authorities who knew all about the locality. Some weeks ago the local managers of the schools had to go to London with the plans of a small gymnasium in order to obtain the consent of the Commissioners. A considerable amount of unnecessary expense was occasioned by that arrangement. To his mind the time had come when this kind of scheme, or power to impose such a condition, should be taken away from any body of men. What did they want? Why, they should insist that the management of these Charities should be given into the hands of Local Authorities. He should be surprised to hear any objection to that principle coming from the Front Benches of a Liberal Government, because there was no security anywhere for the people whom he had been describing, and especially the poorer classes, except in some scheme administered by persons directly representing the community which was to be benefited. It was only in this way that abuses could be remedied, and that public opinion could be brought to bear upon the management of the institutions. He would just refer to one or two further cases, because the schemes were being carried out at the present moment. There was the case of Stroud, which, he believed, was opposed on both sides of the House, the question being by no means a Party one. Then there was the case of Horsham, and the case of Cam in Gloucestershire. In all these cases the rights of the poor were ignored, in some of them taken away altogether. He would just give one instance more, and then he had done, because all these schemes were very much alike as to the principle on which they were framed. Take the case of Scarning in Norfolk. For 200 years there had been a free school there. It had been carried on, so far as he knew, in a very satisfactory manner, and had produced presumably good results. Even if that had not been the case, the question would only have been one of reforming the institution; but the Charity Commissioners, against the wish of everyone connected with the locality, went down a short time ago and insisted on imposing fees upon the children of the district. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council was aware that, from time to time, up to the present, there had been something very like a riot going on in this locality in consequence of that transaction. The poor people did not understand, and could not be got to understand, why they, having this school in their possession, and having enjoyed its benefits, they and those who had gone before them for something like 200 years should be deprived of it by a certain number of officials in London, who say—"Henceforth you shall pay a certain amount of fees which are taken in a neighbouring parish." The Charity Commissioners had done all they could to force these poor people to accept their scheme. Labouring men had sent their children for a time, and had refused to pay the fees, and a policeman had had to be stationed at the school in order to turn these children away from the institution which the people firmly believed to be their own. Up to the present time, the children so turned away were taught in a building constructed for the purpose, by the daughter of a working man, gratuitously, rather than they should go in to pay the school fees, and thereby give up the right which they believed they possessed, and submit to be robbed of their property. What was going on in that parish was simply what was taking place in many other parts of the country. Bad feeling had been produced, class had been set against class. In November, the Vicar of the parish to which he particularly referred had been carried in effigy throughout the village, and burnt on a neighbouring common. All this trouble and ill-feeling had been caused simply by the action of the Charity Commissioners. He would quote a letter he had received from a gentleman he knew residing in the neighbourhood—a gentleman whom he was quite sure would not knowingly say anything he believed to be unjust or untrue. Referring to this action of the Charity Commissioners in regard to the Scarning school, his correspondent said—

> "If such things can be done in a poor and obscure village in Norfolk, we still entertain the hope that in some form or other the facts will be brought under the notice of the House of Commons very early next Session. Departmental government is growing into an intolerable and cruel despotism."

He (Mr. Jesse Collings) was inclined to think there was a great deal of truth in that. Instead of believing more and more in what people should believe in—namely, the efficacy of local government, there seemed to be a tendency in the Department in London to gather everything into their own hands; and, whatever their intention might be, the result was that things were done more inefficiently, less cheaply, and altogether in a more unsatisfactory way than they ought to be. With regard to any reform, if reform was thought necessary in the Office of the Charity Commissioners, he would strongly urge as the guiding principle that the whole management of every scheme should be placed in the hands of representatives of the Local Authorities. But then they had not yet got Local Authorities in the counties. They were promised them, and he hoped it would not be long before they got them. At any rate, they had been waiting for something like 200 years for reform of these Endowments, and it would not be a very great hardship if they had to wait another 12 months in order to have the thing done thoroughly while they were about it. He was quite sure that if any scheme was adopted which did not involve the principle of local management there would be no real settlement of the matter, but a continual agitation until the management of the property of the people and the affairs of the people were placed in the hands of the representatives of the people. As to the Charity Commissioners, he had no wish to bring any personal accusation against them; all he would say was, that they were an institution obsolete and out of joint with the requirements of the present time, and that the result of their action, whatever might be their intention, had been to inflict great hardships on the people of a large number of parishes and towns in England; and he trusted that this action was so stirring up the people that it would not be allowed to continue much longer. Of course, if the Government thought that this action was everything that they could desire, well and good. There would be nothing left but to continue agitation, until, perhaps, they might get the Government to see that there was something in the complaints of the people. At present, the poor people in rural districts had no hope and no power to help themselves. The Charity Commissioners could do pretty much as they liked. There was another view of the question, and it was one very easy to put. The Charity Commissioners, perhaps sincerely—for he did not ask what their opinions were in this matter—had lent themselves to the propping up and to the increasing of the ecclesiastical part of the Governmental Charities in rural districts. He thought it would be found, if this matter could be properly sifted by the Select Committee, that the Nonconformists of some rural parishes in the country were suffering great religious and social hardships from the action of those who administered these Trusts. He would not detain the Committee much longer. He regretted to have had to detain it so long; but he knew of no other way in which to bring before the House of Commons the hardships which he was sure hon. Members on both sides of the House sympathized with; and not the less because they had been exercised, very thoughtlessly perhaps, but in a degree that was very shocking, upon many of the poor classes of the people of the country, and especially on that class which had no one to speak for them, and were not represented here. When these classes were represented, the Committee might depend upon it that the Charity Commissioners would not last a Session, so deep and so wide was the dissatisfaction felt at their action. Hon. Members heard a great deal about setting class against class; and he ventured to say that there were no men or body of men who had ever stirred up animosity between the different social classes in the villages and towns of England as had the Charity Commissioners. Why should labourers go and burn in effigy the Vicar of their parish? Why, simply because the Charity Commissioners had planned a scheme which had stirred up resentment, ill-feeling, and heartburning. He did ask the Vice President of the Council not to shut his mind to these statements. Let the right hon. Gentleman not think there was nothing in it. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman would think, which was rather true, that the Department over which he (Mr. Mundella) presided sympathized with the principle which the Charity Commissioners had adopted. If the Department did sympathize with the Commissioners—and he was afraid they had some evidence that they did—then they too would have to change their policy; because, at any rate, the House of Commons had the Department under them if they had not the Charity Commissioners; and they were not going to be satisfied with any answer which left matters in the condition in which they now found them.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he thought it hardly fair to the subject, or to himself, that the hon. Member, without having placed any Notice on the Paper, and without any intimation whatever, should have launched this question on the Committee, and called upon him to answer facts with reference to Charities, some of which were already before a Committee of the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg pardon; my Notice has been on the Paper for three weeks.

MR. MUNDELLA: But that Notice referred to the Vote in the Estimate, and not to a Vote on Account, which was altogether a different thing. This was the second time the hon. Member had brought the question before the House during the Session. On the first occasion he reminded the hon. Member that a Committee was sitting to consider Charitable Trusts and Allotments, and that he would have an opportunity of bringing these cases before that Committee; but the hon. Member commenced his speech that evening with some allegations of maladministration of a Trust in Birmingham, which he (Mr. Mundella) could assure the Committee he had never heard of before in that House, or had anything to do with in his official capacity. The hon. Member said he had no other remedy; but he would point out that he had a remedy ready to his hand, inasmuch as there was the Committee he had referred to now sitting; and he understood that representatives from Birmingham were going before it, who would probably deal with this very question. Surely it was hardly fair, under the circumstances, when they were considering a Vote on Account, to waste the time of the Committee on questions of this kind. He was utterly unprepared, as the hon. Member must be aware, to go into them, for he had had no chance of communicating with the Charity Commissioners. Then the hon. Member said there was something wrong about the Rochdale Scheme. If there were, he (Mr. Mundella) had never heard of it. These schemes came before the Committee of Council, who acted in a judicial capacity; and if there was a scheme in preparation, and the people of Rochdale petitioned against it, the Petition would, of course, be considered; and, besides, Rochdale had a Member, who would be expected to look after the matter. The hon. Member then said there was something wrong going on with respect to the Stroud Scheme. With regard to that scheme, he had applied to the Commissioners, who said they were in process of dealing with the Stroud School; but that, at present, they had nothing ready which could be submitted. He said it was premature and irregular to discuss points in connection with the action of the Charity Commissioners and the Education Department with respect to a scheme, the clauses of which were not even framed. Again, the hon. Member said that the Tonbridge Scheme ought to be brought before the House to show the policy of the Charity Commissioners. He would point out to the Committee the position of that scheme. It was passed by the Duke of Richmond and the former Vice President of the Council in 1879; and when the present Government accepted Office in 1880, his (Mr. Mundella's) sole business in connection with it was to lay it on the Table of the House. The scheme was challenged, discussed, and amended in that House; and now, after it had been in operation for four years, his hon. Friend came down upon the action of the Charity Commissioners, and described the scheme as one by which the poor were being robbed of their free school. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: That is what it amounts to.] Now, he had in his hand the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commissioners with respect to the Tonbridge School, which was to the effect that the tradesmen were not, on the whole, satisfied with the school; that there were a large number of day boarders attending it, which gave a great stimulus to trade in the place; that many people were attracted by the cheapness of the education for day boarders during the three years necessary to gain the whole privileges of the foundation. The tradesmen, it appeared, could not send their sons to the school for two reasons—first, because the education was so classical; and, secondly, because they feared class prejudices amongst the boys, and, consequently, there was only the son of one tradesman in the school.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: My objection was that the school should be removed to another locality for the benefit of another class.

MR. MUNDELLA: The Report stated that there was only one tradesman's son in the school. There was a class prejudice against tradesmen's sons. Surely it could not be said that the modern school, which the Charity Commissioners recommended with reduced fees, would have the effect of depriving any class of the advantages of education. He simply pointed to these facts in order to show that there were two sides to the question, both of which ought to be heard. In his opinion, the Charity Commissioners had exercised a wise discretion by transferring the school to a town of 10,000 inhabitants, with the full knowledge, as it would be easy to show, of the Skinners' Company. He did not object to an attack by the hon. Member on the scheme of the Charity Commissioners, provided it was made in a fair way. But if the hon. Member wished to challenge the principle of the Endowed Schools Act, let him do so by all means; let him move for a Select Committee to inquire into the working of that Act. But he maintained that the Committee now sitting to consider Charitable Trusts and Allotments should first be allowed to make their Report, and then he should be prepared to meet the hon. Member's challenge. For his own part, he had no sort of objection to inquiry, nor had he any interest in screening the Charity Commissioners; but he said it was unfair to make two attacks upon them within a few weeks upon a question which was already under consideration by a Committee upstairs, and whose Report might be shortly expected. His hon. Friend had not confined himself to the questions specified. He objected to the whole system of the administration of the Tonbridge School; but he was sure the Committee would not expect him to go further than he had gone. However, he would conclude by repeating that he could prove to the Committee, from documentary evidence, that, so far as the Skinners' Company was concerned, they knew, when the question was fully before them, that the school was to be placed at a point within 10 miles of its original position.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he should not go into the details of the schemes which the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) had brought before the Committee, nor should he attack the principle of the Endowed Schools Act. He wished to call attention to a point on which he thought both the Charity Commissioners and the Education Department had not carried out the spirit of the Endowed Schools Act, nor dealt justly with the claims of the poor. He referred to small endowments for elementary education which were originally made for free education. He called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the Reports of his own Department from 1873 to 1882; and he asked what had happened in those 10 years in respect of the Church of England National Schools? He found that there was a steady diversion of the old endowments to the subsidizing of Elementary Schools. The endowments to National Schools had gone up from £63,000 to £123,000, or nearly doubled, in the time mentioned. Now, if that money had been applied to the relief of the poor by helping them in their school fees it would have been applied more in accordance with the spirit of the Charity. The whole policy of the Department had been rigorously to exact increasing fees; and he would show briefly that while the Elementary Schools had made £63,000 a-year more by Endowments, they had screwed up the fees to the highest point, and reduced the contributions of wealthy subscribers by what was actually taken away from the poor. The fees had gone up to £807,000 a-year; whereas, if they had been charged on the same principle as they were 10 years ago, they would have stood at £680,000. According to that, the proportion of subscription ought to have been £620,000 instead of £580,000; so that £180,000 a-year more was taken from the poor than was the case 10 years ago, and £40,000 a-year less was paid in subscriptions. He did not object to the principle that these Endowments should often be applied to secondary education; but if they were applied to elementary education they ought to go to the poor, and not be applied to the subsidizing of inefficient Church Schools to save the pockets of the ratepayers.

MR. COLMAN said, that cases had come within his own knowledge in which two years and even longer had elapsed before they could get any reply to very simple questions addressed to the Education Department. He wished the right hon. Gentleman to understand that there was a strong feeling in the country with reference to the extreme dilatoriness of the Department.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had been much amused at the air of injured innocence which was assumed by the Vice President of the Council in replying to the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). Inquiry had been made on several occasions at Question time with regard to the schools referred to by the hon. Member, so that the right hon. Gentleman knew something of them quite recently. The right hon. Gentleman complained that he had had no Notice; but he said afterwards that he had documentary evidence to prove that the hon. Member was entirely in the wrong. So that, as a matter of fact, he seemed to be arguing in a manner rather contradictory of himself. Then the right hon. Gentleman complained of the hon. Member bringing forward the case of the Tonbridge School, because the school was in a bad state some years ago; but that did not appear to him to be any argument in favour of the present state of the school. Again, the right hon. Gentleman contended that it was unreasonable to bring forward questions of this sort more than once; but he (Mr. Biggar) differed entirely from that view, because his own experience was that nothing was ever done with regard to any subject by the Government until their attention had been called to it over and over again. The usual course was for a Minister at first to refuse to consider the question at all; the Member who raised it would then promise to bring forward a Motion, and when the Question had been put once or twice more the Minister generally agreed to do what was asked of him at first. He judged, therefore, from his Parliamentary experience, that if the hon. Member for Ipswich persevered he would succeed in attaining the object he had in view.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he wished to call the attention of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the recent advance of Russia. He had asked the noble Lord that afternoon the distance which had been covered by the Russian Forces from the Caspian towards India since the present Government came into Office. At the outset of the few observations he was about to make, he must beg the indulgence of hon. Members opposite who were in the habit of regarding reference to these advances as the views of alarmists, and not justified by the facts of the case. The question was one which had altogether passed out of the region of controversy. It was a subject of the gravest national and Imperial importance; and there could not be the least doubt that many of those who were once accustomed to ridicule the danger to their Indian Empire which these advances involved had now ceased to ridicule, and regarded them with apprehension, if not with alarm. The noble Lord had given that afternoon an answer which he would be very sorry to describe as disingenuous, but which was certainly altogether wide of the facts of the case. He stated that the Russian Forces had advanced so many miles in 1878, and so many miles in 1879; but he had omitted to state to the House the important truth that this was merely a temporary advance, and that the forces engaged in it were badly defeated by the Turkoman Tribes, and compelled to fall back upon the Caspian At that moment there was good reason to believe that a Russian Army was in possession of Sarakhs. The noble Lord seemed to think it a matter of no importance that the great Military Power of the Czar should have covered a distance of 500 miles onwards in the direction of our Indian Empire since the year 1880. It was of no use to quibble about Old and New Sarakhs, because the two towns were opposite each other on the banks of a river which was easily passable; and it was not likely that the miserable Persian garrison there would be able to offer any opposition to the Russian Army advancing beyond it. Now, the seriousness of this advance was not to be disputed, and he recommended any hon. Member who wished fully to realize the gravity of the question to read the report of a remarkable lecture delivered by Sir Edward Hamley at the Royal Institution. This accurately described the great danger to their Indian Empire that was involved in the advance of Russia. He might also refer to a statement which appeared a few weeks ago in the Russian semi-official newspaper of the Caucasus, and which stated plainly the position of the Russian Army at the present time. He did not, of course, admit the correctness of the opening statement; but the article was to the effect that if the Russians desired it they could undoubtedly acquire India, and that their policy was to liberate the people of India from the British yoke. That plain-spoken article actually revelled in pointing out the change of front and bearing on the part of Russian officials towards this country. Time was when this Russian advance was concealed, but that was no longer necessary; rather it was held *in terrorem* over this country as a lever which would be exercised in case of an European or any other struggle. The danger of the position lay in the Russian Forces having acquired a fresh basis of operations close to the Afghan Frontier; they had shown their power by acquiring as allies the independent races which intervened between them and Afghanistan. They were pushing their outposts steadily onwards; they had advanced even more than the distance of 500 miles of which he had spoken, and already deputations from the Turkoman Tribes bordering on Afghanistan, and some actually within the Afghan limits, had gone to the Czar's Representatives at Merv and offered their submission. It ought also to be remembered that Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff was actually at Merv. No doubt that name appeared formidable, and it should remind hon. Members opposite that it belonged to the Russian official who was so successful in 1878 in Russianizing Bulgaria. That Prince had been sent to do the same work amongst the Turkoman Tribes which he had so vigorously performed in Roumelia. The

Indian Government had nothing to trust to but their ill-guarded frontier, stripped of its defensive power and strength by the action of the present Cabinet. He understood the Government were pushing forward from Sibi to Quetta the railway which was abandoned some four years ago, and that efforts were being made to find out a frontier from Quetta northwards. In fact, the Government were doing secretly what they blamed the Government of Lord Beaconsfield for doing openly. So long as British troops were in Candahar they had a really great defensive position. They had a grasp of Afghanistan. They held then such a strong position that they could safely have treated the Russian advance with ridicule. At the present moment they had no practical strategic position in Afghanistan. They were fortifying Quetta certainly; they believed the Government were pushing forward the construction of the railway to Quetta; but, on the other hand, the Russians were pushing on their railway; it was said it had been extended another 100 miles. It was significant of the extreme ignorance and secretiveness of the Government that it was not known how far the Russian railway had advanced. That was a point on which the Government ought to give the Committee the fullest information. They had an Agent at Meshed, which was not far from the Russian advance posts; and, by means of Native spies, the British Agent at Meshed, and Her Majesty's Ambassador at Teheran, ought to have been able to give the fullest information concerning the construction of the Russian railway. They were told the other day that great preparations were being made by Russia for an advance on India. That advance was no longer a matter of great alarm; it was no longer a question for the contempt of the Prime Minister, nor to be treated as an old woman's fears. It was an actual danger close at hand, which must be met by vigorous precautions, and by the most prudent military preparations. This question differed very much, indeed, from the other important questions which were now under the consideration of the House and of the country; it differed from their difficulties in regard to Egypt, and from their difficulties with regard to Ireland. Any of those difficulties might be settled the moment the Government was resolute, when the Government made up their mind as to a fixed policy, and when they enlisted the support of the country. The Egyptian and Irish difficulties lay within the grasp of England to settle; but the advance of a great and overwhelming Military Power towards their Indian Frontier might reach a point when it was not within the power of this country to deal with it. That point had not yet been reached, but they were fast approaching it. The time would come when, having given up all the great positions which Nature, and circumstances, and Providence—[*Laughter.*] He was sorry to hear hon. Members laugh at a statement of that kind. He maintained that when they had given up the great positions which Nature, and circumstances, and Providence—[*Renewed laughter.*]—had placed within their power, this country might find itself in the face of a *force majeure* which it would be impossible to cope with. It was one thing to deal with small difficulties and small forces in Egypt; it was one thing to deal with difficulties which might arise close at our doors—in Ireland; but it was quite another thing to hurl back the enormous Military Power of Russia, more especially would it be difficult to resist, especially when the British Government had deliberately given up to Russia all those natural bulwarks and coigns of vantage which they once possessed, and which it was still in their power to regain, but which they were abandoning in the face of the clearest warnings and most imminent danger. There could be no doubt as to the course which the Government ought to take. There would, perhaps, be two or three years of comparative quiet, during which the Czar's Administrators and Generals would be organizing the Turkoman Tribes, and preparing them for an advance on India, during which they would be intriguing in Afghanistan and India itself. He reminded the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the unfortunate tone of the Native Press of India with respect to the Russian advance. The Indian Native Press seemed to have taken a unanimous cue—he did not know from what source, it might be inspired by the Russian Government; but, from whatever source they took the cue, they undoubtedly were writing about the Russian advance, about its advantage to the Indian people, about the leverage it gave the Natives of India over the English Government. Their position with regard to the advance of Russia towards India was one which merited the very careful attention of the Ministry, who ought at once to take steps to complete not only the road but the railway to Quetta. They should have a most perfect understanding with the Ameer on this question, and they should be in a position to put other pressure upon him than that which mere bribes would produce in case of an actual advance of a Russian Force upon India. The Russian paper he had quoted foreshadowed the dangers which might arise in regard to Afghanistan. They had comparatively little to offer Afghanistan in comparison with what the Russians had to offer them. The Afghans had been for 800 years the traditional raiders upon India, and they knew that they had more to gain by a free right to invade and pillage India, which an alliance with Russia would give them, than they had to gain by our casual subsidies. He again asserted that it was important that they should not only hold influence over the Ameer by bribes, but that they should be in a position to put actual military pressure upon him if that were needed. For that purpose a railway to Candahar was an absolute necessity. They should not allow this dangerous advance to continue, lest an actual invasion of India might be made when they were least prepared to meet it, when, perhaps, they were at war with another Power, or, perhaps, when they had a serious revolution at home. He asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in justice to his character for accuracy, to withdraw the statement he made that afternoon, or, at all events, to contradict the inference which would be drawn from that statement—namely, that in the years 1878 and 1879 the Russian Forces advanced 150 or 200 miles eastwards. It was clear that that was a temporary inroad which ended in a disastrous defeat, and which could not be justly or fairly described as an advance in any way similar to the permanent conquest and annexation which had since taken place.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the hon. Member seemed to have forgotten that at the commencement of the Session there was a regular discussion on this question, which was brought before the House in a very able speech by the hon. Gentleman who was the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. E. Stanhope) in the late Government. Speeches on that occasion were made by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), and by himself. When he called to mind the speech which the hon. Member then made, he could not find that the hon. Gentleman had that night introduced any new matter, except the charge of inaccuracy against him (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice). And that, indeed, was not exactly new matter, because the hon. Gentleman was so often charging him with inaccuracy. The hon. Member's indignation against the President of the Local Government Board was even greater than it was against him. If he held his present Office much longer he felt that the accumulation of indignation in the breast of the hon. Member would overwhelm him; but he should, however, in that case, be able to console himself with the reflection that it was all owing to what the hon. Gentleman called "Nature, circumstances, and Providence." The hon. Member deprecated making this a Party question; but what had he himself done? For the last two or three days he had had a Question on the Paper, which could only tend to make it a Party matter. The hon. Gentleman had desired to ascertain, through the Question he had placed upon the Paper, by how many miles the Russian Frontier had been advanced during the tenure of Office of the present Government, and by how many miles the Russian Frontier was advanced during the time of the late Government. He quite agreed with what was said by the hon. Member, and also by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. E. Stanhope), on the former occasion when this subject was discussed, that it was undesirable to make this a Party question if it could be avoided; and he asked the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) to set the example himself. The hon. Gentleman had appealed to him to withdraw the statement he made earlier in the evening as to the extent to which the Russians advanced in 1879. He was very sorry to disappoint the hon. Member; but he really could not withdraw the statement. The hon. Member said the statement was inaccurate, because the Russians were defeated, and at the end of the year withdrew to the Caspian. It was true they did withdraw temporarily; but the next year they overran the whole country between the Caspian and Kizil Arvat. The hon. Member hoped he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would not insist upon what he called the quibble as to the distinction between Old and New Sarakhs. But it was a distinction of importance, because the new Fort of Sarakhs was Persian, and the old town was upon territory which was not clearly Persian, though it had sometimes been claimed by them. It would have been a very much graver matter if the Russians had crossed the river and occupied the Persian town. They had, however, occupied a place which was almost deserted, and which was not upon Persian territory. The hon. Member advised hon. Members to read the report of a recent lecture delivered by Sir Edward Hamley. As a matter of fact, Sir Edward Hamley was an intimate friend of his (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), and they had very often talked over these questions together. They were in close communication only a few days before Sir Edward Hamley gave his lecture, and on a great many of the points of the lecture he had the pleasure of conferring with his friend. Towards the close of his speech the hon. Member frightened himself by rattling in his own ears a great number of long sounding Russian names, and he referred to the "terrible" Russian Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff, who was reported to be at Merv. Now, when he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was in Eastern Roumelia, as a Commissioner, he heard a great deal about Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff, and he was not at all sure that what the hon. Member had said about that Prince was perfectly accurate. Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff did his best in Roumelia to conciliate the sentiments of the people towards the Russian occupation; but he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) could not, in consequence, share the hon. Member's apprehensions as to the influence Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff was likely to exercise over the Afghan Tribes. The hon. Member asked if Government knew all about the railway which was being constructed from the Caspian in the direction of Sarakhs. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had heard of the railway before. He recollected that the hon. Member put a series of Questions concerning it to the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). ["No, no!"] Well, but he did recollect the circumstance; and if the hon. Member would refresh his memory, he would find he did ask Questions on the subject, of the President of the Local Government Board, when he was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He hoped hon. Members would notice the extraordinary inconsistency of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman said it was very wicked on the part of Russia to construct the railway in question, and then he said that we ought to make a railway to Quetta without delay. If it was a wicked act on the part of Russia to construct a railway, why was it an act of virtue on our part? Was it for a great nation like England to go into hysterics every time a few yards of railway were added to the Russian lines in Asia? The construction of roads and railways in the wild districts of Central Asia, by whomsoever undertaken, was a great advantage to civilization and humanity. He knew he had excited the indignation of some hon. Members sitting on the Opposition Benches, by pointing out the fact that Russian annexation in Central Asia had been accompanied by the abolition of one of the most horrible systems of slave trading that the world had ever seen. He was sure the Committee had not forgotten the cruelties which were perpetrated upon English officers — Captain Conolly and Major Stoddart—at the time of the old Afghan War, by the very tribes whose apologist and defender the hon. Member (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had constituted himself. To him (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) it was an extraordinary thing that any hon. Member, whatever his feeling might be upon the political aspects of the question, should come down to the House and make the fate of these barbarous tribes a matter on which the good relations between Great Britain and Russia should depend. Her Majesty's Government held as strongly as any hon. Gentleman opposite that the advance of Russia in Asiatic regions was a matter of great importance; but they felt that it was not a matter about which they ought to get into a state of alarm or excitement. It was a matter to be met calmly, with a due consideration of all the circumstances, and with that strength of character which befitted a great nation like this. The position of the different holders of the Office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had never varied in regard to this subject. He could produce extracts from speeches of Lord Clarendon, Lord Granville, Lord Beaconsfield, and of Lord Salisbury, to show that the advance of Russia in Asia had always been regarded as a probability of the future. Lord Clarendon foresaw the probability that some day or other the Russian line of frontier would be close to that of Afghanistan, if it did not reach it; and he fully realized that that day would be a day to be regarded as one which would tax the resources of the statesmanship of this country; but not one which could be turned to the advantage of this country by hysterical alarm and excited discussion in Parliament. That was still the position of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this question. They quite realized the importance of the events which were happening in Asia; but they must decline to discuss those events prematurely, believing, as they did, that discussion would not be conducive to the peace of the world or to the advantage of this country.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—CREW OF THE "NISERO."

MR. STOREY said, he desired to draw attention to another matter which was of much more importance than the problematical march of Russia towards India. He was not much concerned in what was happening in Central Asia. For his part, he should not be sorry if a civilizing Power like Russia took a great many other places. He wished, however, to invite the attention of the Committee to a question which affected them immediately. They were aware that on several occasions he had asked Questions of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs respecting some British subjects who, for several months, had been the captives of a petty Rajah in Sumatra. He had not obtained from the noble Lord any satisfactory assurance that the English official out there was doing all that was necessary to secure the release of the men; and if the Committee would bear with him, he would very briefly enumerate the circumstances. The *Nisero* was wrecked on the 14th of November, 1883, and since then the crew had not only been in peril of their lives, but from time to time had been in absolute destitution. At the time they were taken captive the Rajah of Tenom was in conflict with the Dutch Government, who claimed Sovereignty in that part of the world. So far as he could form a judgment, the Dutch Government, and other persons, had behaved in a high-handed and improper manner towards this petty Potentate. However that might be, the Rajah, finding that his captives were British subjects, determined to use them as a means of compelling the Dutch Government to do justice to himself. We had nothing to do with the Rajah of Tenom in this matter. The Dutch Government claimed Sovereignty in those parts; and therefore they owed it to us to produce those men when we demanded their release. He wanted to know what the Foreign Office of England had done to secure the release of these British sailors? They were poor men; they had not the honour to be Generals, or to be connected with noble Lords in the other House, or with officers in the Army or Navy. If they had been, he could understand the shoals of Questions which would have been asked in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords concerning their fate. It had been left to him to raise this matter in the House, inasmuch as these men belonged to the borough which he represented (Sunderland); and if he had not had the support of one or two Members coming from the same locality, and of one Member in whose constituency some of these men lived, he should have been entirely powerless even to make a speech on this subject in the House. If he could show the Committee that these men had been kept in captivity for several months, and that practically nothing had been done for their release, and that unless Members spoke out nothing would be done, he thought he should probably secure the support of some other Members. It was on the 14th of November that these men were made captive. What had been done to release them? Representations were made to the Dutch Government; and when the matter was mentioned in that House the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had stated that an expedition had been sent by the Dutch Government. That the Dutch Government had sent an expedition he admitted. They sent an expedition on the 7th of January—two months after the men were captured; but what was that expedition? A person who was well able to give information on the subject had described it. He said the expedition went on shore, set fire to a few huts, and returned to their ships, apparently satisfied that they had done their utmost. On turning to the official declarations of the Dutch Government, he found that the official Report stated that the operations were conducted not for the rescue of the captives, but for the chastisement of the district. He thought the noble Lord knew better than he did that it was not in the policy or the intention of the Dutch Government to do anything relating to these poor men except under strong pressure from the English Government. They were quite content to have an open sore between themselves and the Rajah, and that these men should remain in captivity as a bone of contention between him and themselves; but he submitted that it was the duty of the British Government to enforce it on the Dutch Government that they must deal with this matter. The noble Lord had said that the Foreign Office was doing what it could; but he could tell the noble Lord much more that it ought to do. Once in the history of this country, when an English Earl had been taken prisoner by one of his vassals, William the Conqueror demanded his release, and when his captor made excuses as the Dutch Government had now done, he said—

> "By the splendour of God, Guy of Ponthieu!
> I will have your prisoner or I will have you!"

He submitted to the noble Lord that it was time that the Foreign Office should speak in firmer and more definite language. He thought he had heard an hon. Member say he was speaking in a Jingo spirit. He was not; but they often passed to Jingo actions, because they did not speak definitely. If these men had been in a more important position there would have been a shower of Questions to the Government; but he would recall some of the facts. He did not mean to go into the facts in detail; but he thought it was in the recollection of many hon. Members that on three occasions in the last 10 or 15 years similar questions to this had arisen, only not with regard to poor men, but to men who held positions in society, or had relations with society. What happened? The Foreign Office put all the engines of diplomacy to work, and made its authority so felt that in two cases a remedy was obtained; and in the third case, at any rate, satisfaction was exacted. He would explain why he pressed upon the noble Lord more active measures in this matter. They had not these men alone to consider, though that was a matter of importance. There were more than 20 of them; they were all hard working men, and were now living in a climate that was peculiarly unhealthy at the present time of the year. The noble Lord assured him the other day that he had received a telegram stating that these people were well. He had had a communication from the captain of the ship, who was at present at home. He wished the captain had been with his men to look after them. He entertained an entirely opposite opinion to that in the telegram; and stated that, so far as his judgment, went the message to which the noble Lord had referred was not a message sent by the men at all, but by the Rajah, who held the men in activity, and whose interest it was to make things appear as agreeable as he could. He counselled the noble Lord to ascertain as soon as he could from the men themselves whether they were not at present in jeopardy for their lives, for he thought he knew the temper both of that House and of the people of this country; and he was satisfied that if, through laxity on the part of their officials, those poor men should die while in captivity, there would be considerable irritation expressed against the officials. As he had said, they had not only to consider these men; they had to consider their wives and families. When he asked the noble Lord whether he could do anything for the wives and families of these men, the noble Lord said he regretted that he had no funds at his disposal. He wondered that the noble Lord, having Radical instincts as he had, did not feel ashamed to make such an answer; and he believed the noble Lord would not have made such a reply if he had not been an official. He had received the following short letter from the wife of one of these men:—

> "I am very sorry to write to you again; but I have remained so long expecting some news from my poor husband, that I do not know what to do. I have four children. I am not able to work. I am dependent on a widowed mother so long that I do not know what to do, so I write to you. If you can help me in any way I shall be most thankful. Please write to me if any steps are taken to release these men."

He did not put too much stress upon this letter; but he thought it likely that in a great number of cases the wives and families of these men would be in absolute destitution if they had not found here and there kind friends; and he must say it was little to the credit of the Office which the noble Lord represented that he should have to say that he had no funds at his disposal to help these people. No funds at his disposal! The other day the Foreign Office spent £2,000 or £3,000 on sending certain noble Lords to bestow a Garter; and every time a petty German Prince wanted to come and visit our Royal Family the Government could put a ship at his disposal at a charge of £40 to the State, when he might very well afford to pay for his passage himself. £40 would keep one of these families for 12 months. He could multiply these instances by dozens and by hundreds; but he could assure the noble Lord that if he did not speak much about these matters he took the trouble to note down circumstances under which the money of this country was wasted over the most frivolous and foolish things. But when he asked the noble Lord for money to relieve the distress of these people whose husbands and fathers were kept captive for political reasons—because the Foreign Office dared not be firm with the Dutch Government—he could give no assistance. He did not blame the Foreign Office too much for that, for he did not wish to run them into conflict with the Dutch Government or any other Government; but he most point out that it was because of political consequences that pressure was not brought to bear upon the Dutch Government, and when he asked for a small sum of money to help these people the Representative of the Foreign Office replied that if these people were to be helped it must be done by public subscription. He was very much obliged to the noble Lord for the suggestion; but he was thankful to say that he could do without suggestions from the noble Lord as to public subscriptions. He only pressed upon him and the Committee the impropriety of any public Department saying that they could not afford money in such a case as this, when at some other time they were parties to expenses which no common sense could justify. He had no more to say, except that he thought the Government ought to speak to the Dutch Government with the firmness which a Minister of England ought to employ in such a matter as this. These men were British subjects; they were held in captivity within Dutch territory by men who ought to be amenable to Dutch influence or Dutch power; and if the Dutch Government could not be brought, after six or seven months, definitely to say that it would take effectual measures to release these men, then he thought it was time that the British Government, which could afford to shed blood like water, and spend money by millions, over very much less worthy ends, should itself take steps to assert the honour of England and release these poor men.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he would not enter into the details of the case of these unfortunate British subjects; but he desired to assure the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the greatest sympathy was felt for them by Members sitting on that side of the House. It was no Party question, but one affecting the honour of this country. The hon. Member for Sunderland had said that they had nothing to do directly with the Rajah. That was, no doubt, true; but they had to deal with him indirectly through the Dutch, and they had a right to exercise very direct pressure on the Dutch. They practically owed their position and power in that part of Sumatra to the concessions made by this country in return for the surrender to them by the Dutch of some forts on the West Coast of Africa. The noble Lord would doubtless say, as he had said before, that the Foreign Office had made strong representations to the Dutch authorities upon the matter of these unfortunate captives. Well, they make such representations very freely; they had made them to Russia; they had made them to the Transvaal Government; but there they stopped, as if by making them they had done all that it was their duty or interest to do. Now, he (Sir Henry Holland) protested against this view. He was satisfied that if they took a firm and decided tone with the Dutch authorities, and insisted upon their getting these men restored, either by force or by payment of a ransom, they would succeed. He fully admitted that there were difficulties in the case; but other cases of a like kind, and of like difficulty, had been before now successfully dealt with; and it was intolerable that these innocent men should be left in a captivity which had already lasted too long. He would not detain the Committee any longer; but he desired to uphold strongly the case of these men, and to show by doing so that this was no Party question, and that both sides of the House desired to strengthen the hands of the Foreign Office.

MR. MOORE said, he knew it to be a fact that these men were not detained through any hostility to this country on the part of the people of Sumatra. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) agreed with him; but, while agreeing with the hon. Member upon the matter, he must make one distinction. The people of Sumatra had said over and over again that they were anxious that this country should go and take possession of Sumatra, and would fall at our feet if we would go there and give them protection. He was not urging a policy of annexation; but he wanted to bring the Committee to see the true point, which was this—these men were held in captivity in order to draw attention to the tyranny and brutal treatment which the Natives had received from the Dutch. They said their only hope was in that the Foreign Office should speak one word firmly, and that would bring them relief. These men were not held there through any hostility to or defiance of this country, but simply to draw attention to their grievances. The Dutch had closed their ports, and would not allow them to treat freely. They were deeply grieved, and that was why they were holding these men. He should be sorry to say anything that would weaken the responsibility of the Foreign Office in this matter; but these men were being fairly treated according to the poor diet and circumstances of the people, and he hoped the Government would not exercise the power of this country against these poor weak Natives, except to speak plainly to the Dutch Government and obtain the release of these prisoners, and see that the influence of the country was exercised in securing justice and fair treatment to these people, instead of oppression.

MR. SLAGG wished to say a few words on this subject, inasmuch as one of these men was one of his constituents. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) seemed to think that as this question had not been submitted to discussion in the House these men had not received due attention. But the noble Lord had been in constant communication with him and his friends upon this matter. They had received the greatest possible attention and manifestations of the greatest interest and solicitude on the part of the Foreign Office. He had been in communication with Captain Wodehouse, the commander of the *Nisero*, who had more than once been with him to the Foreign Office, and had been invited, together with others who had interested themselves in the case, to make suggestions for the release of the men. All the suggestions were fully and promptly carried out by the Foreign Office; but the Committee must remember that unusual difficulties surrounded this matter. It was not merely a question of dealing with the Dutch Government, or sending supplies or an armed force from this country. The captain of the *Nisero* absolutely deprecated the idea of sending an armed force on account of the danger and probable death to which such a step might subject these men; and he was bound to say, on behalf of the noble Lord, that he had only been deterred from active steps of the kind suggested through the danger to the men pointed out by Captain Wodehouse. He joined the hon. Member for Sunderland in the hearty desire that the Foreign Office would take up this matter in such a way as to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion; but he was satisfied that undue pressure might result in disastrous consequences.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he was very glad to hear the concluding remarks of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg), for it appeared to him that if they went on as they were going on now they would soon be at war with all the world. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), if he meant anything, meant that they should go to war with Holland, and he had quoted William the Conqueror; but surely they had got past the days of William the Conqueror, and should deal with matters in a different way. He sympathized with these men, and was anxious that they should be brought back safely. He had no doubt that these men were very good men, and he was quite as anxious to get them back as General Gordon. They were not getting the country into any trouble; but he thought the hon. Member, instead of doing good to these men, would do them harm, because if active steps were taken the Rajah would be more likely to murder them. He hoped the noble Lord would speak in a peaceable manner, and not in a savage manner.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he thought the hon. Baronet had delivered a most heartless speech. He forgot the terrible position of these men, and he wished to say that he himself knew something about this matter. He knew how accurately the case had been put by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey); and he felt that it would be a sad day for England when the House of Commons came to discuss with indifference the question whether they should not only use firm words, but should follow them up. It would be a sad day when they led other countries to believe that they were no longer in earnest, and no longer spoke firmly and followed up their words vigorously. But what he particularly wished to say was, that he also had had some experience of the Foreign Office in regard to a case somewhat parallel to this. There was a case of the illegal detention of two Scotch engineers, which was brought before that House more than once by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). That case had some interest for himself, because, although those men were originally Glasgow men, it happened that one of them had come to reside in Birkenhead. He knew the man, and knew how hard his case was; but the Foreign Office did absolutely nothing in the matter, except to write polite letters to the Government of Spain. The case of these men was very similar to this case. They were forcibly imprisoned and taken to Manilla, and afterwards sent home as distressed seamen and entitled to wages. They had a perfectly just claim against the Spanish Government, which the English Government acknowledged, but did nothing. He mentioned this as an illustration of the supineness of the Foreign Office, which had been repeated in the present case, but which he hoped they would no longer adopt.

Mr. W. REDMOND said, attention had been drawn, by the able address of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), to this matter; and he thought the conclusion generally to be drawn was that Her Majesty's Government were at all times ready to embroil themselves in quarrels with second-rate Powers, or with savage races such as the Zulus, or with such as they imagined the Boers were, but afterwards found they were not. The hon. Member for Sunderland had quoted, to the chagrin of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), some ancient history with regard to William the Conqueror, as to the action that William the Conqueror took respecting some friend of his who had been taken prisoner; and the hon. Member seemed to compare his firm conduct to the wavering conduct of the present Government with reference to these unfortunate men. He did not share the opinion of the hon. Baronet, who found fault, so to speak, with the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) for quoting William the Conqueror; but what he did regret was, that when he was speaking of William the Conqueror and of English history he did not cite the action of another person who figured in English history at a more recent date than William the Conqueror. Had he done so, he would have shown completely the reason why the Government did not take action with regard to these men. The person he referred to was Admiral Van Tromp, who, in a former quarrel between the Dutch and the English, sailed up the Medway and set fire to the shipping, and did a great deal of damage to this country. There was another reason. Probably the sound of the rifles which rang in the Transvaal had not altogether died away, but were still echoing in the ears of Her Majesty's Government. He was not surprised, therefore, that the people, or rather the Government of the country, was somewhat loth to take any firm or decided step which might result in a catastrophe of the nature of that which befel Her Majesty's troops in the Transvaal. He could only say that, listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), he had confirmed an opinion which he had entertained — namely, that while the country was embroiled in difficulties of this kind the Government was afraid, and altogether too mean, to stand up against a Power which could not be considered at all powerful. These sailors had been taken, he believed, because they were British, and because there was a feeling in that quarter of the world that British subjects, as a rule, were very little better than depredators. If no notice was taken of the holding of these sailors in captivity, the destitute condition of their families he should have thought sufficient to prompt Her Majesty's Government to take some action to secure the release of the men. But because the Dutch Government appeared to be concerned, Her Majesty's Government remained silent, and would do nothing that they considered likely to raise the ire of the Dutch people. Oh, no; before the Dutch and the Boers they had nothing to say for themselves; but wait until some people like the Zulus awakened their displeasure, and they would then have the British lion on the alert, with his tail swinging and his jaws open, ready to devour whatever might come within his reach.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he was not surprised to hear this subject discussed by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), as there was a strong feeling with regard to it in the North of England, where the relations of the crew of this unfortunate vessel resided. He would go farther, and say that this discussion would strengthen the hands of the Foreign Office in whatever steps they might think it desirable to take, because when they appealed to the Dutch Government, and urged the consideration of the question on them, they could now say that the question was not so much one in which the Foreign Office took interest as one in which the House of Commons itself was interested. At the same time, he must regret some of the observations which fell from the hon. Member for Sunderland, because he felt that the hon. Member was not justified in leading the Committee to suppose that the Foreign Office had been doing nothing; and he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had to thank the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg), with whom he had had frequent communication on this subject, for having risen and corrected the statement of the hon. Member. He must altogether deny the claim of the hon. Member for Sunderland that he, and he alone, had taken a prominent part in this question. While the hon. Member was still in Egypt, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had had frequent communication with many hon. Members on the matter. A deputation, in which were several Members of Parliament, had waited upon the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs some time ago; but the hon. Member did not seem to be aware of what had passed on that occasion; in fact, it really seemed as though he was unaware of what had taken place on the subject from beginning to end, and that his principal desire had been to take advantage of an opportunity for making an attack upon the Government. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would not take up the time of the Committee by replying in detail to the observations of the hon. Member, but would state to the Committee very briefly what had occurred. The hon. Member had not given him warning that he was going to bring the subject on that evening, and the first intimation he had of it was contained in the hon. Member's speech. The position of the subject, however, was that he intended tomorrow to lay on the Table Papers giving particulars of what had occurred between the Rajah of Tenom and the Dutch Government. When the House had seen those Papers it would know how undeserved were the observations of the hon. Member for Sunderland to the effect that the Foreign Office had done nothing. But, as the character of the Foreign Office had been already cleared by the independent testimony of the hon. Member for Manchester, it was not necessary for him to go any further into the matter. The Prime Minister had stated the other day, in reply to a further Question from the hon. Member for Sunderland, that the real and essential difficulty of the case was that the Rajah had got the men in his possession, and that if an armed expedition were attempted, or any intervention of that kind were essayed, its object would be very likely to be defeated, as the Rajah would probably take the law into his own hands and destroy the captives. Every means ought to be taken, therefore—every resource of diplomacy ought to be exhausted, before recourse was had to military force, or any strong measures were adopted. He would remind the Committee of this—that the greatest difficulty of all in this case began at the time the Dutch armed expedition was sent out. The men having been taken in November were still on the sea coast in January, and the Dutch were of opinion that something might be done for their relief by an armed expedition. That expedition might have been well or badly managed; but the result was that the Rajah succeeded in drawing off inland and in taking his captives with him into the interior of the country, where they were now out of reach. There were, as the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) had said, various diplomatic questions put forward between England and Holland, and the position of the Dutch Government in relation to the Sultan of Kemala and his tributary, the Rajah of Tenom. In reply to a Question put by the hon. Member for Sunderland a few days ago, he had informed the House that it was hoped by Her Majesty's Government, by negotiations conducted through the Sultan of Acheen, who resided at Kemala, and was the Suzerain of the Rajah, that it might be possible to secure the liberation of the captives. That was an opinion which the Government had not abandoned, and at that very moment negotiations were going on. The Dutch Government were appealed to to accept a mediation with regard to all quarrels between them and the Native Princes; but, unfortunately, the Dutch Government had refused that mediation. Her Majesty's Government were still pressing that course on the Dutch Government. He was in great hopes that those steps would prove successful; still, he did not conceal the fact that the whole question was one of great difficulty. He believed that in the opinion of the Foreign Office it was one of the most difficult minor questions they had ever had to deal with, because it was complicated by questions both of policy and International Law. Of one matter he felt certain—namely, that if they made up their minds to send an armed expedition with no other instruction than to secure the captives and punish their captors, it would be the most unwise thing they ever did. He was astonished that the hon. Member for Sunderland had mingled with his sentences of kindness and pity for the suffering sailors and their families taunts about German Princes, and the expenses of the Foreign Office. The hon. Member even took the trouble to show how carelessly he had studied the Estimates which he declared he was always studying, for he had said he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was responsible for the expenditure of a certain sum of money for the conveyance of a German Prince to his own country. That was a matter with which the Foreign Office had nothing whatever to do. But he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) did not wish to enter into these points, which were entirely irrelevant to the issue before the House. The great necessity was to take every diplomatic means to secure the liberation of the men, and they could only hope that they would escape thereby from such a disaster as that they had experienced on a previous occasion, when violent measures had been taken to liberate persons. The unfortunate gentlemen who were killed in Greece some years ago perished in consequence of an armed expedition sent out to save them. When hon. Members read the Papers which they would have in their hands the day after to-morrow, they would see that no efforts had been or would be spared by the Foreign Office to secure the release of these men.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT denied that he had found fault with Russia for advancing her railway, or even for pressing on her conquests. It was natural she should seize all she could. But he blamed Her Majesty's Ministers for throwing away the bulwarks of our Indian Empire, and for their blind indifference towards the unerring advance of the Czar's Forces. As for the noble Lord's eulogy of Russian humanity and civilization it was pure imagination. Skobeleff had butchered over 12,000 of the Turkomans, women and children as well as men, at Geok Tepe. The Mussulmans of the Balkan Peninsula, the mountaineers of the Caucasus, and the oppressed people of Poland, could give the noble Lord some information as to the real character of the civilizing mission of Russia.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE FOR THE CITY OF CORK.

MR. PARNELL said, that just before the House adjourned for the Easter Recess they had a discussion on the question of the extra police tax in the City of Cork; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was good enough to say that he would communicate with the Corporation of Cork, and ascertain what their views were with regard to the matter. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had communicated with the Corporation on the subject and what the result had been?

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork has stated his case so briefly that I shall certainly not go into any detail, or repeat any of the arguments or statements I made use of on a previous occasion. I shall confine myself to answering the question the hon. Member has put. After the last discussion, I at once communicated with the authorities in Dublin, who put themselves into communication with the Local Authorities in Cork on the question. No time was lost. At first there was a slight misunderstanding of my object; and I received, on the 17th of April, a carefully drawn Report from Captain Plunkett, recapitulating the reasons why the Police Force had not been diminished. On the 24th of April, I communicated with him again, asking him to read very carefully what had passed in the House of Commons, and saying that I wanted to have the view of the Corporation as to the number of police necessary to do duty in the City, and that that was the best way to get a reliable opinion. He put himself into communication with the Municipality of Cork, and received a letter from, I presume, the Town Clerk, saying—

> "I am directed by the Mayor to acquaint you, with reference to the conversation he had with you on Monday in reference to the Constabulary Force, that he does not feel warranted in consulting the Corporation. If you wish him to do so, and will give him a written statement of the points you want, he will do so on Friday next."

Captain Plunkett answered that the point on which he wished for an expression of opinion was as to the number of police necessary to perform duty in the City of Cork; and, on the 2nd of May, he received a letter to the effect that the Town Council declined to express any opinion as to what number of police were necessary to perform the duties in the City of Cork. It appears that these letters referred to an interview that Captain Plunkett had with the Mayor of Cork on the 28th of April; so that there can be no misunderstanding at all, I think, on the part of the Local Authorities as to the desire of the Irish Government to place themselves in communication with them on the subject. Not being able to obtain the opinion of the Mayor and Corporation on this point, the Irish Government were again thrown back on their own officers; and they came, and came very reluctantly, to the conclusion that it was necessary to maintain the present force. What burden that force places on the City of Cork I will not proceed to state to the Committee, as the hon. Member has not expressed any desire to review the arguments used the other day. I have stated the result of the negotiations.

MR. PARNELL confessed he was very much disappointed at the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He had been in hopes that, in consequence of what took place in the House on the last occasion he brought the matter forward, the Government would have seen their way to remove the extra police in Cork. It appeared from the right hon. Gentleman's statement that the extra force in Cork was to be retained for an indefinite period at the expense of the ratepayers. It was very much to be regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not, through his own Office, communicated with the Local Authority in Cork—that was to say, with the Mayor—in order to obtain his opinion on the matter. It would appear that, owing to the method chosen by Captain Plunkett, and the very scanty communication which he made to the Town Clerk, that no impression was conveyed to that functionary that his communication was really from the Irish Executive, or in reference to any information which the Irish Executive wished to obtain as to the views of the Corporation. He (Mr. Parnell) was informed that the stipendiary magistrate, Captain Plunkett, happened to meet the Town Clerk one day in the street, and he asked him, verbally, what he thought would be the number of police required for the City of Cork; but he did not make the inquiry in such a way as to indicate that he was seeking for information on the part of the right hon. Gentleman or of the Irish Executive. The Mayor gave the reply the right hon. Gentleman had read, and it was followed by a more definite inquiry in writing, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, from Captain Plunkett; but neither did this written inquiry convey the impression to the Corporation of Cork that the information was sought by the Government. He could not help thinking that the Government had acted very hastily, and not in accordance with the spirit of the pledge—though they might have acted in accordance with the letter of it—they had given in dealing with this matter so summarily. The Corporation of Cork, he thought, were entitled to the courtesy of a communication from the right hon. Gentleman on a matter of such importance. Captain Plunkett was a person who had made himself very obnoxious to the Local Authority, and, in connection with this matter, had communicated with the Corporation in such a way as not to make them aware of what the inquiry really was, and the Irish Executive, in choosing this means of making the communication, had acted in such a way as to show that they did not desire a peaceful settlement of the question.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he had left out three lines of his letter to Captain Plunkett; and, as there was what he considered an unjust impression on the hon. Gentleman's mind that he had not conveyed to Captain Plunkett a fair sense of the importance of the matter, if the hon. Gentleman wished he would read them. He had conveyed to Captain Plunkett the exact sense of the promise he had made to the hon. Member for the City of Cork.

Mr. GRAY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table the document from which he had just quoted? It would be interesting to see the exact terms of the communication made to the Corporation. It struck him that the terms of the question put to Captain Plunkett almost necessitated the reply made by the Corporation. If Captain Plunkett had desired to carry out the spirit of the undertaking entered into by the right hon. Gentleman with the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork, the question he would have put to the Mayor and Corporation would have been—"In your opinion, is the extra police force necessary for the preservation of the peace in Cork?" That, he was told, was not the question that Captain Plunkett asked at all. He had asked them to pronounce an abstract opinion as to the precise number of police required in Cork City. The Corporation of Cork had nothing to do with the police; they did not appoint them, and had no control over them; and he thought it most unfair to ask them to pronounce officially as to the number of police required. Would the right hon. Gentleman undertake to have the question put in the other form to the Corporation? If he did, probably he would then be able to get a more satisfactory reply.

Mr. PARNELL said, the letter to the Corporation of Cork neither conveyed what the right hon. Gentleman directed Captain Plunkett to convey, nor did it convey what the right hon. Gentleman had said what he would inquire about. Here was the letter, the only written or formal communication which was sent—

> "Sir,—With reference to your letter of this day, the only point on which I should be glad to have an expression of opinion from the Mayor and Corporation is as to what number of police are necessary to perform the duties in the City of Cork. I am, Sir, your obedient servant," &c.

The Committee would observe that Captain Plunkett did not convey, in this letter to the Corporation, that the information was sought by the Irish Government. He simply said that he required the information for himself. He (Mr. Parnell) could only say that he regretted very much that what, at one time, promised to furnish an amicable settlement of this question, should have been frustrated by the extraordinary manner in which Captain Plunkett chose to carry out the mission confided to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he had some remarks to make; but was reluctant to intervene at that moment. The right hon. Gentleman had changed the discussion to another subject of an important character; and if it were his intention to finish that discussion he would be happy to give way to him.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was perfectly ready to communicate again with

Captain Plunkett, and ask him to write another letter to the Mayor and Corporation of Cork, requesting them to confer with him as to the numbers and disposition of the Cork police force, and, at the same time, to intimate to them that he was desired to do so by the Chief Secretary.

MR. PARNELL said, he was willing to allow the matter to rest where it was until they knew the result of the right hon. Gentleman's further communication with Captain Plunkett.

MR. O'BRIEN said, that while the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was in a yielding mood on the subject of the police force in the City of Cork, he was anxious to remind him that there was a difficulty of a still more acute character in reference to the police force of the City of Limerick. There was an unparalleled struggle going on between the Mayor and Corporation of that city and the Government with reference to the compulsory police force stationed there. The Court of Queen's Bench had issued a *mandamus* for the payment of £460 for the police tax; and, among other points, he believed there were even threats held out that the members of the Corporation would be imprisoned if they refused payment. Now, the Corporation and citizens of Limerick were firmly determined to resist this tax, and to allow the Corporation property, if necessary, to be seized and sold rather than pay 1*d*. of the sum demanded. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was a proper course to enter upon a conflict of this kind with the elected representatives of a great city, and for no other purpose that he could perceive except that of gratifying some local organization, or of saving £460 to the Consolidated Fund? He believed it was £1,500,000 annually which the country readily paid for maintaining military possession of Ireland. An extra police force had been foisted on the people of Limerick by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, against the repeated protests of the Corporation, the citizens, and even the magistrates, who had several times declared that there was no necessity for it whatever—at all events, from a municipal point of view. It was perfectly well known that the police were a purely military force, and utterly useless for municipal purposes; and the Corporation of Limerick did not want to have in the city a large body of men lounging about the streets—star-gazing, for aught he knew—for they had nothing else to do; and they had even been obliged to employ a force of watchmen to protect the property of the citizens. Although the city was one of the quietest, the police had done their worst to torment the people; they assaulted them in the streets; and it was not more than two years ago that they had shot them down with buckshot. Such was the work which the police were doing for their money; and he put it to the Government whether it was worth while for them to create a bitterness, which was always left behind, by the continuance of a struggle of this kind? They might rest perfectly satisfied that the Corporation would have the support of the citizens and the sympathy of every Irishman in seeing this thing out to the end, and in resisting the payment of a tax which they regarded simply as one of the worst remnants of the unfortunate rule of Mr. Clifford Lloyd in Ireland. He was happy to observe that there were some indications that the Government were not inclined to drive the people to extremities in respect of the extra police tax. Already the extra police force had been withdrawn from some districts; and he congratulated the Government on the course they had taken so far. He thought they were showing signs that they perceived the impolicy and unwisdom of keeping open these old sores; that they were beginning to understand that there was nothing in the state of Ireland to demand the presence of these extra policemen in the various districts; and that the issue of any struggle which they might have with the people on that ground was not likely to be conducive to peace or good feeling in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, while he was in the mood to rid the people of Cork of their extra police force, would also be able to hold out some hope that evening of an amicable termination of the dispute, which otherwise unquestionably would have to go on to the bitter end. He trusted that he would not force the people of Limerick to continue a struggle that, whichever way it might end—and the chances were not altogether in favour of the Government—would leave nothing but bitterness behind, and that the right hon. Gentleman would make the same announcement with regard to Limerick as he had done in the case of the City of Cork.

Mr. SEXTON said, he hoped to get something in the nature of an explanation of what appeared to be the inexplicable course of action adopted by the Government in the case of Mr. Preston, clerk in the Land Commission. The case was not that of an individual; it touched the general policy of the Government in Ireland, and it raised the large and important question whether persons in the service of the State and drawing incomes from the public purse contributed to by the people of all political opinions, should be allowed to ally themselves with Party organizations. On the 8th of January last, there appeared in the Dublin Press an advertisement issued by the officers of the Orange Society and addressed to the Loyalists of the United Kingdom; it was signed by 100 persons of consideration in Ireland, all of them members of the Orange Order, including Earls, Viscounts, and military officers of various ranks and Members of both Houses of Parliament, and one of the names subscribed was that of Mr. Preston. That gentleman held the office of Inspector of Tithe Rents, and for the discharge of that office he received a liberal salary. This appeal to the Loyalists said that by the dismissal of Lord Rossmore from the Magistracy, the Government had insulted Irish Loyalists, and it went on to say that the conduct of the Government in dismissing him demanded a most severe rebuke; it called for sympathy for Lord Rossmore and disapproved of the conduct of the Chief Secretary. It was bad enough that persons not in the employ of the State should endeavour to set class against class and to incite them to strife and disorder, but surely it was intolerable that a clerk in the Public Service, drawing a salary from the State, should be allowed to join the persons he had referred to in reviling the Executive of the country. Lord Rossmore was a man so false to his duty as a magistrate, and so false to his duty to the Queen, that instead of preserving the peace, he led a body of men into an orderly meeting with the view of producing a deadly conflict—and that was the man whom Mr. Preston endeavoured to exalt into a hero upon whom posterity might look back with pride. It was on his account that Mr. Preston took upon himself to condemn the Government for their necessary action in dismissing him. The date of the Manifesto, the 8th of January, was important, because seven days before, that was to say, on New Year's Day, the tactics of Lord Rossmore and of the whole truculent and disorderly Orange faction had reached their culmination at Dromore, where they assembled and so threatened the peace of the locality that the police were obliged to chase them from the ground, in which pursuit one of the unfortunate men lost his life. One would have thought that such an event might have been relied upon to quiet the most factious and disorderly of persons; but a week afterwards the name of Mr. Preston appeared on a public Manifesto in which the Government were rebuked for endeavouring to preserve the public peace, and Lord Rossmore was alluded to as a hero. As soon as possible after the meeting he (Mr. Sexton) raised the subject of the conduct of Mr. Preston by Question in that House. On the 11th of February he asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if Mr. Preston, whose name was appended to that scandalous Manifesto, was the same person who held office in the service of the State as clerk in the Land Commission; and, if so, whether he would be continued in the service? To this the right hon. Gentleman made a satisfactory reply by stating that—

> "The Land Commissioners were not aware till now that Mr. Preston was a member of the committee referred to in the Question. They strongly disapprove of his conduct in having become a member of that committee, and they have called on him to resign his situation in the Land Commission. Accordingly, Mr. Preston has placed his resignation in their hands."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 423.)

He (Mr. Sexton) considered that to be a rational solution of the question, because it did not seem to him to be possible that the Government should tolerate in its employ a man who condemned its action and made a hero of Lord Rossmore. He was afterwards informed that Mr. Preston continued to be in the Office of the Land Commissioners, and he pointed out that on the very day after the reply was given to his Question there appeared in the Dublin Press an article well calculated to intimidate the Commissioners and to induce the Government to retrace their steps. The article, among other things, said that the Government were in such a hurry to act that they had not inquired into the extent of their own powers, and it went on to say that Ministers were acting thus in order to bid high for the Parnellite vote. The whole article was to the effect that they had wrongly dismissed Mr. Preston, but that they had not removed those soldiers and magistrates who held up Lord Rossmore to admiration, and charged the Government with inconsistency. The Government had adopted the evil course of restoring Mr. Preston to office. When he ascertained that the article in *The Daily Express* had produced that effect—namely, that the Government were guided by the imputations launched against them, he inquired of the right hon. Gentleman whether or not Mr. Preston had been removed from the Service? And his reply was that—

> "The Land Commission, thinking that Mr. Preston did not understand his tenure of office, gave him an opportunity of withdrawing his resignation, of which he availed himself. The matter having subsequently been brought under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant, without whose assent Mr. Preston could not be removed from office, His Excellency conferred with the Land Commissioners, when it was decided, having regard to the fact that Mr. Preston had been in the service of the State for 38 years without a complaint having been made against him, and to the fact that he never had anything to do with the action of the committee, upon which his name was placed without his authority, that the case would be fairly dealt with if Mr. Preston were reprimanded instead of being dismissed."—(3 *Hansard*, [285] 218.)

Now, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to get up and repeat that statement. Did he mean to ask the Committee to believe that Mr. Preston was not consulted before his name was placed upon the committee? Why, he had already pointed out that the committee was a constellation of distinguished persons; it was composed of the most distinguished Orangemen in Ireland; and was he to be told that 100 persons of influence and position cared so much about Mr. Preston that they furtively put his name on the committee, and that he remained for a whole month after the advertisement appeared in ignorance of the fact; that his name was being used to discredit the Executive and to do honour to a subordinate magistrate who had been dismissed for misconduct from the Commission of the Peace? He asked the Committee to observe the conditions upon which Mr. Preston was restored to office—

> "Provided that he undertook to withdraw his name from the committee . . . . and, further, that he expressed regret at having allowed his name to appear."—[*Ibid.*]

That was one of the most extraordinary contradictions that had ever been recorded in the annals of official life in Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant first said that Mr. Preston was ignorant that his name had appeared as a member of the committee, and then that he was restored to office on condition that he expressed regret for that which, according to his own plea, he had never done. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to explain that to the Committee. He asked how the Lord Lieutenant, having imposed upon Mr. Preston a condition incompatible with his own plea, could be rescued from the suspicion of having acted on a plea which was obviously false? He remembered that one of the most valued public servants that had ever been brought into the service of the State in Ireland, and who was concerned in the issue of a pamphlet which contained two or three phrases objected to by the Government, had been treated in a very different manner. The Land Commission called upon him to send in his resignation; but they never afterwards asked him to express any regret, nor did the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland restore him to his office. His contention was, that Mr. Preston deliberately put forward a false plea, which the Lord Lieutenant had accepted in order to protect a truculent Orangeman; that Mr. Preston was aware of the use that had been made of his name, and that the Lord Lieutenant must have been cognizant of that fact. He stigmatized the whole transaction as scandalous, and he believed that it would be of evil influence on the public opinion in Ireland.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, there were in the Public Service persons whom that House could fairly trust; among them were the officers of the Executive who had had this matter in hand. He protested against these attacks upon absent individuals as being neither fair, honourable, nor just; and he put it to the Committee to say whether the charges made by the hon. Member for Sligo were not, to use his own language, absolutely scandalous.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was bound to state, in reply to the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), that the complaint which he had brought forward was, perhaps, of a less serious nature than the Committee, from his speech, would be led to imagine. The facts were, that the proportion of cost paid by Irish towns in support of the police force was not greater than the payment made for the services of the police in English towns. According to the last Return, it appeared that for the extra men the charge was £344 12s. 6*d.* In addition to that, the town of Limerick kept a force of local police, the exact number of which he did not know; but, taking them at 20 in number, the cost would be about £1,300 a-year. Against this he would take the town of Northampton, for instance, which was about the same size as the city of Limerick. While the city of Limerick paid £344 to the staff of the 10 men of the Constabulary, and paid likewise for the service of the 20 local police, the town of Northampton paid for its police £2,846. There were other large towns in England in which the payment from local rates for the service of the police was very much larger than that paid by the Irish towns. Though hon. Members might say the Irish Constabulary were a military body, used for political purposes, he did not think that the police of the streets was as efficiently performed in England. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, that was his opinion; and certainly the police of the Irish streets was performed at a very much less cost to the country than the police of the English streets was. He had got a Return of the cost of the police in certain counties. In Staffordshire, in England, which had a population of 770,000, £32,000 a-year was paid from the local rates for the police. The collective population of Cork, Kilkenny, and Tipperary was 3,000 or 4,000 greater than that of Staffordshire, and those three counties combined paid for police not £32,000, but something under £24,000 a-year. The hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had referred to the tendency on the part of the Irish Government to reduce the police where possible. Although the counties he (Mr. Trevelyan) had named paid so much less than English counties of the same size, an application had been made to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, since the Return, from which he (Mr. Trevelyan) had quoted, was prepared, for the reduction of the extra police in the county of Cork by 44, and in the county of Kilkenny by 50. The Irish Government were extremely anxious to reduce the extra police wherever it was possible; but he was bound to say that the only process by which the extra police could be withdrawn was the process of a staunch maintenance of the law. In the case of the controversy with the city of Limerick, the law was on the side of the Executive Government, and they could not withdraw the claim which they thought they were bound to make on behalf of the State. If ever the time came when they could reduce the charge for the extra police, they would do so; but, from what he heard, he was inclined to think that the peace of the streets of Limerick would be kept much cheaper if the conservation of that peace were placed more in the hands of the Constabulary. It was certainly somewhat curious that, while the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) urged the Corporation of Limerick to resist the law—he (Mr. Trevelyan) thought he might put that interpretation on the hon. Gentleman's words—the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) should be very much exercised because a public servant who had joined in giving a testimonial to a magistrate who had resisted the law, had been let off much too cheaply. The Government were trying, to the best of their ability, to do justice, tempered with mercy, all round, and he could not agree with the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) that the hon. Member for Sligo had continued the series of attacks which had lately been made upon Mr. Eyre Preston. As a matter of fact, this was the first opportunity the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) had had of raising the question otherwise than by Questions. Well, the story was simply this. Mr. Eyre Preston's name appeared on a very improper Manifesto, which he (Mr. Trevelyan) had not by him at the present moment, but the impropriety of which he was quite willing to acknowledge to the full. If he recollected aright, it called for funds to erect an Orange Hall in Dublin, in commemoration of Lord Rossmore's resistance of the Irish Executive. The hon. Member for Sligo called the attention of the Government to the matter, and they referred it to the Land Commissioners. The Land Commissioners called upon Mr. Eyre Preston for an explanation, and the one he gave was so unsatisfactory in their opinion that they removed him from the Land Commission. Subsequently, it was brought to the knowledge of the Land Commissioners that they could not remove Mr. Eyre Preston without the sanction of the Lord Lieutenant. They communicated with Mr. Eyre Preston, and suggested to him the withdrawal of his resignation. It then became necessary for the Lord Lieutenant to go into the subject *de novo*, and to determine whether Mr. Eyre Preston's conduct had been such that loss of office ought to be enforced against him. Mr. Eyre Preston's defence was this—

"In the year 1853 I became a member of an Orange Lodge, and I have so continued to the present time. I have never supposed, nor heard it said, that my being what is called an Orangeman was in any way inconsistent with my position as a Civil servant; and indeed, in my interview with the Commissioners on Monday, I did not understand them to make any such suggestion. I have, moreover, never been a prominent member of the Body. I have not taken part in public demonstrations, and although I entertain strong political views, I have not even joined a Political Club, nor made myself conspicuous as a politician. In the month of December last, I received a Circular (which I enclose) stating that the object of providing in Dublin an Orange Hall was under consideration at the recent meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, and that a committee had been appointed to make the necessary arrangements to promote the object in view. A list of the proposed committee, which included my name, was given, and the persons so named were requested to act. I know nothing of the project referred to in the Circular beyond what it disclosed. The Commissioners will see that it is a document of the most innocent character, and contains no political allusion of any kind. Assuming that my name had been introduced by way of a compliment to my having been so long connected with the Body, I wrote thanking the honorary secretaries for the honour that had been done me, but at the same time intimating that my avocations would prevent me from giving much assistance. I never attended or acted on the Committee, and from that time I never heard, directly or indirectly, of its doings until I saw some day about the middle of January, in a newspaper, the advertisement to which the Commissioners referred in our interview. I do not usually look at advertisements, and my seeing the one in question arose from the accidental circumstance that in the copy of the newspaper which I was reading it was printed immediately before the leading article. I glanced at it hastily; I observed that it contained a reference to Lord Rossmore, condemning the action of the Government, but I did not further note the motive or character of the reference. I also saw that my name was included in the long list, but it never occurred to me that that circumstance made me responsible for a document which I had never authorized and about which I knew nothing whatever. The matter brought thus to my notice accidentally and quickly, passed as quickly from my mind. It was not so much that I considered it of no importance as that it never became a subject of thought or consideration with me at all. I did not afterwards hear it referred to, and it was only brought back to recollection upon seeing on Friday last a paragraph in a newspaper on the subject. When speaking to you as the Secretary of the Commissioners on Saturday last, I stated, as you may remember, that I was ready to at once withdraw my name from the committee. I would have taken this step before if the matter had ever engaged my attention; but the Commissioners can, I am sure, understand how an advertisement, even under the circumstances I have mentioned, and never made the subject of discussion or conversation, would produce no impression on the mind. I have now, at too great length, perhaps, but with the most perfect accuracy, stated all the circumstances which, as far as I am aware, bear on the charge against me. It will be seen that it is not a case in which a Civil servant has taken part in, or countenanced by any overt act, a public censure on the Executive. I have never considered to what an extent an official would be justified in so acting, inasmuch as my own opinion is, and has been, that it would be bad taste in a person, holding as I do a subordinate position in a Public Department, to interfere at all in such a matter, and accordingly I have always avoided doing so. If I had not seen the advertisement, I presume that the Commissioners would, under the circumstances I have stated, have held me blameless. If this be so, I would submit that my default has at the most amounted to mere mental carelessness or blindness of perception leading me not to appreciate the effect of my name being printed along with many others under an advertisement at which I had given a hasty glance. I am 62 years of age, my official salary forms a substantial portion of my income; although well able to perform my Departmental work, it would be hopeless for me at my time of life to look for new employment. I would ask the Commissioners to remember that dismissal would entail a far heavier punishment on me than on a younger man. I would ask them also to consider my past professional and official career, free from stain or imputation. In conclusion, I would press on them, humbly and respectfully, but very earnestly, to say whether, having regard to all the circumstances, the case is one which would justify the heads of a Department in removing from his office an old and long-tried public servant."

Mr. Eyre Preston had been in the Public Service for 38 years; and with that letter before him, it was the duty of the Lord Lieutenant to say whether, in the interest of the public, it was necessary to inflict the punishment of dismissal in the case of a man who showed such great contrition. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) compared this case to the dismissal of Mr. Fottrell. With the dismissal of Mr. Fottrell, he (Mr. Trevelyan) had nothing to do, and at the time it took place Lord Spencer was not Lord Lieutenant. He could not enter into any discussion as to whether Mr. Fottrell was wisely or unwisely dismissed. Throughout the whole of this Lord Rossmore business, it had been the desire of the Executive not to punish as long as they could get a complete and thorough acknowledgment from the person who had misbehaved himself, that he recognized the fact that he had done wrong, because in times of political excitement people were apt to take steps which were not justifiable, but which after all might not be absolutely criminal. If in the case of the public servants who attacked the Government on account of their conduct towards Lord Rossmore, there was ample and complete contrition, and a promise given that their course of wrong conduct would not be repeated, the Executive Government were glad to excuse them. It would be a very different thing if such conduct were repeated. The circumstances of the last Recess in Ireland were very novel, and many men in public positions acted under the impression that the action they took was quite permissible. They now knew it was not permissible, and that a repetition of their conduct would be visited with very serious consequences. The official letter which contained the submission of Mr. Eyre Preston was dated the 23rd of February, 1884, and in it he said—

> "I have to express my obligation for yours of the 22nd instant, and beg to state that I have already withdrawn my name from the committee of the Orange Hall, and am ready to give my withdrawal such publicity as the Commissioners may require. I quite disavow any responsibility for the terms of the appeal for funds for erecting such a building; and I beg again respectfully to repeat that I was ignorant of such appeal, or of the intention to issue it, until I saw it in print. I regret that, being, as I am, a public servant, I allowed my name to be placed on the committee; and I undertake that I shall never in future, so long as I hold office in the Land Commission, take any public or prominent part in political matters."

He (Mr. Trevelyan) recognized the public spirit in which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had brought this question forward; but, nevertheless, he humbly submitted to the Committee that the Government had taken adequate means of expressing their sentiments.

Mr. SEXTON said, the purpose he had in view in bringing forward the question had been tolerably well served by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman; his purpose was far removed from the gratification of private spleen which was attributed to him by the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman). He (Mr. Sexton) never saw Mr. Eyre Preston; he had not the slightest personal knowledge of that gentleman; and therefore he thought he might take credit to himself of being actuated by public spirit in bringing this question before the Committee. His only object was to teach public officials of every grade in Ireland that they were obliged to maintain the peace impartially. After Mr. Eyre Preston had addressed the Land Commission in language of such emphatic contradiction, he (Mr. Sexton) would scarcely have thought of troubling the Committee by introducing this question. He had brought the matter forward, however, because subsequently Mr. Eyre Preston was restored to the Commission, on the ground that he expressed regret for having done that which previously he said he had not done. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would undertake to lay the Correspondence on the subject upon the Table in the shape of a Parliamentary Paper, he (Mr. Sexton) would be perfectly ready not to pursue the subject further.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, an expression fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary of which he thought he had a right to ask for an explanation. The right hon. Gentleman said that during the last year persons holding positions in the Civil Service had criticized the conduct of the Government in a manner which they now knew was not permissible, and that if the criticism were repeated, it would be visited with condign punishment. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman meant to say that gentlemen holding positions in the Civil Service—and he (Colonel King-Harman) believed magistrates and Lord Lieutenants of Counties were supposed to be engaged in the Civil Service—were precluded from criticizing, in any manner whatever, the action of the Irish Government? Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that men were to be absolutely debarred from all liberty of speech, from all liberty of expressing themselves in the Press, because they held Commissions of the Peace, and because they tried to do their duty as far as their lights allowed them? He maintained that a more gross attack upon the liberty of the subject was never made in the House of Commons, and he called upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to explain himself—to say whether magistrates and others were to be muzzled, so to speak, in any case where the conduct of the Government, or any Member of the Government, was concerned? Were the Government to be allowed to go scatheless, and was everything they did to be deemed incapable of criticism? He never heard a more extraordinary expression of opinion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary might as well say that Members of Parliament were to be muzzled. Were Members of the Government to do just what they pleased without remonstrance? He called upon the Chief Secretary to explain what he meant, and to say whether he intended his words as a threat?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he had stated in the strongest terms that it was the opinion of the Lord Chancellor and his (Mr. Trevelyan's) own opinion, and also that of the Lord Lieutenant and of the Land Commissioners, that magistrates and public servants could, of course, belong to political associations and express political opinions. If circumstances recurred in which magistrates broke the peace instead of keeping it—if magistrates and public servants supported and endorsed by their conduct breakers of the peace—they would do so on their own responsibility, and they would find that the Government would consider that responsibility was not a light one.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, that no one who had perused the recent speeches of the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) and his Friends would feel much apprehension that their liberty of speech was in much danger. He (Mr. O'Brien) attempted to catch the Chairman's eye a few minutes ago to express regret that he had left anything to the sense of justice of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He would not repeat the blunder. The right hon. Gentleman had treated the Committee that night to another of his delusive parallels between the contributions from local sources in England for the maintenance of the police force and the local contributions in Ireland for the maintenance of the police. The right hon. Gentleman well knew, or, if he did not know, every man, woman, and child in Ireland could tell him, that the difference was that in English towns the police were the people's servants, but in Irish towns the police were the people's masters. The Irish people were perfectly willing to pay their police as the English people did, if Parliament would give them some control over the police. But Parliament dared not give the people that control, but paid the police themselves, in order to keep the people in subjection, and then were surprised if the people did not submit tamely. The right hon. Gentleman made exactly the same reply that night with reference to Limerick that he made with regard to the question of the extra police in Cork, which was raised by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). His hon. Friend retorted by telling the farmers of Ireland that they were fools to pay 1*d.* of the police tax, and as soon as the constituencies seemed inclined to take his hon. Friend's advice the Irish Government showed a disposition to remove the cause of quarrel. It was a curious circumstance that wherever the people had shown a resolute spirit the Government had seen reason to withdraw the extra police force. There was the case of Monaniny, and there were numerous cases in Kerry where the Government had anticipated resistance. The people of Castle Jordan, however, instead of resisting the tax, resorted to Petitions and to correspondence with the Castle authorities, and they received nothing but snubs from Mr. Jenkinson for their pains. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said he (Mr. O'Brien) had advised the people of Limerick to resist the law. He (Mr. O'Brien) was sorry to say the Irish people had not the power to resist a good deal that was done in the name of law; if they had he might speak in a different tone. All he asked the people of Limerick to do was to exercise their legal right of passive resistance; and he thought that after the proceedings of that night—after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman—the people of Limerick would learn that if they wanted to win like the people of Monaniny had won, they must imitate the people of Monaniny.

Mr. W. REDMOND desired to have a more satisfactory explanation from the Chief Secretary; but as the Committee were not likely to get a satisfactory reply with reference to the police in Limerick, he would like to call attention to the conduct of the police in the borough which he represented (Wexford). While he was away he was elected to represent that borough, and certain gentlemen went there to represent his interests and the interests of his Party. He had no more claim on the confidence of the people than any ordinary individual, and he had no more claim on the protection of the police; but what happened? Wexford was one of the most peaceful towns and counties in Ireland. Crime was altogether unknown, and the people were most peace-loving, and yet a large body of police were sent down during the election. Why? Did they expect a riot? If so, who were the people who would make a riot? The large majority of the people were of one way of thinking, and there had never been any breaches of the peace during any election, and no assaults committed on the unpopular candidate and his friends. Notwithstanding that the town was most peaceful, a large body of police were drafted down. The narrow streets of the town were crowded with police, and not ordinary police as Englishmen might understand them, but police who were practically soldiers, armed *cap-a-pie* with rifles and cartridges and bayonets, and the people going to the election were very much irritated by the presence of these police, who occupied a commanding position in the town, where crowds assembled to learn the result of the polling. They were obstructed by the police, and they naturally resented the insult. They had no intention of committing a breach of the peace; they only wished to exercise their legitimate right to see how the election had gone. The result was that the police came into contact with the people, and they charged upon the people. Blood was shed like water, and 26 policemen were so severely injured that they had to be sent into hospital to have their wounds attended to. He did not mention this because he had no sympathy for the police; on the contrary, he only wished to point out that the Government were not only doing injury to the police in Ireland, but to the police themselves, in drafting them unnecessarily into peaceful districts. After this collision between the people and the police, Wexford was crowded with extra police; but he was happy to say they had now been withdrawn, because they had proved to be unnecessary. There was just as little necessity then for these extra police as there was now. He did not think there was any better way of judging when extra police were necessary in any town than by taking the opinion of the Corporation, who were a representative body elected by the people. The Corporation of Limerick were unanimous in the opinion that the extra police in that city were quite unnecessary. There was no riot or crime of any kind in the city; and yet in the face of that fact, and of the protestations of the Corporation, the Government and the Lord Lieutenant and the officers of Dublin Castle, who knew nothing about the requirements of the district, sent a large force of police there, and when the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) came and asked for some explanation of the matter, or for a pledge that the Chief Secretary would inquire into it, what was the answer he got? The right hon. Gentleman, assuming, he supposed, that Irish Members were altogether ignorant of the people of Great Britain, in reply to the suggestion that the extra police should be withdrawn, gave a very elaborate and what would, no doubt under certain circumstances, be a highly interesting account of certain statistics in Great Britain. He gave some statistics relating to the town of Northampton; but there was no parallel between the police force in Northampton and in Limerick and other Irish cities. And the right hon. Gentleman, in support of his statement, pointed out that the police duty, and especially street duty, was performed more cheaply in Limerick than in Northampton. He would, however, venture to point out that in regard to street duty the police had little or nothing to do in Ireland. If the police in Ireland were only required to perform what was called street duty, one-twentieth of the number of police would be sufficient; but the police in Ireland were not used so much for keeping the peace, as for keeping the people down. If the right hon. Gentleman would not give a satisfactory answer to the case put by the hon. Member for Mallow, he would remind the Committee that, in the long run, that course might not prove well for the Government in Ireland, or for the conduct of proceedings in that House. Perhaps it was not very interesting for English Gentlemen to listen to Irish Members at all, imagining they were there only for the purpose of Obstruction; but they were there to express the wishes of the people who had sent them there. In such matters as this they would express the opinions of the people, if they had to keep the House up all night, and if they did not get a satisfactory answer from the right hon. Gentleman, it would not be so well for the proceedings of the House in the long run.

MR. BIGGAR said, the right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged that the Government which he represented had not done their duty with regard to the magistrates in the North of Ireland, and at the same time he had promised to reform his ways in future; but he would like also to have an assurance that the right hon. Gentleman would follow out his duty in another direction—namely, with regard to the packing of juries by the Solicitor General in Ireland. He wished to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman the importance of his obtaining honest juries for trying people on political or semi-political charges. Irish Members had constantly to draw attention to the fact of honest men being condemned for offences of which they were perfectly innocent. In some cases that went so far that those men were executed. This was an exceedingly awkward state of things, and he appealed to the Chief Secretary to say that in future he would give instructions to the Law Officers and those administering justice in Ireland that, so far as possible, they would get impartial juries for these trials, and not convict persons who were clearly innocent. With regard to Limerick, the state of things there was very peculiar. The Town Council, who were of mixed politics, were practically unanimous in favour of the withdrawal of these extra police, and the borough magistrates, who had been appointed by the Executive, and who had no special reason for being in accord with the people, were also in favour of the withdrawal of these police, and to the abandonment of this unfair claim upon the people of Limerick. If the Government did not consent to that, he would urge the Town Council to hold firmly to their position, as had been done by other Corporations, and to let the Government find their own remedy. The Government must know that this was a most unreasonable claim, for, otherwise, the Corporation and the magistrates would not have protested against it and refused to agree to it. Under these circumstances, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would do well to give a satisfactory answer to the point raised with regard to the payment of the police and the payment for what passed as the administration of justice in Ireland.

MR. LEAMY said, the Chief Secretary had told him the other day that the Assistant Commissioners had received documentary evidence. He wished to know whether he had received a copy of the evidence taken by the Local Government Board Inspector in the inquiry held in Waterford a fortnight ago; and, if so, whether he would have any objection to lay it on the Table, together with the Inspector's Report, and also the conclusion of the Assistant Commissioners, if they had yet arrived at a conclusion.

MR. SMALL observed, that the people of Ireland were just as willing to pay for policemen as the English people, and in regard to Northampton, the right hon. Gentleman had not shown that there was much difference between the cost of the police there and the cost in Limerick. In Limerick a population of 31,000 paid £2,000 for police; in Northampton a population of 31,000 paid £2,846. Besides, the people of Northampton had control over their police, who were their servants, while in Limerick the case was quite the opposite. When had there been a disturbance in Limerick? The right hon. Gentleman said the police were there because the place was not peaceable; but he had not shown that that was so. The reply of the Chief Secretary to his Question that afternoon was manifestly unsatisfactory, and he must now ask what evidence the Sub-Commissioners had upon which they fixed the judicial rent? The facts were these. The areas of these holdings were two acres; their valuation was £2, and the rent £4. The only evidence of their value put before the Sub-Commissioners was the evidence of one Land Commissioner on the part of the tenants, while the landlord presented no evidence. The Sub-Commissioner did not visit the land, or even looked at it from a distance; but, without taking proper evidence, he affirmed the old rent of £2 an acre, and doubled the valuation. It appeared to him very strange that, as the Chief Secretary had told him in reply, the Land Commissioners would not ask the Sub-Commissioners whether or not they had visited the lands they valued; for in many cases they knew that the Sub-Commissioners did not do so, or had not done so. If they affirmed rents in that way, what protection was there for tenants in the Land Court? The Land Court was of little use now, but it was likely to be of less use unless the Sub-Commissioners visited the land.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was glad that the Chief Secretary would turn his attention to any case brought under his notice as to extra police, and he wished to draw his attention particularly to the town of Galway, from which, he thought, the police might safely be removed. He had no objection to their being as many police in the town as the right hon. Gentleman liked; but he did object to having to pay for dummy police. He had mentioned a case last year, and the Chief Secretary had promised to inquire into it, but he had heard nothing more of it. In England, Members came to London, and found there all the head offices centred in London; and if they had a grievance, they could go to the head office and have it investigated. That gave them direct contact with the officials, but that was not the case in Ireland. They had no control over the office in Dublin. They had some slight control in the House of Commons; but they had no means of calling on the head officers in Dublin, and so were actually obliged to bring matters before the House of Commons. It was not that they were not often in Dublin, but it was no use going to the offices, for they were totally out of gear with the Constitution, as it was understood in England. They had not the means in Ireland of remedying these small grievances which the people of England had, and therefore they must bring them before the House, and so they must take up the time of the House. In Galway 100 extra men were put on, but 50, or less, of these were dummies. According to the Rules, a certain number of constables were allotted to each county, and for Galway there were 500. If extra police were put on the county, a certain number of the 500 were taken off and sent away—perhaps 60 or 70 of them—and returned as ill. Then 60 or 70 extra were put on and charged for as 100. These men were not really ill, but were sent away on leave and then charged on the county. The Chief Secretary was very fond of statistics, and he was usually accurate; but in this case he was not correct. His statement of £32,000 in English towns, as against £24,000 in Irish towns, was incorrect. As a rule the Government were fond of underpaying men in Ireland. The Constabulary got enormous pensions, because the Government wished to secure faithfulness in the force, and of course large pensions were an obvious way of securing that; but if the Local Authorities maintained their own police, and followed the example of the Government in paying less than they paid in the Civil Service, and for National School Teachers, there would not be much difference between the two totals. The Government said they paid for the Irish Constabulary; but in reality, as the Chief Secretary had shown, they gave only one-fourth. Of course there was a large extra sum in Ireland; but he looked upon that as a military item for the Constabulary. In regard to roads, the Government also said they paid for roads in Ireland; but they did not do so, because, while they paid for the Constabulary, the Local Authorities paid for the roads. They had voted a large sum for roads in England and Scotland; but they had voted nothing for Ireland. Then there was another item which had grown up in recent years, the conveyance of prisoners. In every way they had a wretched system of administering, and were heavily mulcted in these matters, and to his mind the Irish Members did not take half as much notice of these things as they ought to do. Ireland only got

£2,000,000 or £3,000,000 of the £9,000,000 voted in the ordinary expense of the country, and he thought the Irish Members should vote against Supply, until the Government showed some little care in attending to their wants in these matters. He wanted the Government to give Ireland a contribution, either to the rates, or an equivalent to what was given in England and Scotland. Also, in parts of the country which were undisturbed they wanted the Government to relieve them from the police tax. There was no use in keeping up a recollection of troubles, and he therefore would not keep the police in a district four or six months after a disturbance had taken place. These were very simple points, and, he believed, tolerably practicable ones. He had thought it right to make these observations that night, and he must protest against the contempt in which the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant dealt with matters of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman would not be able at all to look into Irish administration and Irish affairs, if he were not backed up by a large majority of the Irish Members—that was to say, if matters were not brought before his attention by those Members. The Chief Secretary for Ireland got no assistance from the Opposition, because those who supported him were snubbed, and the right hon. Gentleman was, therefore, in the hands of the Executive officials in Dublin, who spent money, and who made something out of the expenditure. That was the reason why the remonstrances of the Irish Members were treated with but very little attention.

MR. MOORE said, that no doubt it was the duty of the Government to look into this point as to the extra police, setting aside those argumentative and administrative questions concerning the alleged disorder of the districts. He (Mr. Moore) desired the right hon. Gentleman to look into the financial question. There was no doubt that the moment sanction was given for the employment of extra police in a certain district, that a draft was made which became a permanent extra police force. He had gone into this question for some years—he was not speaking on the point of order or of disorder—year after year on the only occasions when they had an opportunity of exercising anything like control over the taxation, he had objected to the extra police tax, because the men were not employed in their own county. What were the figures? He thought there were 60 extra police appointed in the County Tipperary. Year after year he had insisted on having a responsible officer come before the Grand Jury to make a statement in regard to the matter. They had been paying in Tipperary for 60 men, and they never had had that number by as many as three. It was very galling and irritating to have to pay this tax. The Committee was perfectly ignorant of the way in which these matters were managed. Hundreds of pounds were thrown away in the Irish counties under the Prisons Act. No one knew what was going to be done. That was very often the case amongst hon. Members when the House was passing a Public Act. They were often perfectly ignorant of the way in which they were piling up local taxation. They knew very well what they were doing when they were piling up Imperial taxation, because the expenditure in that case had to come before them in the Estimates; but that was not the case with local taxes. That House had no jurisdiction over local taxes, and, therefore, he thought this question of police was one that should be inquired into. It would be satisfactory to know whether the districts now paying for extra police had the full Parliamentary force.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he thought they had had enough talking that night, and he was glad to have heard such a large chorus of assent. If they had any more discussion they would have too much, and, therefore, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant an opportunity of answering the questions that had been put to him—his answers would involve a great deal more talk—he would move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

MR. COURTNEY said, that seeing they had discussed this Vote for so long —for seven or eight hours—he would put it to the Committee whether it would not be idle now to report Progress, thereby adjourning the debate. The Vote must be taken that night. [Colonel NOLAN:

Why must?] They must have the Vote before separation for the Whitsuntide Recess, inasmuch as the two months for which they had obtained money expired on the 31st of the present month. If they did not obtain this Vote, during the holidays they would have nothing to go on with. If the debate was postponed for another night, he was confident they would have just as much discussion as they would be likely to have to-night.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he was anxious to talk until the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant came in. The right hon. Gentleman was now in his place, and, that being so, he would proceed to put three or four subjects before him. He wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman how jaded hon. Members were, and he wished to mention several subjects, and to talk about each one. It would be a great advantage if they went to a Division now. He knew Irish Members were very few in the Committee; but naturally they thought that a Division on a Motion for reporting Progress would have its advantages, because the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who, in an earlier part of the evening, had answered some questions very satisfactorily, had failed to give an answer at all on certain financial subjects. He thought the Motion for Progress was very properly moved at a time when they were getting no answers from the Chief Secretary.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he could understand the hon. and gallant Gentleman, having listened to his speech, and was prepared to give an answer to him which he thought would be agreeable to him and to those who sat around him. The fact was, that he (Mr. Trevelyan) had not spoken at once out of respect to hon. Gentlemen who were getting up on the other side. He, for his own part, had been anxious to avoid rising more than once.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had effected the purpose he had in view in moving to report Progress. He had elicited that little word "must"—he had elicited that the Government must come down three or four times a-year and say—"We want the money and we 'must' have it." He wished the public to see that, and to ask themselves whether that was the proper way in which Supplies should be demanded from the House of Commons. He should be very much surprised if there was not a very great deal of dissatisfaction before long in the country at the way in which public money was voted in the small hours in the morning. Not wishing to put hon. Members to the trouble of walking the Lobbies, and not wishing to have that trouble himself, he should withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. O'BRIEN said, that before the Chief Secretary answered he should like to call his attention to another matter—with reference to the charges brought against the Government in connection with certain very horrible scandals in Dublin. He had intended to take an opportunity on that occasion to draw attention to the whole question; but the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had obtained in the ballot a much more favourable opportunity, at a time when the excuse that litigation was pending, he ventured to think, would be no longer available for the prevention of full discussion. He would not refer further to the case than to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, which he thought he was entitled to ask him, to give some guarantee or engagement that precautions would be taken that none of the persons who were inculpated in this matter were permitted to leave the country in the meantime. He thought he was also entitled to ask that any questions in reference to the pensions of any of these officials would be reserved until such time as the House had had an opportunity of discussing the Motion of the hon. Member for Queen's County.

MR. TREVELYAN remarked, that the hon. Member had said very little about the case itself, and he (Mr. Trevelyan) should follow his example, and say as little as he could with regard to it. In answer to the two questions that had been put to him, he had to observe that it was impossible for people to be arrested and kept in the country when no criminal charge had been preferred against them — ["Oh, oh!"] Well, no information of any sort or kind had been laid against these persons — ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members might dissent as much as they liked, but he was stating a simple fact. To prevent any person leaving the country before anyone had laid any information against them was a proposition which would not be for a moment entertained. As to the other point, the Government had called upon these persons to vindicate their character, and that was one of the matters which the hon. Member (Mr. O'Brien) intended to refer to when dealing with the conduct of the Government. No pensions would be allotted until this matter was decided. The hon. Member for Waterford City (Mr. Leamy) had asked him for the details of the evidence that was laid before the Prisons Commission. He should be inclined to ask the hon. Member to wait and see how soon the Report of the Commission would be in coming out. He should presume the evidence the hon. Member asked for would be printed in the Appendix to the Report of the Commission; but, at any rate, they should wait and see whether or not that was the case. As to the question the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) had asked him earlier in the evening in reference to a decision in the Land Commission Court, he had given him the answer which had been placed in his hands by the Land Commissioners, and he must say to his mind that answer was a very reasonable one. The hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw) also thought it a reasonable one that he had given to the hon. and gallant Member for Dorset (Colonel Digby) about five minutes before. The hon. Member for Dorset had asked for certain decisions, and he (Mr. Trevelyan) had given the answer and some explanation of a pointed nature on his own prompting. The fact was they could not force the Land Commission to give details to the House of Commons as to the processes of their judicial inquiry. The Commissioners very rightly stated that they were not willing to give such details, and that if any irregularities had taken place during an inquiry before them they could be made the subject of appeal. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had spoken on certain financial questions with which he was familiar, and had declared that the Chief Secretary, partly from being overworked and partly from being ill-advised, was not cognizant of the facts which were exercising the minds of the Irish Members. Well, he (Mr. Trevelyan) must say that the questions relating to the disposition of the police force and the proportion of the expenses contributed by the county at a time when they were not getting the benefit of its services, were the first questions which were presented to any Chief Secretary, and of which he heard more than he did of any other class of questions during the time he held Office. Of that subject he had spoken very frequently in the House. He had referred to casualties which must occur in every force, and the proportion of men who were recruits and who were under training. The complete force, which was nearly 10,000 men actually on duty in the streets and lanes, lost 10 per cent of its men who had to be formed by the commands amongst whom the force was allotted. The matter was one which had long been in dispute between the Executive Government and the Irish Members. The hon. Member had then gone on to say there was another question which had escaped the notice of the Irish Government, and in which Ireland was put at great disadvantge as compared to England; and he had said at the time the Prisons Bill was being passed these differences had escaped the House. He (Mr. Trevelyan) would not enter very deeply into this subject. The hon. Member was right in thinking it was a matter of inadvertence; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) was rather unwilling to dwell upon this case, because the controversy on this point had now been settled, and settled in a manner not altogether in accordance with what was the intention of Parliament. It had been settled in the interest of the localities and against the interest of the Exchequer. The Irish Government and the Treasury had come to the conclusion that in the matter of the conveyance of prisoners Ireland and England should be placed on the same footing. He proposed to introduce a short Bill on this subject—either he would or his hon. Friend (Mr. Courtney) who sat near him; and he had every reason to believe that it would be passed without opposition in the House. He earnestly hoped that the Committee would now be allowed to take the Vote.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered him upon the question of the payment for roads.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury would answer that; but he trusted that after having received the assurance which he had just made, and which was satisfactory at least in one respect, that hon. Members would now allow the Vote to be taken.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that subventions in aid of turnpike roads was a provisional arrangement assented to most reluctantly two years ago by the Prime Minister in anticipation of the introduction of the County Government Bill. When that Bill was brought in and local finances were properly arranged, the subventions would be withdrawn.

Mr. GRAY said, the announcement which the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General made the other day, that he did not contemplate sending the Irish mail train under the new arrangement earlier in the evening from Euston, had caused a considerable amount of disappointment to all those who had given attention to the subject, which was really one of great importance. Within 24 or 26 hours of that announcement a Memorial was presented to the right hon. Gentleman, signed by 60 Irish Members—or all those in London, except two or three—asking that the decision might be reconsidered. He (Mr. Gray) understood that the right hon. Gentleman's answer was not a favourable one, and that he did not see his way to complying with their request. It was quite natural that those skilled officials and others to whom the matter was referred should recommend, when the case was put before them, that everything should be left as it was rather than that a new arrangement, involving a considerable amount of trouble upon them, should be undertaken. The Irish Members and the Irish Chambers of Commerce, who had studied the question, considered, and he (Mr. Gray) considered, with many others, that with a thoroughly efficient mail service from London to Dublin, very nearly, if not quite, two hours could be saved on the journey, whereas only something like three quarters of an hour had been saved. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not delay bringing the new system into operation until the Irish Members had had some opportunity of considering it, and the Postmaster General had said that he did not see his way to that delay, for the reason that it would interfere with the prompt introduction of the new service which he was anxious to establish about the 1st of July. One would have imagined from that that something would be gained from the introduction of the new service; but he (Mr. Gray) ventured to express the opinion that nothing whatever would be gained by it. A certain amount of inconvenience would be suffered by passengers who would be landed in Dublin at an earlier and colder hour than at present. The mail service would not be assisted in the slightest degree. There was nothing to be gained by accelerating the service between London and Dublin alone, as that service was already sufficiently rapid. The mails were posted after business hours in the evening in London, and delivered before business hours in the morning in Dublin, and whether they could be delivered at 6, or 7, or half-past 7, or 8, could make a difference to hardly a single individual. The right hon. Gentleman as yet had not even, so far as he (Mr. Gray) could understand, opened negotiations for the really important portion of the business—that was to say, the acceleration of the mails out from Dublin. He (Mr. Gray) was afraid it was hopeless to ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider his determination as to the starting of the Irish mail from Euston. In connection with the service to Cork and Limerick, which were, perhaps, the two most important services, one or two hours acceleration were of no use. What the right hon. Gentleman should give, if he wanted to confer any real advantage whatsoever in the principal Provincial cities, was an acceleration so complete as to enable business men in those towns to answer their letters to London and England by the evening mail leaving the town on the same day on which they had received the letters to which their communications were the replies. At present, letters were received from England in Cork at 2 o'clock, and he believed letters would have to leave Cork at 1, or some such hour, at any rate, some time before the arrival of the English letters, for them to get sent away that day. The giving of an hour or two hours under such circumstances was of no use whatever. The mail train should arrive in Cork from Dublin two hours or two and a-half hours before the corresponding mail left Cork for Dublin.

Unless that were settled, and merchants and business men had an opportunity of replying to the letters they received the same day, the right hon. Gentleman might save himself the trouble of interfering with the Irish mail arrangements. He was astonished to find that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken into consideration the desirability of despatching a mail from Dublin in the evenings at a later hour than at present. If an acceleration of three quarters of an hour could be given between London and Dublin, an acceleration of a corresponding period should be given between Dublin and London. He should have imagined that the right hon. Gentleman, when arranging the service from London to Dublin, would also have arranged the service from Dublin to London, and would not have lost sight of that important element in the solution of the problem of how to satisfy the inhabitants of the Provincial towns in Ireland by enabling them to save 24 hours in their correspondence. It must be remembered that there was only one mail service to all the great towns in the morning, and that the whole passenger service depended on the mail trains. That was not the case in England. In Ireland they were dependent altogether for their rapid travelling on the arrangements that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General might make, and they would be dependent upon them for 10 years to come. He pressed these matters to the right hon. Gentleman's attention, because, though uniformity might be a very nice thing in the Post Office, there was something far more important for the travelling public of Ireland. He and the other Irish Members desired to get the best possible service they could, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to communicate on the subject with those who were interested in the matter in Ireland. ["Divide!"] He (Mr. Gray) was aware this was not a matter of importance to English Members; but it was one of great importance to the constituency he (Mr. Gray) represented (Carlow County), and, therefore, he intended to discuss it. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to communicating his plan to those directly interested before he decided the matter. There was always a great deal of mystery enshrouding Post Office contracts, and he (Mr. Gray) never for the life of him could understand why that was. He never could understand why, when tenders had been submitted, they could not be published before they were accepted or rejected; and in the same way, when the Department had arrived at a plan for the revision of the mail service, he did not know why it could not be submitted to those interested before it was decided upon. The mere laying of a contract for 40 days on the Table really meant nothing at all. He would invite the right hon. Gentleman to explain why he should not consult Chambers of Commerce in Ireland on a subject which so directly concerned them before he came to a final decision, which would bind not only the present, but would bind succeeding Governments for 10 years to come, and bind the whole of Ireland, and, in fact, the whole of the interests of the country. He did not suggest that the Chambers of Commerce should have power, or control, or veto in the matter; but he thought, at least, their opinion should be taken on the question they had studied very minutely, and in which they were profoundly interested. It should be in the power of those who were interested to make reasonable suggestions which might be thrown out, but which at times, if adopted, might be found to give a largely improved system, and do what the right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, desired to do—namely, to give the best possible mail service which was practicable, under the circumstances, to the country.

Mr. DEASY said, that, before the right hon. Gentleman answered, he should like to call his attention to the case of Cork.

Mr. FAWCETT: I am going to refer to that. I will, first of all, make a short statement in reply to the hon. Member for Carlow, who has put questions with regard to the time the Irish mails should leave, and acceleration to Cork and other towns. He says I ought to have consulted Irish Members and Irish Chambers of Commerce. Well, that is what I did. I have repeatedly done so, and it is what I am always anxious to do. I am sure there is an almost unanimous wish that the Irish mail should leave Euston earlier than it does; and I have acted throughout on the assumption that this is the wish of Irish Members, and the Irish people who take an interest in the subject, and I have endeavoured to effect that object. But it is entirely a question of the intricacies of Post Office administration. The train must meet cross-country trains that bring letters from various towns to catch the mail train. Even starting the train at the same time, and accelerating it to the Midland towns, even that, in some cases, will cause considerable difficulty, because at such towns as Nottingham, for instance, Irish letters will have to be posted earlier than at the present time. This is not the only difficulty, as I have stated before. If the train leaves at 8, instead of half-past, as I have tried to arrange, it would be necessary that the Irish letters with the late fee should be posted earlier in London. Not only so, but through Dublin the whole of the American correspondence passes; therefore, if we start at 8 o'clock we introduce an anomaly, two kinds of late fee postings, which will be attended with serious inconvenience. Now, hon. Members say this acceleration of half an hour is of no use in Ireland.

Mr. GRAY: Of no use to the mails to Dublin.

Mr. FAWCETT: I know it will be of no use to Dublin, but it is essential, as I will show, to effect the acceleration —so much desired—to Cork, and I take that as a typical instance. We shall get an acceleration of half an hour; and when the new steamers are ready for use—and under the contract they must be ready next year—another quarter of an hour will be gained, an aggregate acceleration of three quarters of an hour. When this comes into operation it will be very possible to have a most important acceleration to Cork. The mail now leaves Dublin at 9, and arrives at Cork at 2, while the mail leaves Cork at half-past 12, an hour and a-half before the mail arrives, so that quick replies to letters are hopeless. Now when the whole acceleration comes into operation, I hope it will be possible for the mail train to leave Dublin for Cork at a quarter before 8, and arrive in Cork at 12, and instead of leaving at half-past 12 will leave Cork for Dublin at 2 or shortly before, thus gaining the time hon. Members so much desire. I did not like to interrupt the hon. Member while he was speaking; but I could have told him this was the direction in which we are working at the present time. I have made proposals to the Railway Companies, and of course much will depend on terms; but this has been my object—my chief object—throughout, to gain the very two hours hon. Members think so important. If this acceleration can be obtained it will be of great importance to the South of Ireland and to the public generally; because it will to this extent accelerate the American mails, and render it unnecessary for steamers to wait so long at Queenstown by two hours as they do now. I hope Irish Members and the Committee will think I have said enough to convince them that I am as anxious as hon. Members are to do everything possible to improve the Irish mail service.

Mr. GRAY said, after this satisfactory statement he no longer felt regret that he had delayed the Committee. It was a satisfaction to have elicited such an explanation. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate their anxiety, as he had made no such public statement until now, and would believe that it was with no desire to harrass him with questions that the subject had so often been brought forward.

Mr. SEXTON trusted the Postmaster General would see his way to carry out an equally effective acceleration to the West of Ireland, where the mail service was even worse than in the South.

Mr. FAWCETT: I cannot give any promise yet. I take Cork in hand first of all. No doubt the hon. Member refers to Sligo. An acceleration there presents greater difficulty, and the correspondence to be dealt with is much less, but I will see what can be done. The Cork acceleration is, to my mind, of the most pressing importance; but I will not lose sight of other matters. I am going to consider the whole subject of Irish mails; and I hope hon. Members will not now press me as to one district after another. I take Cork in hand at once as being in the worst condition, and as being of most importance in connection with the American mails.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

SUMMARY JURISDICTION OVER CHILDREN (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 75.]

(*Mr. Gibson, Sir Richard Wallace, Mr. Blake, Mr. Corry.*)

THIRD READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd April], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made under "The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867," relating to the parish of Stevenston and Saltcoats, *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 221.]

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made under "The Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement (Scotland) Acts, 1875 and 1880," relating to the Improvement of the Burgh of Aberdeen, *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 222.]

RAILWAY REGULATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Bill to amend the Regulation of Railways Acts; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL, and Mr. JOHN HOLMS.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 225.]

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 23rd May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) * (104); Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (105).

Committee—Report—Water Provisional Orders * (92); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) * (84); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (Alton-Barnes, &c.) * (85); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) (Bovey-Tracey, &c.) * (86); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) (Ashill, &c.) * (87); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) (Acton, &c.) * (88); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) (Ashen, &c.) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) (Abberley, &c.) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) (Abergwilly, &c.) * (91); Colonial Prisoners Removal * (44).

Report—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (The Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * (64); Criminal Law Amendment (99-107); Greek Marriages * (96).

Third Reading—Gas Provisional Orders * (81); Land Drainage Provisional Orders * (82); Marriages Legalization (76); Public Libraries Acts Amendment * (95), and *passed.*

PARLIAMENT—SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.—OBSERVATION.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he would announce to their Lordships that the present intention of the Government was to adjourn for the Whitsuntide Holidays on Tuesday next, and to re-assemble on Monday, the 16th June. It was not possible, however, to make any definite arrangement yet, as the exigencies of Public Business, in connection with the passing of a Money Bill, might require their Lordships to re-assemble at an earlier date.

SCOTLAND—HARBOURS OF REFUGE ON THE NORTH EAST COAST—REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SUB-COMMITTEE.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I wish to ask Her Majesty's Government a Question, of which I have given private Notice. It is to ask, If the Special Sub-Committee appointed to make inquiries as to the best position for a Scottish harbour of refuge have yet made their Report; whether the Committee on Convict Labour have made any recommendation on the subject; and when the place selected by the Secretary of State will be announced to Parliament?

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE: In reply to the noble Earl, I have to state that the Special Sub-Committee appointed to report on this question have, I believe, agreed upon their Report. I believe that that Report is now being printed for the consideration of the General Committee, and I have every reason to hope that it will not be long before it will be in the hands of the Secretary of State.

SETTLEMENT AND REMOVAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 97.)

(*The Earl of Belmore.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF BELMORE, whose name stood on the Paper to move the second reading, said he would ask leave to postpone it till after the Holidays. The intention of the Bill—not very obvious on the face of it—was to prevent the removal of a large number of poor persons back to Ireland from the North of England and Scotland, as the present system was attended with very great inconveniences. He had only taken charge of the Bill on behalf of a noble Friend (Viscount Lifford); and since he had come down to the House to-day he had received a telegram from his noble Friend, saying that he had just heard the Bill was to be opposed, and asking him to postpone it.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON said, he thought his noble Friend (the Earl of Belmore) had exercised a wise discretion in asking their Lordships to postpone the second reading; and he would have acted still more wisely if he had postponed it for six months, as many of its provisions were objectionable. The present law was that a residence of five years gave a settlement; but the Bill contained a provision which would make one year's residence sufficient to give a settlement, and that would be an alteration affecting England and Scotland most prejudicially. He thought that was a change in the existing law which would require very grave consideration on the part of their Lordships before it could be adopted.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he could not accept the description given by the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) as the unanimous description of their Lordships. He thought that the Bill invited more favourable consideration.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, that the Bill was inconsistent in that it made one year's residence in England and Scotland sufficient to acquire a settlement; but the Bill did not apply to Ireland, so that natives of England and Scotland who went to Ireland would not acquire a settlement there in one year.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, that no one of the class referred to would go to Ireland to reside there, or obtain a settlement who could possibly help it.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, there was no question as to Ireland being excluded from the operations of the Bill. In that country relief could be obtained anywhere without acquiring a settlement, for a poor person was entitled to, and got it, wherever he might be.

Order *discharged.*

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 99.) REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to order).

Clause 3 (Procuring defilement of woman by fraud).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 2, line 3, after ("unlawful") insert ("carnal"); line 13, after ("unlawful") insert ("carnal"), and after ("connection") insert ("either within or without the Queen's dominions with any man"); and in line 20, after ("labour") insert as a separate paragraph:—

> "Every misdemeanour under sub-section four of this section shall, in England and Ireland, be deemed to be an offence within and subject to the provisions of the Act of the session of the twenty-second and twenty-third years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter seventeen, intituled 'An Act to prevent vexatious indictments for certain misdemeanours.'"

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Defilement of girl between twelve and sixteen years of age).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN proposed to amend the clause by substituting 14 for 16 as the age at which consent could be given. Formerly, the age was 12; but a Bill was brought into the other House in 1873 by Mr. Charley to raise it to 14. That change, however, was violently resisted; it was objected to by Members of Mr. Gladstone's Government, and it was opposed by Sir John Coleridge, who said that the law of all European nations fixed the age of a woman at 12, and that of a man at 14; and he could not consent to create a criminal offence in the case of consent by a girl over 12. The noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook), then Mr. Gathorne Hardy, also expressed himself in favour of the age of 12 as that at which there should be no power of consent, though he admitted that there might be cases of hardship in which it would be desirable to have a higher age. That Bill came to nothing; but in 1875 Mr. Charley brought in another Bill with the same object, when, by a compromise, and partly at the suggestion of the Recorder, Mr. Russell Gurney, the age of 13 was inserted; and in their Lordships' House Lord Lyttelton proposed 14; but the compromise of 13 was adhered to. Now it was proposed to jump to 16; but it was clear that the Government were not fully satisfied of the reasonableness of the proposal, because they had hedged it with two safeguards—one that the Act should not apply where the offender was shown not to have known the age of the girl, and the other requiring the consent of the Public Prosecutor before proceedings could be taken. Their Lordships would be surprised at the number of marriages which took place at 15 and 16, although in many cases the age was not ascertained, as the word "minor" was simply inserted in the certificate. But, according to the registers, there were, in 1878, 21 girls married at 15, and 291 at 16; in 1879, the numbers were, respectively, 32 and 253; in 1880, 28 and 272; in 1881, 20 and 288; and, in 1822, 29 and 299, and in each year one girl was actually married at 14. And yet it was now proposed to make it a misdemeanour to have connection with those mobile girls with their own consent, and even on their own solicitation. He would like to know whether the Government had consulted the Common Law Judges? Every Judge to whom he (the Earl of Milltown) had spoken on the subject had expressed himself as very dissatisfied with the Bill. Their Lordships' House had won a reputation for a sobriety of judgment which frequently corrected the impetuous and premature decision of the other House; and he trusted they would not in that Bill do anything to impair that reputation, and cause more to look to the Lower House to correct the ill-advised and rash legislation of the Upper.

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, line 43, to leave out ("sixteen") and insert ("fourteen.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

LORD MOUNT TEMPLE said, that more knowledge of the sad circumstances that this Bill dealt with was now known; and if the learned persons to whom the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Milltown) had referred had had before them the evidence which was given before the Committee they would have formed different opinions. Evidence of various kinds had been given before the Committee, and it was not without grave consideration that the age had been fixed at 16. It was shown that offences were committed on girls at lower and lower ages, and they required more protection against the snares and traps laid for them by a large class of degraded men and their female accomplices. The protection of the Bill against the accusation of having given consent to a seducer was fixed at the age when girlhood passed into womanhood; but a girl under 14 was a child, and ought not to to be made responsible for the act that degraded and ruined her.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, that noble Lords did not perceive how illogical and inconsistent it was to raise the age and increase the penalties in reference to an older girl, at the same time refusing corporal punishment in the case of brutal violence to a child of tender years, while the Legislature allowed the infliction of corporal punishment for violence towards officials of a gaol; therefore, in his opinion, the Bill was comparatively useless, because it failed to award a sufficiently stringent punishment for the crime most needed to be dealt with under the Bill—namely, the violation of an innocent child under 12 years of age.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he would call their Lordships' attention to the fact that the age of 16 was in the Bill when it passed last year; and for that reason he could not ask the House now to accept the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he was unable to support his noble Friend's (the Earl of Milltown's) Amendment. When one age was put against another, it was difficult to bring forward the particular reasons which had induced the Select Committee to come to a decision. The Committee considered the matter with extreme anxiety, and resolved that the limit of 16 years should be adopted. He could not be a party to departing from that limit. It was itself rather in the nature of a compromise among the Members of the Committee. On the whole, he did not believe there would be any danger in accepting this age; and he doubted the power of that House, sitting as a Whole House, to determine such a matter as this in a satisfactory manner. If they wanted to re-open the decision of the Committee, they ought to appoint another Committee.

Lord BRAMWELL, in supporting the Amendment, said, he did so because he thought it would be difficult to get a jury to convict at the age stated in the Bill, when they could find no more fault with the man than they could with the woman or girl.

The Earl of MILLTOWN protested against subjecting young men who might be led away by immoral girls under 16 to the penalties of the Criminal Law.

On Question, "That the word ('sixteen') stand part of the Clause?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 102; Not-Contents 29: Majority 73.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Bedford, D.
Devonshire, D.
Somerset, D.

Bristol, M.
Hertford, M.
Northampton, M.
Salisbury, M.

Belmore, E.
Camperdown, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Cowper, E.
Derby, E.
Ducie, E.
Fortescue, E.
Granville, E.
Lathom, E.
Leven and Melville, E.
Lovelace, E.
Lucan, E.
Morley, E. [*Teller.*]
Northbrook, E.
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Redesdale, E.
Rosse, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Stanhope, E.
Sydney, E.

Canterbury, V.
Clancarty, V. (*E. Clancarty.*)
Eversley, V.
Exmouth, V.
Hardinge, V.
Hawarden, V.
Powerscourt, V.
Sherbrooke, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
Carlisle, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
Liverpool, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Albans, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Ashford, L. (*V. Bury.*)
Bagot, L.
Barrogill, L. (*E. Caithness.*)
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*) [*Teller.*]
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Camoys, L.
Carew, L.
Carlingford, L.
Carrington, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Churchill, L.
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Colchester, L.
Cottesloe, L.
Crewe, L.
Denman, L.
Digby, L.
Dinevor, L.
Egerton, L.
Gage, L. (*V. Gage.*)
Hammond, L.
Hare, L. (*E. Listowel.*)
Harlech, L.
Hatherton, L.
Hawke, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kenmare, L. (*E. Kenmare.*)
Lamington, L.
Lawrence, L.
Lovat, L.
Meldrum, L. (*M. Huntly.*)
Moore, L. (*M. Drogheda.*)
Mount-Temple, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Poltimore, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L.
Ross, L. (*E. Glasgow.*)
Sandhurst, L.
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Stratheden and Campbell, L.
Sudeley, L.
Talbot de Malahide, L.
Thurlow, L.
Waveney, L.
Winmarleigh, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Rutland, D.
Sutherland, D.

Ashburnham, E.
Cadogan, E.
Coventry, E.
Milltown, E. [*Teller.*]
Strange, E. (*D. Athole.*)

Brabourne, L.
Bramwell, L.
Cloncurry, L.
Dorchester, L.
Ellenborough, L.
FitzGerald, L.
Forbes, L.
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Houghton, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Leconfield, L. [*Teller.*]
North, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Saltoun, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Teynham, L.
Ventry, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)

Amendment *disagreed to.*

The Earl of DALHOUSIE moved to amend the clause by inserting after the word "labour," in line 20, words bringing every misdemeanour under Sub-section 4 within the Vexatious Indictments Act.

Amendment *moved*, in page 3, leave out lines 15 to 20, inclusive, and insert—

("Every misdemeanour under this section shall, in England and Ireland, be deemed to be an offence within and subject to the provisions of the Act of the session of the twenty-second and twenty-third years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter seventeen, intituled

'An Act to prevent vexatious indictments for certain misdemeanours.' ")—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he was afraid that the Amendment would not prevent chantage, or the extortion of hush money.

Lord ABERDARE said, he would remind the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) that the clause was intended for the protection of very young girls.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Amendment of 2 & 3 Vict. c. 47, s. 54, and 10 & 11 Vict. c. 89, s. 28, as to prostitutes).

The Earl of MILLTOWN moved to omit the clause, which provided for the arrest by the police of persons soliciting without any complaint of annoyance from the passengers, on the ground that it placed a most injudicious power in the hands of the police. How could they tell that soliciting had taken place unless complaint was made to them; and how could it be guaranteed that they would not arrest respectable women to whom loose men had made insulting overtures? Moreover, there were among the police black sheep who would abuse this power and levy black mail to any extent. It would, moreover, create a bad feeling between the police and the public, such as now existed in Paris, where the police possessed this arbitrary power. Young men would not stand by and see women dragged off to prison who had committed no apparent offence, and street rioting would be the result. The present law went quite as far as it was safe to go; and if the public did not take the trouble to make a complaint, they had only themselves to blame for any annoyance they suffered.

Moved, To leave out Clause 10.—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

The Earl of DALHOUSIE, in opposing the Motion, said, he maintained that the clause did not confer the dangerous powers mentioned by the noble Earl. He would point out to their Lordships that it could not apply to respectable women, as it distinctly specified "common prostitutes or night-walkers." Moreover, it was based on the recommendations of the Committee, and he must ask the House to agree to it.

On Question, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill?"

Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 59; Not-Contents 56: Majority 3.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Devonshire, D.

Bristol, M.
Northampton, M.

Belmore, E.
Camperdown, E.
Cowper, E.
Derby, E.
Ducie, E.
Kimberley, E.
Leven and Melville, E.
Morley, E.
Northbrook, E.
Redesdale, E.
Sydney, E.

Sherbrooke, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
Carlisle, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
Liverpool, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Aberdare, L.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*) [*Teller.*]
Breadalbane, L. (*E. Breadalbane.*)
Carlingford, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Churchill, L.
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Crewe, L.
Denman, L.
Granard, L. (*E. Granard.*)
Hammond, L.
Hare, L. (*E. Listowel.*)
Hawke, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kenmare, L. (*E. Kenmare.*)
Lovat, L.
Mount-Temple, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L.
Ross, L. (*E. Glasgow.*)
Sandhurst, L.
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Sudeley, L.
Thurlow, L. [*Teller.*]
Waveney, L.
Winmarleigh, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Somerset, D.

Hertford, M.
Salisbury, M.

Ashburnham, E.
Cadogan, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Coventry, E.
Fortescue, E.
Lathom, E.
Lovelace, E.
Lucan, E.
Milltown, E. [*Teller.*]
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Rosse, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Stanhope, E.

Canterbury, V.
Clancarty, V. (*E. Clancarty.*)
Hardinge, V.
Hawarden, V.
Powerscourt, V.

Bagot, L.
Brabourne, L.
Bramwell, L.
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Cloncurry, L.
Colchester, L.
de Ros, L.
Digby, L.
Dinevor, L.
Dorchester, L.
Ellenborough, L.
FitzGerald, L,

Forbes, L.
Harlech, L.
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Houghton, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lamington, L.
Lawrence, L.
Leconfield, L. [*Teller.*]
Moore, L. (*M. Drogheda.*)
North, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Poltimore, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Talbot de Malahide, L.
Teynham, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Summary proceedings against brothel keeper, &c.)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in moving the omission of the clause, which gave power to the police to enter without warrant or complaint a house of ill fame and to prosecute the keeper of such house, said, the question was fully debated last year, and their Lordships would stultify themselves if they now passed what they then strongly objected to. There was no evidence whatever that the present law was insufficient. When those houses constituted a nuisance they could be, and in fact were, successfully prosecuted and put an end to.

Moved, To leave out Clause 12.—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in opposing the Motion, said, the retention of the clause in the Bill was necessary on the ground that the present law was inoperative on account of the unwillingness of people generally to enforce it. The clause did nothing more than give a power of summary procedure, with some enlargement of definition.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he believed some power was required beyond that of the present law, for there was hardly a local Bill came before him, by which the local authorities did not seek to obtain larger powers of the kind conferred by this clause. He always said it was a matter to be dealt with by the general law, and not by the local law.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, that the local authorities referred to by the noble Earl sought regulation rather than suppression. An officer of the Army had remarked to him that the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act had resulted in about half the Army being in hospital; and under this Bill, if the clause were allowed to pass, the other half would soon be in prison.

On Question, "That Clause 12 stand part of the Bill?"

Their Lordships *divided* :— Contents 72; Not-Contents 37 : Majority 35.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Archp.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Devonshire, D.

Bristol, M.

Belmore, E.
Camperdown, E.
Derby, E.
Ducie, E.
Granville, E.
Kimberley, E.
Leven and Melville, E.
Morley, E.
Northbrook, E.
Redesdale, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Sydney, E.

Canterbury, V.
Eversley, V.
Sherbrooke, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
Carlisle, L. Bp.
Durham, L. Bp.
Exeter, L. Bp.
Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
Liverpool, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
St. David's, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Aberdare, L.
Bagot, L.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*) [*Teller.*]
Bramwell, L.
Breadalbane, L. (*E. Breadalbane.*)
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Carlingford, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Cottesloe, L.
Crewe, L.
Denman, L.
Egerton, L.
Ellenborough, L.
FitzGerald, L.
Forbes, L.
Granard, L. (*E. Granard.*)
Hammond, L.
Howth, L. (*E. Howth.*)
Kenmare, L. (*E. Kenmare.*)
Lawrence, L.
Lovat, L.
Mount-Temple, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Poltimore, L.
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L.
Ross, L. (*E. Glasgow.*)
Sandhurst, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Strafford, L. (*V. Enfield.*)
Stratheden and Campbell, L.
Sudeley, L.
Thurlow, L. [*Teller.*]
Ventry, L.
Waveney, L.
Winmarleigh, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Hertford, M.
Salisbury, M.

Ashburnham, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Fortescue, E.
Lathom, E.
Lovelace, E.
Lucan, E.
Milltown, E. [*Teller.*]
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Stanhope, E.

Clancarty, V. (*E. Clancarty.*)

Hardinge, V.
Hawarden, V.
Powerscourt, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Brabourne, L.
Cloncurry, L.
Colchester, L.
Digby, L.
Dinevor, L.
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Houghton, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lamington, L.
Leconfield, L.
Moore, L. (*M. Drogheda.*)
North, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*) [*Teller.*]
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Talbot de Malahide, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Future tenancies determinable for keeping brothels).

Amendments made, in page 7, line 4, by leaving out ("and his") and inserting ("his executors, administrators, and"); and in lines 7 and 8, by leaving out ("and all persons claiming any estate or interest through or under him") and inserting ("his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns.")

LORD BRAMWELL moved the insertion of an Amendment directed against making a lessee of a valuable property lose his lease simply because some subsequent assignee or tenant had used the house for disorderly purposes.

Amendment *moved,* in page 7, line 12, leave out after ("building") to ("require") in line 15, and insert—

"Provided, that where any other house or premises is or are included in the same lease, agreement for a lease, or other contract of tenancy, with the house or building so used as aforesaid, and any person other than the person or persons so using such house or building is interested therein as lessee, tenant, or occupier, the landlord shall not have power by virtue of this Act to determine or put an end to the said lease, agreement, or contract of tenancy, so far as relates to such other house, or premises, or the estate, term, or interest of any person so interested therein as aforesaid, but the same shall remain in full force as if the house or building so used as a brothel as aforesaid had not been included in the said lease, agreement for a lease, or contract of tenancy; and in the event of the house or building so used as aforesaid being subject to an undivided rent in common with such other house or premises, the rents shall be apportioned as in case of eviction of part of the premises let, and all covenants and conditions contained in such lease, agreement for a lease, or contract of tenancy shall remain and be applicable to such other house or premises as aforesaid."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, there was no greater hardship involved in the clause than was involved already in many leases where particular trades or occupations were forbidden under pain of forfeiture.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that in the cases referred to by the noble and learned Earl equitable relief was afforded. He did not know whether it was so in this case; but if not the offender ought to be made liable in damages to the original lessee. The clause itself was bad in principle, as if a sub-lessee committed an offence under it not only his lease, but all other leases prior to his, would be forfeited.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, the clause was a very beneficial one for the ground landlord. But it was a strong thing that the landlord who had had a house built for him, and done nothing to deserve such good fortune, should be able to take possession of the house of his lessee because some person over whom the lessee had no control had let, it might be one room, for immoral purposes.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was willing to accept the Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR repeated that this was nothing more than the restrictive covenants to be found in most leases, and he did not see that any injustice would be done.

LORD BRAMWELL pointed out that in the cases referred to by the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack, the lessee had the covenant clearly expressed before him, so that he knew his liabilities, and also that it was by agreement between him and the lessor; while by the clause proposed they were compelled to have the conditions in the lease.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he would suggest that the Amendment should be inserted, and then, after the third reading, the Government would consider whether any further modifications could be made. Of course, the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) and the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) could, if they pleased, move the rejection of the clause on the third reading.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Further Amendments made, in page 7, line 32, by inserting after ("occupier") ("not being the owner);" and in line 21, leaving out all after ("shall") and inserting—

("Operate in law as an absolute forfeiture and determination, so far as respects such premises, of any lease, agreement for a lease, or other contract of tenancy whereby such premises are held by him without any other action, suit, or proceeding at law for that purpose.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 107.)

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the view of Her Majesty's Government that any news has been received direct from General Gordon since the 8th or 9th of April, and if there has been no more recent news directly from him; whether Her Majesty's Government are still prepared to decline making any public announcement as to whether it is their intention to send an expeditionary force for his rescue as well as for the relief of the beleaguered garrisons of the Upper Nile, said, that, from his Memorandum of the 22nd of January, General Gordon had evidently expected to be forced to military measures, and that preparation ought to have been made at home for the emergency that had arisen. He thought the time had arrived when the Government could no longer content themselves with verbal professions of a general nature as to their responsibility for the life of General Gordon. On the 28th of April he asked the noble Earl a Question as to the correctness of a telegram dated the 26th April, in reference to a proposal to send an expedition to Berber, and its being stated that it would be impossible for such an expedition to start for four months. He, by request of the noble Earl, postponed his Question for a day; and on the next day—the 29th of April—the noble Earl said that the Papers he had just laid on the Table would show what had been done on the subject. For some reasons, those Papers were not distributed till the 3rd of May, on which day he (the Earl of Galloway) came down to the House to give Notice of some Resolutions based upon matter contained in those Papers for the 8th of May; but, acting on advice, he, for two reasons—first, that there had been a Division on an analogous subject earlier in the Session in that House; and, secondly, because Notice of a Motion had just been given in the other House of a similar character—did not bring his Resolutions forward. His proposed Resolutions were, in effect, that the Papers showed that the several massacres which had been perpetrated in Egypt were the direct result of the absence of any well-defined or continuous policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government; that, in consequence, the honour of the nation rendered it incumbent upon Parliament to insist upon measures being taken to establish order in the Soudan, and to deliver General Gordon — that, with this object in view, it was essential to make an announcement that a military expedition would be sent to Berber and Khartoum—and that, in the interests of humanity alone, an assurance should be obtained from the Government that a military occupation should continue until a stable form of government had been established on a permanent footing. Those Resolutions would show the drift of his present Question. He contended that it was evident from the very first that General Gordon contemplated the possibility of having to fight, although, of course, his mission was intended to be a pacific one; and, secondly, that his policy of handing the country generally back to the old families of the local Sultans never, in his opinion, could apply to Dongola, Khartoum, or Kassala, more especially the latter two places, as they had but recently sprung up, in regard to which he had expressly stated in his Memorandum that no decision should be arrived at as to the mode in which they were to be dealt with until their inhabitants had made known their wishes. It was quite evident, from the terms of his Memorandum, that General Gordon was aware that he could not rescue the garrisons without the aid of troops; and if Her Majesty's Government had made up their minds definitely not to send him such aid, they should have informed him of the fact before he left Cairo. He did not want to press the Government to state the exact moment or the exact route at which or by which aid would be sent to General Gordon; but he did press them to state distinctly that aid would be sent to the rescue of that gallant officer and of the beleaguered garrisons. Such an announcement of their intentions would spread like wildfire through Egypt and the Soudan. He could not disguise from himself, however, that what would probably have cost thousands to effect a few weeks ago would now cost millions. He trusted that any plans for the relief of General Gordon would be framed in the most ample manner, with the view of dispelling the state of anarchy now prevailing, and rescuing that gallant General from the terrible fate which seemed to threaten him in his present perilous position. With these observations he begged to ask the Question of which he had given Notice.

EARL GRANVILLE: I am sure my noble Relative will readily believe me when I assure him that I have not the slightest ground to complain of his having refrained from putting to the House the Resolution which he has read to us to-night, and which he intended to put on a former occasion. I am bound, at the same time, to say that I cannot agree with all the assertions which he has made. I cannot, for instance, agree with him in thinking that General Gordon undertook his chivalrous expedition with the expectation of receiving military aid from this country; and I also disagree with his statement that it would have been wise to send a few hundreds of Cavalry to Berber as recommended by the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY: I only said that, in my view, preparations should have been made in this country, upon the receipt of General Gordon's Memorandum, which would have enabled us to send such a force, if necessary, after the battle of the 12th of March, as six weeks' preparation would thus have not been thrown away.

EARL GRANVILLE: I was under the impression that the noble Earl cited, with approbation, the proposal to send a certain number of Cavalry to Berber; and I still less agree with him in thinking that it would have been judicious to prepare for a summer expedition six weeks ago, and that such an expedition would have been cheaper than an expedition undertaken in the cooler season of the year. I am sorry that, with regard to the last part of the Question, I can add nothing to what was said at the close of the debate in the House of Commons the other day by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War. With regard to the previous part of the Question, as to whether we have received any further information from General Gordon since the 9th of April, I can only say that we received information as late as the 10th, and that that information has been published and is in your Lordships' hands. I may mention, as bearing on this subject indirectly, that we last night received a telegram, stating that the Mudir of Dongola believes that a messenger to General Gordon has entered Khartoum, but cannot leave it, and that the Mahdi is prevented by his followers from going to the White Nile. The Egyptian authorities have taken every possible means for conveying messages to General Gordon, and I have strong hope that they will be successful.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: May I ask which debate the noble Earl refers to, and what it was that the Marquess of Hartington said?

EARL GRANVILLE: I can quite understand the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) not being able to distinguish between the numerous Votes of Censure which have been moved and debated on this question; but he calls on me at very short Notice to explain what was said at the close of the last debate in the House of Commons. The debate was closed by the Marquess of Hartington and Sir Stafford Northcote; and if he wishes me to read the speech of my noble Friend I will do so. The noble Earl, accordingly, having read a copious extract from the speech of the Marquess of Hartington, said: I could have given the words which I myself used; but, as my opinions are exactly those of my noble Friend, I thought in a matter of military operations it was better to refer to the utterances of the Secretary of State for War.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl need make no apology for the course which he has taken. The Marquess of Hartington has been an admirable pupil of the noble Earl in the art of answering Questions. He invariably says — "We are bound to consider;" "We are bound to inquire;" "We will give no decision if we can possibly help it;" and so on. The noble Earl referred to the debate as having been closed by the Marquess of Hartington; but, as a matter of fact, the debate was finished by Sir Charles Dilke, which was my reason for asking what speech and what debate he was referring to.

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 23*rd May*, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [May 22] *reported.*

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) * [226].

First Reading—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * [227]; Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment * [228].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders * [200]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) * [198].

Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Sir Gabriel Goldney *disch.*; Lord Algernon Percy *appointed.*

Committee—Representation of the People [119] [Fourth Night]—R.P.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged Sir Gabriel Goldney from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, and had appointed in substitution Lord Algernon Percy, in respect of the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY.

Viscount GALWAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any foundation for the statement that Mr. William Gray, a Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act, 1881, assisted by his colleague, Mr. Sproute, another tenant farmer, recently reduced the rent of a man, by name Galbraith Hamilton, occupying a farm of fifty-seven acres, from £41 7*s.* 9*d.* to £30; and, further, whether it is true that the said Galbraith Hamilton, about a twelvemonth before the decision in question, viz. in March 1883, actually paid the outgoing tenant a sum equivalent to upwards of forty-two years' purchase for his interest in the holding in question, subject to a rent of £41 7*s.* 9*d.*?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that in this case the Sub-Commission, of which Mr. Gray is a member, reduced the rent from £41 7*s.* 9*d.* to £30. A good many other Sub-Commissions have made reductions as large. An application for a rehearing before the Land Commissioners is pending. The Land Commissioners have no official knowledge of the amount paid by the present tenant to the outgoing tenant for the interest in his holding.

Mr. BRODRICK: Is it true that Mr. Gray's district has been changed, and that he is now to operate in the South of Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have not heard anything about it?

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—REVACCINATION.

Dr. CAMERON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the alarming increase of small-pox in London; whether revaccination of persons exposed to infection is regarded by his medical advisers as constituting a most effective mode of preventing the spread of the disease; whether, in London, it is the duty of local medical officers of health to report cases of small-pox to vaccinating officers, whose duty it is to inform public vaccinators, whose duty it is to send the persons concerned handbills informing them that on certain days, at certain hours, and in certain stations, they may, if they choose, be revaccinated without charge; whether he is aware that in Glasgow, and other large towns, all this circumlocution is avoided, and the medical officer of health personally looks after the isolation of small-pox cases, and sees that revaccination is promptly offered to all who have been exposed to the infection; and, whether he will recommend the appropriation of a few hundred pounds to encourage medical officers of health in London to undertake the same work, and test whether outbreaks of small-pox in the Metropolis may not be controlled as cheaply, speedily, and effectually as they have repeatedly been in Glasgow?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We are aware of the large increase in the number of small-pox cases in the Metropolis during the last eight weeks. The re-vaccination of persons exposed to infection is regarded by the medical adviser of the Board as constituting a most effective mode of preventing the spread of the disease. The Question does not accurately set forth the duties of the medical officers of health and the public vaccinators. What is or should be done on the occurrence of small-pox is that the vaccination officer, with such assistance as the Guardians may give him for the occasion, should make detailed visits to the houses in infected streets, for the purpose of detecting any children who may not have been vaccinated, and of urging re-vaccination on adults and adolescents who have not already been re-vaccinated, and who are exposed to danger of small-pox infection. The object of this special visiting is to urge people to apply, without loss of time, for vaccination and re-vaccination, and to apply at the place where it is provided in the best form, and will be practised with the best success. Special places for re-vaccination in this form are frequently provided by Guardians to meet the convenience of special classes of people. These measures have repeatedly been carried into effect through a Union with excellent results, and the Board loses no opportunity of commending them to Guardians. It may further be mentioned, with regard to the Metropolis, that in the case of persons who are removed to asylums of the managers—and these constitute a very large proportion of the cases of small-pox occurring in London—the patients are, as a rule, in the first instance, attended by the district medical officer, and the Vaccination Acts contemplate that where a medical officer attends a person suffering from small-pox, he may at once vaccinate or re-vaccinate any of the inmates of the house, where such operation is required, and be paid for the vaccination or re-vaccination the same fee as the public vaccinator would have been entitled to receive. Under similar circumstances, the public vaccinator might re-vaccinate other than at the usual station; and the vaccination officer would, doubtless, where necessary, give notice for the purpose. As the Board understand, re-vaccination at Glasgow under circumstances of hazard is then and there performed by the medical officer of health. As already stated, in exceptional cases, the vaccination may be performed at once in England also, although it is not part of the general system on which English vaccination proceeds. The last part of the Question raises the point whether—as, indeed, was advised by the Royal Commission on Hospitals—the vaccination arrangements should not be transferred from Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis to the sanitary authorities. This is a question which, at the present moment, when material changes are proposed in the constitution of the Metropolitan sanitary authorities, cannot well be determined; but it is a matter which must receive full consideration as soon as such changes have been made.

DR. CAMERON: In order that it may receive consideration, I beg to give Notice that on the first available opportunity in Supply I will call attention to the different results of the Glasgow and London systems.

THE LAND COURT (IRELAND)—MR. BELL, VALUER FOR CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Bell, a land valuer for the Land Court in county Cavan, recently in the County Court gave evidence as to the value of the holding of William Topham without once going on the land; and, what action does he propose to take in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Bell informs me that he was twice over the land referred to—the first time, some years ago, valuing for rateable purposes; and the second time, recently, to ascertain a fair rent, and that it is, therefore, not a fact that he gave evidence in the County Court without being fully satisfied as to the value of the holding.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF BERNARD ENNIS, PHILLIPSTOWN, KING'S CO.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Whether, at the last Winter Quarter Sessions, at Phillipstown, King's County, in a case of ejectment on the title by Sir E. Grogan, landlord, against Bernard Ennis, tenant, a decree against the tenant was granted on the sole evidence of Zoe Collins, estate bailiff to Sir E. Grogan, that he had seen Mr. Ennis sign a deed of attornment; whether Mr. Ennis, who was not present at the hearing of the case, wrote next day to the County Court judge, accusing the witness Collins of perjury, and declaring that he never had signed any document in the presence of Collins; whether Mr. Ennis repeated the accusation in a letter to the Lord Lieutenant and offered, if called upon, to prove it, but no official steps have yet been taken; whether, as Mr. Collins is clerk of the Phillipstown Petty Sessions, the Executive deem it requisite to take measures to ascertain the grounds of the charge against him; whether, in virtue of the decree obtained on the oath of Collins, Mr. Ennis was, on the 3rd ultimo, evicted from the holding, also Patrick Warren, caretaker, and Warren's wife and four children; whether notice of the intention to evict was given either to the tenant, the caretaker, the local board of guardians, or the relieving officer, and whether, consequently, the relieving officer was not present at the eviction, to afford relief, if requisite, to the caretaker and his family, who obtained shelter from a neighbour for the night; whether the sub sheriff, at the eviction, was assisted by the estate bailiff, Zoe Collins, upon whose evidence the decree had been obtained; whether, on the day of eviction, a horse, the tenant's property, was sold under the decree for 105 days' rent; and, what steps will be taken to recover the penalties incurred by violation of the Law, in not serving the notice of intention to evict, and what means will be afforded to examine the charge against the witness Zoe Collins?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): It is the fact that an ejectment decree was obtained on the evidence stated, and that Mr. Ennis wrote to the County Court Judge and Lord Lieutenant alleging he had not signed the deed of attornment which Mr. Collins swore he had. Ennis was in Court when the evidence was given. He did not appeal from the decree, as he might, and has done nothing beyond writing the letters mentioned; and the Executive would not consider itself justified in assuming, under those circumstances, that any grounds existed for imputing perjury to Collins. An eviction took place under the decree, and Mr. Collins was present in discharge of his duty as sub-agent. Notice of that eviction was given to the relieving officer, which was a compliance with the law, and notice was also given to the Guardians. It is not necessary, in point of law, that the relieving officer should be present at the eviction. A horse was sold, as stated in the Question. If there was any violation of the law by reason of an omission to serve notice the Guardians are the proper persons to enforce the penalties provided by the Act of 1847.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—CLARE SLOB LANDS RECLAMATION.

Mr. KENNY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the present position of the Clare Slob Lands Reclamation Works, and if any efforts are being made to complete them; if he will state the amount of money advanced by the Irish Board of Works for the purpose of these works, and upon what security was the money originally advanced, and what precautions were taken to insure that it should be fully expended; and, if any rate of interest is chargeable to the persons to whom the original advance was made; if so, whether such interest is still being paid?

Mr. COURTNEY: With respect to the Clare Slob Lands Reclamation, it is expected the works of embanking will be finished this summer. Every effort is being made to this end, more than 300 men being constantly employed upon them. The sum of £76,226 has been advanced towards them, secured on the improvement itself, and on bonds for due completion to the amount of £90,000, given by persons interested in the scheme. Constant inspections have insured due application of the money. Until the work is completed, interest at 5 per cent is chargeable on the original advance, and proceedings are being taken to recover it.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND) — THE ARRESTS AT TUBBERCURRY.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the cases of the Tubbercurry prisoners, arrested on the 2nd of April, now over seven weeks in prison, remanded several times in private, without evidence, and more than once, after public examination, Whether the Executive will now proceed to close the case; whether, in case the representatives of the Crown determine to ask for the committal of the prisoners, or any of them, they will do so at the end of the next hearing; and, whether an assurance will now be given that, in any event, the representatives of the Crown, if they decide to apply for a committal, will do so at such time as, in the event of the application being granted, may allow of the trial being held at the forthcoming Summer Assizes?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is the desire of the Executive to close the case at the next hearing, and to ask to have the prisoners committed for trial, and we hope no necessity will now arise for a further remand. As to the trial, the hon. Member will understand I cannot give an absolute pledge; but I can state there is at present no intention whatever to postpone the trial over the summer, and the committal will be in ample time.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883 — SCHEMES FOR THE ERECTION OF LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of schemes for the erection of labourers' cottages, under "The Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883," already sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and the number of such schemes at present in process of completion; if he will also state the number of labourers' cottages ordered to be erected by the Commissioners under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," and the number of orders complied with; and, if he can state whether proceedings have in any cases been taken against tenants disregarding the order of the Commissioners, and with what general result?

MR. TREVELYAN: In the course of the debate on Wednesday I gave the latest information available as to the working of the Labourers' Act. I then stated that orders had actually been made in 38 Unions—namely, 34 non-compulsory orders, including 216 houses, and 35 compulsory orders, including 2,601 houses. There are, in addition, about 35 schemes in progress of completion. The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of labourers' cottages ordered by the Land Commission to be erected up to the 31st of March last is about 620. It would not be possible, without much longer Notice than I received of this Question, to give a complete or satisfactory answer to the third paragraph, as it would be necessary to communicate first with the Boards of Guardians throughout Ireland; but the Local Government Board inform me that such information as is immediately available in their Office shows that a considerable stimulus has been given to the enforcement of orders.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS — DRUMCLIFF WEST, CO. SLIGO.

MR. LYNCH asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the recent Poor Law election for Drumcliff West, county of Sligo, Whether the Irish Local Government Board have caused inquiry to be made of James Callaghan and Mrs. Mary Currid, electors in the said division, and also of James Callaghan's niece, Miss Lenehan, and of the Rev. James Madden, C.C. Castletown, Drumcliff, as to the alleged illegal taking away of voting papers by Mr. Thomas Simpson, a candidate in the election; whether any inquiry has been made on behalf of the Board, of Mrs Currid and the Rev. James Madden, as to the truth of the statement made by the returning officer, the clerk of the Sligo Union, to the Board, viz. that he had no knowledge of the illegal taking away of voting papers by Mr. Simpson; and, whether, if such inquiry has not been made, it will now be instituted.

MR. TREVELYAN: I answered a Question on this subject a month ago. I then stated that the Local Government Board had informed Mr. M'Govern, the unsuccessful candidate, that if he had any evidence to support an objection to the right of Mr. Simpson, the elected Guardian, to act as such, they were willing to inquire into the circumstances. The Local Government Board now inform me that Mr. M'Govern has not since furnished them with any evidence to support his objection. They have, therefore, not held any inquiry, and do not propose to hold any inquiry, unless Mr. M'Govern can show that there is reason to question the validity of the return.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether it was not a fact that Mr. M'Govern had furnished the Local Government Board with the names of witnesses who would prove that Mr. Simpson had illegally taken away votes; and was it not the duty of the Local Government Board, under these circumstances, to inquire into the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he would like to have Notice of that Question.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION IN GALWAY CO.—MESSRS. R. & C. HENRY.

Mr. LYNCH asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that Mr. Robert Henry, and his son, Mr. Cecil R. Henry, of Tougher, near Tuam, county of Galway, are now, and have been for years past, constantly attended by a body of police maintained at the expense of the ratepayers of the district; if it is true that the district is perfectly peaceful, and that no serious outrage has been committed within a radius of seven miles for years past; whether the constables in question spend their time in playing cricket and otherwise amusing themselves; and, why this special force has been so long maintained, and whether it will now be discontinued?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This protection post was established about four years ago, and has since been maintained from necessity. .The local police authorities do not think that it could as yet be safely dispensed with. At present it consists of two men, and it is not the fact that a police tax is levied on the ratepayers of the district for their maintenance. The district is peaceful, the presence of the police having, no doubt, tended to secure that result. It is not the fact that the constables spend their time playing cricket, and otherwise amusing themselves; but they have accompanied Mr. C. R. Henry to cricket matches, and one of them has occasionally played while there.

Mr. LYNCH: Will this police force be discontinued?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, the force was not to be discontinued.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — PROTESTANTS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE POST OFFICE AT PORTADOWN.

Lord ARTHUR HILL asked the Postmaster General, To state the number of Protestants and the number of Roman Catholics employed in the Post Office at Portadown; whether he is aware that in that town there are about six thousand Protestants out of a total population of about eight thousand persons; whether he is aware that the officials employed inside the Post Office are, almost without exception, Roman Catholics; whether the Protestants are only employed as letter carriers; and, whether one Protestant only is employed in the Parcels Post?

Mr. FAWCETT: I regret I cannot give the information asked for by the noble Lord. I have stated on previous occasions, when similar Questions have been addressed to me, that the Post Office makes no inquiry into the religious opinions of any of those whom it employs, and I think it would be most undesirable that such an inquiry should be made.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—LIMITATIONS OF AGE.

Mr. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any change is contemplated in the limitations of age in the case of candidates for cadetships in the Royal Irish Constabulary?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, he had consulted the police authorities; and considering their opinion, and likewise comparing the force with the Constabulary Forces throughout the Kingdom, he had come to the conclusion that no change was desirable.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

Viscount FOLKESTONE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government are, or have been, in communication with Messrs. Cook, the organisers of Cook's Tours, with regard to the supply of vessels to be used for the rescue of General Gordon?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no doubt that Messrs. Cook possess very valuable information on the subject of that part of the Nile over which they are in the habit of conveying parties. I do not believe Messrs. Cook own any steamers themselves; but they have hired some from the Khedive, and I have no doubt that in the future they would be willing, if required, to place those vessels, as well as the information they possess, at the disposal of the Government.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any news from General Gordon has been received since April 9th; and, whether the Government have sent him any message of encouragement?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The latest telegram from General Gordon appears to be of the date April 10. It is quoted in "Egypt, No. 15, page 2." A further message of a confidential character has been sent to him. I may add that Mr. Egerton telegraphed yesterday that the Mudir of Dongola thinks that the messenger to Gordon has entered Khartoum, but cannot leave it. His Reports state that the Mahdi is at El-Rahat, in Kordofan, and is prevented by his followers from going as he wished to the White Nile. El-Rahat is a place to the south-east of El-Obeid, which is the capital of Kordofan, and near the place where General Hicks met with his unhappy end.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I presume that puts an end to all doubt as to the fidelity of the Mudir.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If the hon. Member wishes to ask Questions about the Mudir of Dongola I must ask for Notice of them.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I asked this Question once before——

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will take it upon myself to say that that question of the fidelity of the Mudir is evidently one which, in the judgment of the Government, it is not desirable to answer. It is a subject of a very delicate nature.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I ask this Question in order to enable the Government to give a formal denial to the statements which have appeared in all the papers in the country, and not at all with an evil motive.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask a general Question, whether the Government have any further knowledge as to the state of affairs at Khartoum, or at any of these places, beyond what has been communicated to the House; and whether they have received anything within the last 12 hours?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; certainly not. With respect to Khartoum, and with respect to these other places, it is a little difficult on the moment to put together what there may be with regard to them. All I can say is, that, considering the reports that were afloat some weeks ago with respect to Berber and Dongola, I think I may say that the purport of the intelligence received has been re-assuring, though, at the same time, not of an absolutely definite character.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—FORGED CERTIFICATES OF PEDIGREE OF HORSES—CASE OF DAVID AND JOSEPH RAESIDE AND ANOTHER.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that David Raeside, a lad of eighteen years of age, arrested in Glasgow on 23rd November, 1883, on a charge of forging and uttering, kept in prison for seven weeks, and then liberated on bail, has not yet been brought to trial; and, why, since Circuit Courts were held in Glasgow at the end of December, February, and April, so serious a charge as that against Raeside has been so long permitted to remain undisposed of?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): David Raeside, his brother Joseph Raeside, and another person were charged together with having forged certain certificates of pedigree for insertion in the Stud Book of the Clydesdale Horse Society. Joseph Raeside, the elder brother of David Raeside, had gone to America before the frauds were discovered. In order to the history of the frauds being satisfactorily laid before a jury, it would be essential, or at least of great importance, that the brothers Raeside should be tried together. This is the cause of the delay.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ILLEGAL ACTION OF THE SHERIFF OF KING'S COUNTY.

MR. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state upon what ground one Pyke, a bailiff, and Edward Whitten, of Gloneygowan, King's County, assisted by the Police, did, on the 13th December last, forcibly break into and take possession of the house of Mary Anne Halon; and, if he is aware that she has a lease for ever of the said house, and had at the time paid her rent, tithe, and income tax.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Sir, an *habere* from the Court of Exchequer in Dublin having been issued to the Sheriff he authorized in the usual way his bailiff to carry it out. The bailiff forced in the door, as admission would not be given, and this was quite legal under the authority of the writ. The police did not assist, save so far that three members of the force were present for the Sheriff's protection; but they took no further part in the matter. Neither the Sheriff nor the bailiff was aware of Mrs. Halon's title, nor whether she had paid her rent, tithe, and income tax. She did not state so at the time, nor did any person on her behalf.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I desire to correct a mistake, or what is, perhaps, a misprint, in the report of *The Times* of my speech on Central Asia made last night. I am reported to have said that in 1880 the Russians overran the whole country between the Caspian and Sarakhs. In this sentence Sarakhs should be Kizil-Arvat. The facts are correctly given in my answer to the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) at Question time yesterday.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister if there was any change in the announced order of Public Business?

DR. CAMERON asked the Prime Minister, as Member for Mid Lothian, whether, considering that the subject first on the Paper for Tuesday night was one of the most important to Scotland which had been brought before this House for many years, he would, in moving the Adjournment of the House, follow the precedent set when he moved the Adjournment for the Easter Recess, and bring on the Motion at the Evening Sitting?

MR. GLADSTONE: In reference to the last Question, I can only say that I do not think it would be possible for us to keep a House at the Evening Sitting on Tuesday. As to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, we have been extremely anxious, being very much alive to the state of opinion in the City with regard to the National Debt Bill, to take the extreme measure of asking for a Sitting on Saturday. [Mr. WARTON: Oh!] I expected cheers; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman would allow me to finish my sentence no doubt he would cheer it. I was about to add that, finding it would be a subject of contention, and that time would be wasted in debating whether there should be a Sitting or not, we have reluctantly, and at the same time definitely, withdrawn that design. We shall, therefore, propose to report Progress between 11 and 12 on Monday night in order to take the second reading of that Bill.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: Sir, with great reluctance I ask for the indulgence of the House, while I call attention to a personal matter. Yesterday afternoon, it came to my knowledge that the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) had published in the Plymouth *Western Morning News* a letter which bears the date of May 15th, in which the hon. Gentleman professes to describe what happened in this House in respect to the second reading of the Sunday Closing Bill for Cornwall. In that letter the following passage occurs:—

> "With respect to the Cornwall Sunday Closing Bill, you know I always do my utmost to further it. I endeavoured to induce Sir E. Watkin to put off his Bill, which had priority, and I think he would have done so, had it not been for a man who openly speaks of temperance advocates as hypocrites—I mean Mr. Cavendish Bentinck. This gentleman made, as I dare say you saw, a very long speech on the Channel Tunnel Bill, the real object of which, since that Bill had no chance of passing, was to leave so little time for our Bill that his coadjutor, Mr.

Warton, could easily talk it out, which in due course he did."

Now, I desire to say that there are three statements in that letter concerning myself which are absolutely at variance with the facts. In the first place, I had no communication, either direct or indirect, with my hon. Friend the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), who is now in his place and can confirm what I say. In the second place, I did not, openly or otherwise, speak of temperance advocates as hypocrites. I should certainly not be likely to speak of them in that way, because I am a temperance advocate myself. In the third place, there is no foundation whatever for saying that I made a speech unduly long and obstructive on the Channel Tunnel Bill. I was the only Member of the House, besides the hon. Member for Hythe, who was connected with the promotion of that measure, and at the request of the hon. Baronet I purposely delayed any observations I thought it right to address to the House until other hon. Members had finished their speeches, so that what I said might be in the nature of a reply. In point of fact, I almost limited my observations to answering the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, and endeavouring to meet the charges of *mala fides* which the right hon. Gentleman had brought against the hon. Baronet and the promoters of the Bill. More than that, the Messenger who is in charge of the door took the time which my speech occupied, and it was only 13 minutes, so that I cannot be charged with having unduly occupied the time which was then at the disposal of the House. Having made this statement, I wish to ask the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) whether he admits the authenticity of the letter which I have quoted, and whether he has any explanation to offer concerning the statements which it contains?

MR. BORLASE: I have, in the first place, to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his courtesy in having communicated to me privately his intention to bring on this matter to-day; and, in the second place, I have to thank him for affording me an opportunity of recalling to his memory words which he may have said in haste, and, perhaps, forgotten, and of stating to the House, which it is very painful for me to do, the incident which made me make use of the expression to which the right hon. Gentleman alludes. In my opinion, there is far more cause for an explanation from the right hon. Gentleman to myself and to the advocates of temperance reform, than there is for an explanation of anything in the letter with regard to the right hon. Gentleman. However, I will state the facts to the House. On the Wednesday morning, while the House was being made, I was sitting in my place in this part of the House, and I happened to be next to the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, there being at the time not more than 10 or 12 Members in the House altogether. The right hon. Gentleman crossed the floor of the House and sat next to the hon. Baronet on the side away from me. Whilst sitting there, after some general conversation, the right hon. Gentleman made use, in an emphatic manner which is peculiarly his own, of these words—"Those hypocrites, the teetotallers, have got a Sunday Closing Bill to-day for Cornwall, or some such place." That was said not to me——

MR. WARTON: A private conversation.

MR. BORLASE: I have not the honour of the right hon. Gentleman's personal acquaintance; but it was said at me, and in a manner which was naturally calculated to aggrieve anyone who was taking—as the right hon. Gentleman might have known I was taking—a keen interest in a Bill which was approved, as this one is, by all parties and classes in my constituency. Now, Sir, on these grounds I venture to justify that part of my letter which deals with the word "hypocrites" as applied by the right hon. Gentleman to the temperance party. The object of the letter was to point out to one of my constituents, who was wondering why we could not pass the Bill, that it was utterly useless to attempt to introduce into this House temperance legislation on a Wednesday, when debate is limited, owing to the peculiar course which is so often taken with regard to it by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). I now wish to say this, that I at once withdraw all intention of imputing collusion between the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, who met me so graciously by offering to make his speech on the Channel Tunnel Bill as short as possible. But, at the same time that I do that, I must in turn request that the right hon. Gentleman will withdraw those words he used in my hearing, and which cast a direct imputation upon the advocates of temperance reform in this House.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN: It is very painful to me to have to take part in a personal discussion, and already the few hours allotted to the Franchise Bill to-day have been largely trenched upon. But so far as I am concerned I am bound to say there is not one word of justification for the statement, contained in the letter, that my right hon. Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) interfered in any sense whatever to prevent the postponement of the Channel Tunnel Bill. The hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) asked me to postpone it for a week, at the same time remarking that he was an advocate of the Tunnel, but saw the many difficulties which surrounded his request. I explained to the hon. Member that had I known his wishes four or five days earlier I might have been able to comply with them and have postponed the Bill for another week, but now the Bill had been ordered for that particular day by arrangement with the Board of Trade, and hon. Gentlemen were coming up from the country to discuss it, and, therefore, it was impossible that the second reading could be delayed. At the same time, recognizing the interest of the hon. Gentleman in the question he had in hand, I volunteered to shorten my speech as much as possible and to use my influence in the same direction with the supporters of the Bill. In moving the second reading, I did, accordingly, curtail my speech, leaving out important matter, which was afterwards made the subject of controversy by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to my prejudice, and consequently exposing myself to some injury in the discussion. I repeat that there is no justification for charging the right hon. Member for Whitehaven with having interfered in any way whatever. As to the conversation referred to by the hon. Member for East Cornwall, I have not the slightest recollection of it; but if it occurred at all it was a private conversation at a time when the second reading of the Tunnel Bill was practically before the House, and, therefore, it could not have affected the question of the postponement of the Tunnel Bill in order that the Cornwall Bill might come on. That is all I have to say on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER and MR. WARTON rose together, whereupon the latter gave way.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope that, in the interest of the House, I may be allowed to intervene, and to act as a mediator between the right hon. and the hon. Gentlemen. I understand the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) to say that he was annoyed at an expression which he overheard, and which the right hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) says he either never used, or certainly did not intend the hon. Member for East Cornwall to hear, and in consequence of those words the hon. Member for East Cornwall made a statement, in a letter to a newspaper, reflecting upon what he supposed to be the action of the right hon. Gentleman. I understand the hon. Member for East Cornwall to say that he withdraws the charge of collusion between the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, provided the right hon. Gentleman will withdraw on his part any offensive expression which he might have made use of. If I understand the right hon. Gentleman aright, he is quite willing to say that he had no intention in anything he said to give any pain to the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase); and, if so, I respectfully submit to the House that the whole question falls to the ground, and there is no occasion to pursue a painful personal matter any further.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I can only add that, like the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe, I have no recollection of having used the words "those hypocrites the teetotallers," or any other opprobrious epithet, either in joke or any other way, and I should not think of doing so. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) knows that I have never applied an offensive epithet to him or to anyone else who shares his views. Therefore, in answer to the appeal of the hon. Member, although I have no recollection of having used such an expression, I am bound to say that if such an expression did fall from me it must have been in a moment of thoughtlessness, for I should be sorry to give pain to the hon. Member or to anybody else.

MR. BORLASE: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his disavowal, and I merely rise for the purpose of saying that it is possible I may have misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman's remark at the time. If so, I beg to apologize to the right hon. Gentleman for having misunderstood him.

CUSTOMS—OUTDOOR OFFICERS.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How many out-door officers of Customs have been promoted to the rank of examining officer from the competitive lists, and how many from the acting list, since 1st September 1883?

MR. COURTNEY: Since September, 1883, 42 vacancies of examining officers have been filled from the competition lists and 16 by selection. The difference between these numbers is due to the necessity of redressing a previous inequality in the opposite direction.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 16th May.*]

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Extension of the Household and Lodger Franchise.

Clause 2 (Uniform household and lodger franchise).

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF, in moving, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the words "after the passing of this Act," said, the object of the Amendment he moved was to provide that the Bill should not come into force after the passing of the Act until a Redistribution Bill had been introduced. He might say that he had given Notice of this Amendment in consequence of the short discussion which took place when the Bill first went into Committee. He hoped he should be able to place before the Prime Minister some considerations which would induce him to give some kind of intimation to the House that the Government really intended to bring in a Redistribution Bill before the provisions of the Bill now before the House came into force. It was not necessary that he should quote now the arguments which he had deduced on the previous occasion, but he thought it was desirable that he should point out one or two of the anomalies which would be created in addition to those which already existed in regard to the representation of the people if any future elections were to take place under this Bill without some measure of redistribution. He had formally intimated on the previous occasion what his objects were, and he had understood the Prime Minister to sympathize, although he did not give a pledge to carry them out, in the views which he had expressed. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Government were desirous of accompanying the present measure by a Redistribution Bill; therefore he thought it was desirable that at the present stage of the discussion the words he proposed to strike out should be omitted. It appeared to him that if those words were inserted in the earlier portion of the Bill it would close the door to Amendments which might recommend themselves to all parts of the House subsequently. He had observed that later on there were Amendments and new clauses which, even as a point of Order, he thought would be shut out if these words were retained as they now stood in the clause. He did not know whether that was technically the case or not, but it appeared to him that if they put in now the date at which the Bill was to come into operation it would be very difficult to reopen the question hereafter. He was informed by the authorities of the House that the reason why the words were in italics was really in accordance with an understood rule that dates as well as sums of money should be left in blank to be filled in afterwards. If, however, the words were now filled in and passed without amendment, no further discussion would be possible. He would content himself now by moving the omission of the words of which he had given Notice, and he had no doubt that the proper discussion of the

Bill would be very much facilitated if this difficulty were cleared away. His only object was to secure from the Government an intimation that hereafter sufficient means would be afforded for discussing a well digested measure of redistribution by which means the Bill could be fairly carried out. He had ventured to state on a former occasion for himself, and he believed for many hon. Members sitting on that side of the House, that there was no objection to an extension of the franchise, provided that a good measure of redistribution of seats accompanied it, and it was with a view to secure a full and clear consideration for the question of redistribution that he ventured to move this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, leave out the words "after the passing of this Act."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he thought it was desirable, before the Committee considered the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, that it should clearly understand from the Officers of the Crown what the exact position of the law was at the present time, and how, if the Bill became an Act of Parliament, it would work in its present form, and how it would work if the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Portsmouth were adopted and another date were inserted in lieu of the words "from and after the passing of this Act." If the Committee referred to the clause, they would see that it did not in terms confirm the franchise in the first instance. What the clause did was to confer the right on a person to be registered as a voter, and from and after registration then to vote. Therefore, the initial step that had to be taken was that of registration. This was not an easy question. It would consume a considerable amount of time; and he had ventured to submit to the Committee on the second reading of the Bill that, whether these words were inserted or not, it was practically impossible for the franchise, which was about to be conferred by the Bill, to come into force, at all events during the present year 1884, and possibly not until a very late date in 1885. The first step in registration took place in the month of June. There were several stages in the question with which he need not trouble the Committee; but the last date of the initial stage of registration was the 31st of July, and, for all practical purposes, a voter who was not qualified on the 31st of July could not be placed on the list of voters which was then being prepared, and could not make a claim to have his name inserted if it were left out. In July the overseers prepared the list of persons qualified to vote. That list was finally closed—in some cases earlier, but taking an outside case—on the 31st of July. The list was published on the 1st of August. It was revised by the Revising Barrister between the 20th of September and the 31st of October. The list did not become the register until the last day of December, and it then came into force, and was the register for the ensuing year. The Committee would see, therefore, that whoever was to be put on the register for 1885 must be placed there on the 1st of January next; and, therefore, to have the right to vote in 1885, he must, to all intents and purposes, possess his qualification on the 31st July, 1884. If this Bill received—which he ventured to think was an improbable contingency—the Royal Assent in June, or, at any rate, prior to the end of July, 1884, in the absence of any legislation to the contrary, the new franchise would not come into operation until the 1st day of January, 1886; and, therefore, if a Dissolution took place in 1885 upon the question of redistribution, that question would be decided, not by the existing constituencies, but by the new constituencies. If he were wrong in this statement, of course his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would put him right. His proposition was this—under the existing legislation, unless there was special legislation to the contrary, the register which would come in force in 1885, and which would operate during 1885, would not include the newly-enfranchised voter. He would refer the Committee to the precedent of the last Reform Bill. No question arose in 1867 with reference either to acceleration or retarding. The object of the Government of the day, and, he thought, of the House too, was to bring that Bill into operation as soon as possible. There was a distinct provision in the Act of

1867 that it should not come into operation until the 1st of January, 1869. The words were—

> "In and after the year 1868 they (the persons enfranchised) shall be entitled to be registered as voters, and, when registered, to vote."

There was, therefore, a considerable parallel between the position of 1867 and 1884. At that time it required two Sessions of Parliament to pass a complete Reform Bill, because, although a measure of redistribution accompanied the extension of the franchise in 1867, it was absolutely necessary that there should be a rearrangement of the boundaries. A Boundary Commission was, therefore appointed. Their Report had to be confirmed by Parliament, and the boundaries required two years to complete the Reform Bill. The contention of Her Majesty's Government was that the present Reform scheme was composed of two essential and integral parts—the extension of the franchise and the redistribution of electoral power. Hon. Members who sat on his side of the House attached as much importance to the redistribution of electoral power as hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. What they contended was that a complete measure should be the work of two Sessions of Parliament —that one Session should decide the question of the extension of the franchise, and the next Session of the same Parliament should settle the question of redistribution. The Act passed in 1867 provided that the Act should not come into operation until the 1st of January, 1869. [*Expressions of dissent from the Opposition.*] He hoped that hon. Gentlemen opposite would allow him to state his facts, and correct him afterwards if he was wrong. He thought, however, that he would be found to be historically correct. The Act passed in 1867 provided that the Act should not come in force until the 1st of January, 1869. In the autumn of 1868 the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Government introduced his Resolutions on the subject of the Irish Church. On those Resolutions the Government of the day was defeated, and Mr. Disraeli tendered his advice to the Queen to dissolve Parliament; he informed the House that he had also advised Her Majesty that it was advisable that an appeal should be made to the new constituencies; and he further said that by accelerating the registration that appeal could be made at an early date. A Registration Bill was accordingly introduced in the spring of 1868, which provided that the 1st of November, 1868, should be substituted for the 1st of January, 1869. A large staff of Revising Barristers were employed *ad hoc,* and the registration was got through with great rapidity, and completed by the 1st of November, 1868, and immediately afterwards the Dissolution took place, and the Election occurred prior to the 1st of January, 1869. Therefore, the parallel between that case and this would be this—there was a Franchise Bill in 1867; there would be a Franchise Bill in 1884; a Boundary Bill in 1868; a Redistribution Bill in 1885. The old franchise came into operation in November, 1868; the new franchise could come into operation in November, 1885; and what he wanted to have clearly from the hon. and learned Attorney General was whether, without special legislation, by the inevitable operation of the existing law, it would be impossible to appeal to the new constituencies prior to the autumn of 1885?

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General will be better able than I am to enter at the right time into the discussion of the point raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). My hon. Friend has made an important speech on a very important question—namely, whether an appropriate date is fixed by the Bill, or whether the 1st of November, 1885, would be more appropriate. At present we have not yet reached the point at which the date could be inserted, and I will confine myself to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman opposite, who, with apparent fairness, has explained the object of his Amendment. I think he says that at present our position is simply this—If the 2nd clause of the Bill stands with the words "after the passing of this Act" retained in it, the effect of that would be that the House would be precluded from raising at any subsequent part of the Bill any question as to the date at which it should take effect. On the other hand, by leaving out those words it would be possible for the House to discuss the proper date to be adopted. The hon. Baronet who has moved the Amendment has taken note of the declaration of the

Government that they desire the question of redistribution to be dealt with and disposed of by the present Parliament; but he appears to think that there should be some indication of that in the Bill itself. That point, however, would be more properly raised when the proposal is made later on to fix a date for the Bill to come into force. I am perfectly ready at present to agree with him as far as this—that it is not desirable to fix the date now. Therefore, I accept his proposition that these words be left out, only saying that I do not pledge the Government to accept any particular date, but because I wish the House to have a full opportunity of hearing the arguments which may be adduced in regard to fixing a date; and I do not regard this as one of the points of the Bill upon which we have arrived at a positive conclusion at this moment, which would preclude us from following any course on the whole we may deem expedient.

Colonel STANLEY: I wish to ask a question upon a point of Order. I want to know whether by leaving out these words I should be precluded from proposing words in the sense of the Amendment which stands in my name?

The CHAIRMAN: The Question would be put in such a manner as would not preclude the right hon. and gallant Member from moving his Amendment.

Mr. GOSCHEN: There are really two questions involved in the 2nd clause —one is the conferring of the franchise; and the other is the time at which the franchise should be conferred, which is imported into the clause by the words "after the passing of this Act." It appears to me that it would be far more convenient that these two questions should be treated separately—that the House should first dispose of the question of extending the franchise, and then approach in an unprejudiced way the question of the time at which the Act should come into operation. Following the precedent adopted in the last Reform Bill, I understand there will be a clause in the Bill stating that the Act will come into force on a given day. If so, then the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) ought not to be entered into upon this clause, but upon the clause affecting the time when the Bill is to come into force. It appears to me infinitely better that the House should reserve the whole question intact, and should not now embark upon the question when the Bill is to come into force. I would, therefore, suggest that the Government should withdraw these words from the clause, and insert them where they could be more conveniently dealt with, because by that means they would avoid the necessity for a double or treble discussion, and the whole question would be better considered upon a clause specially fixing the date when the Bill is to come into operation.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: The right hon. Gentleman will see that there is a distinction between the present case and that of the last Reform Bill. The difficulty in which we are placed arises from the fact that the Franchise Bill deals with only one branch of the question of Reform. The question of the time when the Bill is to come into operation is vitally affected by the other branch of the question, which may or may not be dealt with during the existence of the present Parliament. The House will see that it is impossible for the Government to assure us that the Bill will come into operation concurrently with the Bill for the redistribution of seats, and, therefore, it seems to me that it is vital for the House to know when it is to come into operation. That, however, was not a vital part of the analogous question raised by the Bill of 1867.

Mr. GOSCHEN asked to be allowed to explain. He attached the greatest importance to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but it appeared to him that it would be better discussed as an Amendment to a distinct clause fixing the time when the Bill was to come into operation rather than at the present moment. He had no wish to oppose the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, or to disparage its importance.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he hoped that before the Committee accepted the Amendment they would have some declaration on the part of the Government, of a more decided character than they had yet received, that they would not put any date of the kind they had been discussing into the Bill, fixing the time when it was to come into operation. If they were, as the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) suggested, to approach the consideration of the date in an unprejudiced way, or, in other words, if they were to leave it an open question, then he ventured to say that that was a change of front on the part of the Government, and it amounted to a first paving of the way in the Bill for concessions which would be regarded by the country with nothing short of dismay. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He hoped he might be allowed to state his own views. His arguments, of course, would be taken for what they were worth; but the country had been given to understand by the most positive assurances on the part of the Government, in express terms, that those persons who did not at present possess a vote should, at any rate, become citizens after the Bill passed, so far as having the right to be placed upon the register at the earliest possible moment was concerned. [Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Hear, hear!] His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) said "Hear, hear!" but he (Mr. Jesse Collings) contended that, if they fixed a date before which the Act could not come into force, it would be a very important matter so far as the new voters were concerned. He therefore hoped the Government would give the House an assurance that they had not changed their opinion, and that they really intended to put the people whom it was the object of the Bill to enfranchise in possession of their rights as citizens—to use the words of the clause, immediately "after the passing of the Act." Unless the Government were prepared to say something definite and firm upon that question, he thought hon. Members on that side of the House would have a right to resist this Amendment. He had been surprised to hear the speech of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. The hon. Baronet opposite the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had frankly stated the reason which had induced him to press the Amendment—namely, that the Act should not come in force until after the passing of a Redistribution Bill. They all knew the state of the law, and that it was practically impossible to prepare a redistribution list until the date mentioned by his hon. Friend. There was nothing, however, to preclude them from specially accelerating the registration. Why were they to presume that they could not have a Registration Bill introduced in order to accelerate the time? If there was to be any delay in putting the Bill into operation, let it be done by the opponents of the Bill, and not by those who supported it, and he hoped the Government would not show any signs of weakness upon this point. If they did, he would tell them frankly that they would create a most unfavourable opinion among a large body of the people who did not understand these niceties of compromise, but who were apt to go on the broad meaning of the words held out to them. They would be unable to understand why, having a franchise given to them, possession of it was to be put off for a certain number of years. He trusted the Government would state openly that they did not intend, as far as they were concerned, to favour any proposition to fix any date whatever, but that after the passing of the Bill the right to exercise the franchise should be enjoyed by the voter.

MR. RAIKES said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had shown very plainly that the omission of these particular words in this particular place would have no effect whatever on the operation of the clause, and that the only effect which would follow from their omission would be to adjourn until a more convenient moment the discussion of the question as to the time at which the Act was to come into operation. The only person who would have reason to complain of the adoption of the Amendment was not the man who assumed to speak on behalf of the people of England like the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), but his right hon. Friend below him, because it would rather cut away from him the reason for proposing his Amendment. He (Mr. Raikes) had risen now for the purpose of supporting the suggestion which had been made by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) should postpone the Amendment of which he had given Notice. Certainly, it seemed to him that that Amendment would be more appropriately considered if it were brought forward after these words had been struck out. If the date were put down in the Bill as a new clause, then his right hon. and gallant Friend would start fair with the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), or any other hon. Gentleman who had an Amendment to propose upon that point. He must say that he thought the Government had met the proposal of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) in a reasonable and straightforward manner, and their acceptance of this Amendment would not preclude the future discussion of any other which might be raised on that side of the House. The only effect of the decision would be to declare that it would be more convenient to raise the question at some future time. He hoped the Amendment would be accepted, and he trusted that his right hon. and gallant Friend would see his way to the postponement of his Amendment until a subsequent period.

Mr. GLADSTONE: As I understand the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), he seems to consider that it is the vital point of the incidence of the present Bill that the right, not to vote, but to be registered as a voter, shall be conferred *instanter* upon the passing of the Act. Nothing contrary to that position is involved in the acceptance of the Amendment, and it would not in the slightest degree prejudice that question. The only question now raised for the House to consider is—first, whether it is convenient that the right to vote should accrue at once from the passing of the Act; and, secondly, whether that question should be now settled, or whether it would be more convenient to decide it after further progress has been made with the Bill, and after we have had a full opportunity, which we cannot possibly have at the present moment, of discussing the important argumant raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). It is quite clear that what time may be required for registering the time for the Act to come into operation, and what time may be left for the introduction of a Redistribution Bill, are questions that are fairly entitled to be discussed now. I wish to point out that nothing is prejudiced by the acceptance of the Amendment.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he hoped that an assurance would be given by the Government that nothing should be allowed to put off the power of obtaining a vote under the Bill later than the 1st of January, 1886. He regretted that his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton had somewhat obscured the real question. His hon. Friend was perfectly right in what he had said; but he might have put it in half-a-dozen words. Every Member of that House knew that if the Bill was not passed before the 31st July, the persons to be enfranchised under it could not possibly obtain a right of voting under it until the 1st of January, 1886. In reference to what had fallen from the Prime Minister, he was quite willing to assent to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth; but he thought they ought to ask the Government to give them an assurance that nothing should be done to the prejudice of the rights of voters who were to be enfranchised by the Bill, and that nothing should be done which would prevent their obtaining that right of voting at a later date than the 1st of January, 1886. He wanted an assurance from the Government that they would not put off the matter of registration until that date, and that they would not propose a later date in reference to this important matter than such date as would enable the persons who were enfranchised by the Bill to exercise the suffrage on the 1st of January, 1886.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that it was quite unnecessary to raise that question at the present moment. It would come on much more regularly later on. Therefore, no good object would be secured by continuing the discussion.

Colonel STANLEY asked, as a point of Order, in what form the Amendment would be put, so as to enable him to move the Amendment he had placed on the Paper?

The CHAIRMAN: The proposition now before the Committee is that the words "after the passing of this Act" stand part of the clause. In answer to the question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, I may say that he will still have power to move his Amendment, if the words "after the passing of this Act" are struck out.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he only wished to put a question upon the point of Order. He wished to know whether the Instruction which was moved on the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill was not practically identical with the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman?

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman will be perfectly in Order in moving his Amendment in the form in which it now appears on the Paper.

MR. RYLANDS desired to say a word upon the question which had been raised by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). It appeared to him that the Government in acceding to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth had taken a course which was for the convenience of the House. He did not gather that the withdrawal of these words from the clause placed the Committee in any worse position, but in regard to any future discussion they would be in a much better position. If these words were omitted, and no explaining words were introduced into the Bill, the effect would be that the operation of the Bill in reference to the registration of voters would immediately commence as soon as the Act received the Royal Assent. But they knew perfectly well that, before a Redistribution Bill was passed, hon. Members who were alarmed at the prospect of having an additional number of voters placed upon the register would have ample opportunity for proposing such restraining clauses as they might deem necessary to prevent the Bill from coming into operation until a Redistribution Bill was passed. That, however, was a matter for discussion hereafter. It appeared to him that his hon. Friend was altogether wrong in assuming that the Government had given way to pressure. He (Mr. Rylands) did not assume for a moment that the Government intended to yield, or to give way to pressure. On the contrary, he believed they were prepared to maintain the provisions of the Bill, and, therefore, he would cordially support the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Portsmouth and accepted by the Government.

MR. WARTON said, he could not understand the strictures which the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had passed upon the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). No hon. Member expressed himself more clearly and distinctly than the hon. Member for Wolverhampton; and he was much surprised that the point which the hon. Member wished to raise had not been made perfectly clear to the hon. Member for Salford. He had risen with the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) for the purpose of asking the ruling of the Chair upon the point raised by the right hon. and gallant Member himself in regard to his Amendment, and another point as to the Instruction moved at an earlier period to be given to the Committee. He had also anticipated that the objection made by the hon. Member for Salford would be taken. Therefore, he submitted that, in the event of any rule of that kind being applied, it would have been much better to have accepted the Amendment moved by the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) directly the Bill went into Committee.

MR. GORST remarked that, at the present moment, there seemed to be only one question for the Committee—whether it was expedient to discuss the time at which the Act should come into force? It must be quite obvious that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) had it in his power to move his Amendment, and thus bring on a discussion at the present moment. He (Mr. Gorst) had, therefore, risen in order to save time. It appeared to be the general sense of the Committee that they should not discuss the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman now, but that they should pass the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and then go on to other Business. He hoped that course would be assented to by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; but if it was his intention to press his Amendment upon the consideration of the Committee now, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had better address himself to it at once, and not waste any more time. He certainly thought personally that, after the general expression of opinion, it would be better to postpone the consideration of that subject. It was advisable that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman should state what course he proposed to adopt in regard to his Amendment.

COLONEL STANLEY said, he was loth to trespass on the Committee. At the same time, he felt considerable diffidence as to the course he was about to take; but he did not feel that it would be consistent with his duty to withdraw the Amendment. He, therefore, agreed with the hon. and learned Member for

Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that the sooner they proceeded with the Business of the Committee the better.

Mr. BRYCE said, that, before the Committee proceeded further, he thought it was desirable that the hon. and learned Attorney General should express an opinion as to the point which had been raised by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), so as to clear the way for future discussion. So far as the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) were concerned, many hon. Members on that side of the House felt quite as strongly upon the Bill as the hon. Member did, and were just as anxious that nothing should be now agreed to that could prejudice the question of the date of its taking effect. But he did not believe that those hon. Members feared that their freedom would be at all affected by the course taken by the Prime Minister in accepting the Amendment.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that, as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman did not intend to withdraw the Amendment, it would be advisable to take the discussion at once. The only object in striking out the words "after the passing of this Act" was to allow the discussion to be taken at a later period; and he presumed that the Prime Minister had made his proposal on the supposition that the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) would be put off, so as to avoid having a discussion now, and a subsequent discussion on the same point later on.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he desired to make an appeal as strongly as he possibly could to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) to reconsider his decision after the very generally expressed desire of the Committee that these words should be left out now, and the discussion taken later on. He did not think, as far as hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House were concerned, there was a point in which they took greater interest than that there should be a full, fair, and, if possible, a favourable consideration of the Amendment which stood in the name of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; and if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was of that opinion also, and was genuinely in earnest in regard to the proposition of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) that Reform should be dealt with, but that it should be dealt with completely—if that was the genuine intention of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, he would take a course which must inevitably and hopelessly prejudice the proposal of the noble Lord. If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was prepared to resist the appeal which had been made to him by so influential a Member of the Conservative Party as the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), as well as the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and against the desire of the whole Committee, and insisted upon raising that Amendment now, it was perfectly evident that the chances of the Amendment would be hopelessly prejudiced. It was the one thing in which the Conservative Party took the deepest interest; many Members on the other side would support it, and that support would be entirely thrown away by the hasty and, he thought, injudicious course taken by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman.

Mr. ALBERT GREY wished to know whether, if the words "after the passing of this Act" were not omitted from the clause, the Amendment which stood in his name would be in Order?

Mr. HENEAGE asked whether, if these words were struck out of the Bill, the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) could possibly be put?

The CHAIRMAN: In regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), I must defer expressing an opinion until the time when that Amendment will properly come before the Committee. In regard to the question of the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), I have no doubt that the words proposed are perfectly in Order. As I understand the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, he proposes to insert, after the words "after the passing of this Act," the words—

> "And of an Act to be passed for amending the Acts which settle and describe the divisions of counties and the limits of cities and boroughs of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of the election of Members to serve in Parliament."

That Amendment would be perfectly in in Order.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that in that case he wished to make a further appeal to the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) not to press his Amendment at the present moment, as it would certainly prejudice the discussion of the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), whereas the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would not be prejudiced in any way by the postponement of the discussion. Therefore, in the interests of the counter Amendment of his hon. Friend, he would venture once more to make an appeal to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he rose for the purpose of saying that the point raised by his right hon. and gallant Friend was one altogether distinct from the mere question of the date at which the Bill would come into operation. The point raised by the Amendment of his right hon. and Gallant Friend was whether the Bill should or should not be allowed to come into operation before the passing of another Act which it was contended ought to accompany it—namely, a Redistribution Act. He understood that his right hon. and gallant Friend desired to have that point decided before proceeding with the discussion of the remaining clauses of the Bill. It was quite obvious that the views which the Committee might take on many points that might arise in the course of the discussion on the Bill would be considerably influenced by the consideration whether the Bill was to be a Bill by itself or whether it was to be accompanied by a Redistribution Bill, He, therefore, thought his right hon. and gallant Friend was taking a convenient course in desiring the decision of that question at once.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS wished to explain that he had no objection in the world to the withdrawal of these words, provided there was an assurance from the Government that the Committee would be in the same position in regard to them as they were before. The words proposed to be withdrawn were "after the passing of this Act." Would the Government assure the Committee that it was only for convenience that they wished to leave that question over, and not from any weakening of their view in regard to the time at which the Act was to come into force? His hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) was very confiding; but his hon. Friend must bear in mind that the only expression they had as yet had from that side of the House was one which had fallen from the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), which implied that the date was to be left an open question. Was that the position which the Government took in regard to the matter? Was it to be an open question? If so, it was a direct encouragement to the hon. Member for South Northumberland to press his Amendment. He thought the Committee were entitled to have some expression of opinion from the Government, if these words were to be withdrawn, that they were themselves of the same opinion as they had given the House to understand they had entertained up to the present moment—that the Act should come into operation immediately after it had been passed. The only reason which would induce him to leave out these words was that it would be for the convenience of debate, and so far they had failed to elicit anything from the Government except an inference in the opposite direction. If he could get anyone to divide with him he would certainly divide against the Amendment. When he found Members on that side of the House joining with hon. Members opposite, the conjunction certainly appeared to be an ominous one. He was quite sure, unless the Government gave a more decided expression of opinion, they would be playing into the hands of the Opposition and encouraging Amendments in the direction of the one which had been placed upon the Paper by the hon. Member for South Northumberland.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he confessed he saw nothing to be alarmed at in the withdrawal of these words. The hon. Member for Ipswich said that nobody had said a word in favour of the Amendment except the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). The hon. Member seemed to forget that the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) had expressed a strong opinion upon it. With or without these words, an Act of Parliament, as soon as it received the Royal Assent, came into operation, unless there was some qualifying clause fixing another date. Upon this point he thought that nothing could be plainer than what had already fallen from the Prime Minister.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, the question was a difficult one to deal with, and when the time came for taking the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland, he would like to know what would be the position of the Committee. What would be their position supposing that his right hon. and gallant Friend withdrew his Amendment now, and before they were able to bring on some other Amendment, fixing the date at which the Act should come into operation, some hon. Member—for instance, the hon. Member for Ipswich—were to bring forward an Amendment, naming the 1st of November, 1885, and entitling every voter to exercise a vote after that date who had been placed upon the register? In such a case it would not be possible for his hon. and gallant Friend, or any other Member, to bring forward the principle of this Amendment, and he thought it was most desirable that that Amendment should be fully discussed. He, therefore, hoped there would be a clear understanding upon that point.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, the subject of the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had already been twice discussed, once on the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), when a Division was taken, and, secondly, on the Motion of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), when another Division was taken. The question the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was anxious to raise again was precisely the same question as that which had already been twice before decided.

Mr. HENEAGE said, he hoped there would be a clear understanding in regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham)—that whoever moved the first Amendment in regard to fixing the date, it would be perfectly competent for the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Gray), or anybody else, to propose an alteration of the date.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) entirely misunderstood the whole point at issue. His right hon. and gallant Friend did not desire to fix any date, and, therefore, the question of the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham) could receive no answer. The House had come down fully prepared to discuss the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend, and his right hon. and gallant Friend had no option but to move it.

Mr. ALBERT GREY thought the noble Lord had been rather hard on the hon. Member for Grimsby. The position was this. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) would be perfectly in Order in moving his Amendment upon any proposal to fix the date on which the Act should come into operation, and, therefore, appeals had been made to the right hon. and gallant Member to withdraw his Amendment for the present, and to bring it on upon a subsequent occasion. It must be evident that, whatever the result of this Amendment might be, there must be another discussion and Division, and the right hon. Gentleman was only precipitating matters and bringing about two discussions and two Divisions instead of one.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL made a further appeal to the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire to withdraw his Amendment. Many hon. Members sitting on those Benches felt that the arguments which had been brought forward in favour of the postponement of the Amendment were quite conclusive.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was one of the last persons who would desire to intervene in a discussion of this kind. His only object in interfering now was that he had at heart the wish that the Bill should not come into operation until they had a Redistribution Bill before them. It was for that reason that he ventured to ask his right hon. and gallant Friend not at that moment to press his Amendment. His right hon. and gallant Friend, as a good general, would know that it was not desirable, but, on the contrary, would be most unfortunate, to divide his forces. He thought they ought to present a united front; and believing, as he did, that his right hon. and gallant Friend would have an equal if not a better opportunity for discussing the question later on, he would press upon him at that moment the advisability of withdrawing his Amendment.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON pointed out that if his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) yielded to the appeal made to him, hon. Members who would otherwise vote for his Amendment would be voting against it.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, this was not, in his opinion, the most convenient part of the Bill in which to discuss the point. He had given Notice of an Amendment to provide that the Act should not come into operation until a Bill was passed for the redistribution of seats in the United Kingdom, which, he thought, expressed in a better form the intention of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, who, he trusted, would not press his Amendment to a Division.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Colonel STANLEY: Sir, I need not assure the Committee that it is only under a very strong sense of duty that I can bring myself to resist the appeals which have been made to me from various quarters of the House. At the same time, it is because those appeals have been based upon some misconception of fact, and upon some misconception of the principle involved, that I feel bound to submit to the Committee the Amendment standing in my name. Its object is pretty plain, and the Amendment itself has been before the Committee now for some considerable time. I do not propose it as being in itself the best or most convenient course to take, except under the circumstances in which we find ourselves; but I desire to do that which lies in my power as a Member of this House to make the Government put on record that which they have already stated in debate over and over again to be their intention, but which, on the face of the Bill, there is nothing to show that they mean to carry into effect. I believe it would have been far wiser if the Government had brought forward their proposal in one Bill. The Prime Minister says he did not do so mainly, I believe, on tactical grounds, and the reason which he gave was expressed in language somewhat curious, considering the direction in which hon. Gentlemen opposite generally vote. He said that these local interests were touched, upon exceptional if not selfish grounds, by a measure opposed to the extension franchise; but it seems to me rather a left-handed argument to say to his own supporters that they would prefer rather to consider their local and personal interests than the general welfare of the country. There is a very wide difference between the proposal to deal with this matter by any reference to dates, whatever those dates may be, and, on the other hand, insisting that the Bill shall not come into operation until the House can make it a complete measure, which is the object I have in view in proposing this Amendment. It should be remembered that this Bill is proposed in the fifth year of the present Parliament, in circumstances of great anxiety all round, and yet it is assumed that one and the same Parliament shall deal both with the question of the extension of the franchise and of the redistribution of seats. I do not doubt that the Government wish that redistribution should follow closely upon this measure, and, as I have already stated, the object of moving this Amendment is to put on record and to test the sincerity of the Government as to the professions they have made. There are those among us, whatever our views are upon the franchise, who feel that in redistribution lies the whole key to the situation. We know what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) and the noble Lord the Member for North-East Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) have said. A frank warning was given that the reform was not such as would be likely to meet with their favour, and though it is true that the Prime Minister treats as a matter of comparative indifference the occurrence of a General Election, should such occur between the time when the one Bill should be passed and the other come before Parliament, it does not appear that that in any way disposes of the difficulty. It is not the representation of the individual, but the representation of the people, as a whole, that we are considering, and the argument of the Prime Minister leaves out of sight the alterations in constituencies which may take place in a subsequent interval. What would happen if Parliament were dissolved before a Redistribution Bill was passed? One thing is certain—namely, that you will be appealing, not to the constituencies as they existed, or as you intend them to exist, but to a sort of hybrid body which is neither one thing or another. If the Government said they were going to deal with the question as one of electoral districts, my argument would be weakened; but it is clearly stated that they mean to keep apart the county and borough representation as such; and, therefore, it becomes necessary to see to what extent the representation in the counties and boroughs would be temporarily confused during the time of an election under the circumstances I have described, and before there was time to adjust the boundaries. With the permission of the Committee, I should like to give a few figures bearing upon this subject, which have been taken out very carefully, and, I believe, verified. I want to show how the representation in certain places will be changed. In East Cheshire there are now, in round numbers, 7,000 electors, and it is estimated that under the operation of the Bill there will be 19,000. In Mid Cheshire there are 9,990, or practically 10,000, electors; they will become 23,000. In West Cheshire there are 13,000 electors, and these will be more than doubled; they will be increased to 27,000. In North Lancashire there are 18,000 electors, and under the proposed conditions they will number 42,000. In North-East Lancashire there are 13,000 electors; they will become 42,000. In South-East Lancashire there are 28,000 electors; they will become no fewer than 90,000. In South-West Lancashire there are 28,000 electors; they will become 73,000. In East Suffolk 9,900 electors, or practically 10,000, who will be increased to 31,000. In North Northumberland there are 4,500 electors, they will become nearly 12,000; and in South Northumberland there are 9,000 electors, who will, on the proposed conditions, be increased to 21,000. I will not weary the Committee with giving further instances. It must, however, be borne in mind that, although the individual electors may be exercising the same vote in the one case as in the other, there will be a direct disturbing influence exerted upon all the constituencies concerned. The Bill will take from this borough and give to that county, and it will give to that county and absorb what properly belongs to that borough. Of course, I do not want to insist now upon the very obvious inference which has been drawn over and over again from the system of grouping; but I say it is essential to have the two Bills before us in order that we may see that the redistribution scheme is one that the House can fairly be asked to assent to. It is easy, as has been suggested, to arrange the grouping so as to swamp a hostile constituency or to make one of an opposite character quite secure, and that is a point which cannot be left out of sight in dealing fairly with this question. My point is, that while my Amendment need not delay the Bill one hour, yet it calls upon the House to affirm the principle that the two Bills should be considered as a whole and come into operation together. I desire, particularly after the discussion which has taken place, to say that it is far from my wish to act in any way discourteously to the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey); but, at the same time, it seems to me that the principles of our several Amendments are entirely separate. The question with me is one of completeness. If you are to treat these two measures as a whole, whether you pass one now and another later, I say that the two should come into operation together; and I venture, by the way, to point out that the Government could give no stronger weapon into the hands of their opponents, or do anything more likely to endanger the passage of the Bill, than to leave it incomplete. We have already had the suggestion from an hon. Member that redistribution might be accelerated, and we cannot help thinking that, if it only depends upon dates, in the many chances of Parliamentary life something may occur to cause this Bill to go forward and to leave the other question to be decided afterwards. The hon. Member referred to the Bill of 1867; but I would point out that there is nothing analogous in the two positions, because it is quite possible that in the present case redistribution might be put aside altogether. With regard to the question of dates, it seems to me that the fixing of a date might sometimes lead us into considerable difficulty, for it must be borne in mind that dates may be restrictive as well as definitive. In making this proposal, I am simply asking the Committee to affirm that the two measures shall come into operation at the same time, because redistribution is for all purposes part and parcel of any scheme of enfranchisement. Sir, I beg to move the Amendment of which I have given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 11, at the end of the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words "and after the passing of an Act to be passed for amending the Acts which settle and describe the divisions of counties and the limits of cities and boroughs of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of the election of Members to serve in Parliament."—(*Colonel Stanley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, it would be very easy, I think, to criticize the terms of the rather peculiar Amendment which has been moved by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. I conceive his meaning to be that the Franchise Bill, should it pass into law, shall take no effect until a Redistribution Bill is passed, although that meaning is not expressed in the terms of the Amendment. The terms are that it shall not come into effect until a Boundary Bill is passed. There is no reference here to the enfranchisement or disfranchisement of boroughs, there is only a reference to boundaries; and although the boundaries are an important part of the scheme, whether in the measure or not, the essence of it lies in enfranchisement and disfranchisement, and, consequently, the terms of the Amendment might be satisfied and our Franchise Bill might take effect if we brought in a Bill for altering the boundaries of certain constituencies, although the important part of redistribution—namely, enfranchisement and disfranchisement—were left out of the measure. I think that hon. Gentlemen opposite who appealed to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to withdraw his Amendment, if they had looked into the terms of it, would have perceived that it gave no effect to his real purpose, because it does not require that a Redistribution Bill should pass before the Franchise Bill takes effect. I do not think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will question the truth or the accuracy of what I say. However, the real point to be considered is whether, in the few words I shall have to say, I shall take the Amendment according to its terms or according to its intention. I have said that if we are to accept it according to its terms, we should be able to pass by its intention, because we should not be required to deal with the great subject of enfranchisement or disfranchisement; but I take it according to its intention, and, while admitting that it is a new form of raising the question whether redistribution or enfranchisement must necessarily be dealt with together, I am afraid it is the worst form in which it can come before us. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman proposes that words should be inserted in the Bill for the purpose of enacting that, to use his own euphonious language, the measures of Reform and Redistribution should form but one measure. That would not be my way of stating it; but if such a proposal were carried out, it would be in the power of 300 Gentlemen in the House of Lords not only to refuse to pass a Redistribution Bill, but absolutely to nullify the whole of the labour we should have expended on the Franchise Bill, and that without limit of time. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman says he does not want the insertion of any date in the Bill. No, Sir; certainly not. What he wants is that the question of the franchise shall be absolutely and entirely and unconditionally hung up, after the House has expended its labour upon it. Well, Sir, I do not think it necessary to enter into any detailed argument as regards that proposition. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman says this is not a complete measure. Sir, there never was a complete measure of Reform before Parliament. It was just as necessary that Scotland and Ireland should have Reform Bills in 1832 and 1867, before English Reform could take effect, as it is now that a Redistribution Bill should be enacted before the Bill for Enfranchisement should take effect, and yet no one thought it necessary to insert in the Bills of 1832 and 1867 clauses saying that those Bills should not take effect until Bills for Scotland and Ireland had been passed. Such is the bulk and mass and scope of a Bill dealing with Reform, that it has never been found practicable to deal with all the questions that belong to the subject in one and the same measure. According to the intention of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, as expressed in his speech, though I am bound to say it is not expressed in his Amendment, the adoption of his proposal would be an utter nullification of the Bill; so that it is conceivable, if Parties in this House or "elsewhere" were strong enough to prevent the passing of a measure of Redistribution, that 2,000,000 of people, declared to be fit to vote and invested by the law of the land with the right to be registered, would be entirely disappointed, and fed, so to speak, upon ashes instead of the fruit promised to them.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, there was no greater fallacy than to say that the Committee were asked to discuss what had already been discussed before. He entirely differed from that view. The question was also one that they would not have an opportunity of discussing in all its bearings upon the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Albert Grey). What had been discussed before was whether enfranchisement and redistribution should be contained in the same measure. They were now discussing whether or not they ought to have before them the redistribution scheme before the present Bill should become operative. Was that a reasonable proposal? In his opinion it was absolutely so, and, moreover, just, and in accordance with precedent. If he were to detain the Committee he could quote passage after passage from speeches of hon. Members opposite to the effect that a scheme of redistribution was the very essence of this scheme of Reform. Therefore, he thought they were entitled to claim that a redistribution scheme should be passed into law before this Bill came into operation. At no previous time had any portion of Reform taken effect until the whole scheme had passed into law, previous Governments having always taken care to do that before an appeal was made to the country; and if that were not done in the present case, they would run the risk of having a new electorate with the old constituencies. The right hon. Gentleman had objected to the proposal on the ground that it would lead to the disappointment of 2,000,000 of persons who were waiting for the franchise which had been promised to them. But it was necessary to take care that, under the plea of justice, they did not perpetrate a mischievous injustice. He believed it was the duty of that House to give to the agricultural interest its fair share of representation in the country, and he quite admitted that one of the effects of the Bill might be to take away the power of the farmer. But the farmers did not represent the agricultural interest. If this Bill, as it stood, were passed into law, and a Dissolution took place before a Redistribution Bill was passed, the effect would be that the agricultural interest would be swamped by the urban element introduced into the constituencies; and, so far from having a fair share, it would have an unfair share in the representation. Then, it was asked, why they objected in counties to what they were ready enough to advocate in the case of boroughs? He would not detain the Committee by pointing out the essential difference between the two cases at length, but would simply observe that in the one they had a homogeneous population, and in the other they had not. But the most important difference was that the Government were going to apply their measure to admittedly temporary constituencies. His right hon. and gallant Friend had pointed out the enormous alteration which would take place in the case of the constituencies in Lancashire and elsewhere. What would be the position of one who should contest any of these constituencies? He would be contesting a temporary constituency which, the moment the Redistribution Bill was passed, would be broken up into fragments. He said this would be putting candidates in a wholly false and unfair position; and, therefore, he contended it was necessary to present to the country a complete scheme of redistribution and enfranchisement. The right hon. Gentleman went on to point out that if the Amendment were carried, it would place the whole subject at the mercy of the House of Lords; but he (Mr. E. Stanhope) said that it would also give the Government an opportunity of fulfilling their pledge of bringing in a Redistribution Bill. He did not believe they could do so in the present Parliament; but the proposal would, at any rate, allow them to try, and if they did not succeed, then let the operation of the Bill be postponed until the next Parliament, when the country would have before it the whole scheme of the Government.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he wished to say a few words on the principle of the Amendment, as to which he entertained a strong opinion. The Prime Minister had told them that if the Amendment were adopted it would not have the effect which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman wished. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken did not allude to the object of the Amendment; but it was the same as that of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey)—namely, that ift here were a General Election after the passing of the Bill, and before the passing of a Redistribution Bill, the new electors should not vote. That appeared to him a most impossible course to take, and the proposal seemed to him so unjust to the electors that it should be withdrawn. Some hon. Members might not agree with that view; but let them consider how the Amendment would work, not merely in the towns, say, of Lancashire and Yorkshire, but with regard to the enormous masses of people in the manufacturing villages and districts, which were very similar to towns. Let the Committee imagine the feelings of those people when they found that Parliament had given them the right to vote, but that they were not to use it upon the question in which they had the greatest interest—namely, in what apportionment and in what district they should vote. It seemed to him that to state the object of the Amendment was to give a sufficient answer to it; but the overpowering argument against it was that the rankling feeling of injustice created amongst the new voters would be such as, in his opinion, no Government could meet, or the House itself venture to look forward to.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman that there would be any injustice in taking a General Election on the present constituencies in case the Government failed to deal with the question of redistribution, because it had always been held that redistribution and enfranchisement should go together, and that one was inseparable from the other. To his mind, the new voters had not the right to vote until redistribution had taken place. Therefore, he could not assent to the proposition laid down so poetically by the Prime Minister about the voters who were going to be enfranchised by this measure not having their rights fully recognized by Parliament until a re-arrangement had been made. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), in the speech he had just made, had talked about some friendly arrangement between himself (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the Prime Minister, and about playing into the hands of the Liberal Party. A more trumpery and ridiculous proposition could not possibly have been laid before the House; and he wanted to know which was the more likely to be open to that charge—the right hon. Gentleman or himself? That was a matter which he would confidently leave to the House and the public. It was no exaggeration to say that one-half of the Conservative Party were pledged to the assimilation of the county and borough franchise; and that half, he believed, were genuinely anxious to see an extension of the franchise, although they coupled that extension with redistribution of seats. But there was another Party who were undoubtedly opposed to Reform, and they were those who were planning to defeat the Caucuses. He was under the impression at one time that opposition to Reform on principle was upheld by the Conservative Party; but the reason why he had altogether departed from that view was that it happened to him in the autumn to make a speech on the question of Reform, in which he undoubtedly opposed Reform on principle; but the delightful experience happened to him that the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) got upon the platform and pointedly and completely disagreed with everything he had said. Having found from that reliable source of information that opposition to Reform on principle did not recommend itself to the Conservative Party as a whole, he naturally enough made haste to abandon what was so unpalatable to his Friends. What had taken place on the second reading of the Bill? The noble Lord, the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) got up in the name of the Conservative Party, and under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), moved an Amendment, giving the public to understand that the Conservative Party were anxious to deal with Reform, but in a more complete manner than was proposed by the Government. The course adopted by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was completely at variance with that honest statement of the intention of the Conservative Party; because if they wanted to get a complete measure of Reform, they could do it in two ways—either by requiring the Government to deal with it completely in one Bill, or by persuading or compelling them to make such arrangements as would enable them to deal with the supplementary parts of Reform next year. Now, they had no power to compel the Government to bring in one Bill to deal with the whole subject; but, considering what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House with regard to redistribution, he thought they had the power to persuade the Government to undertake that redistribution should be dealt with next year. Undoubtedly that object would be attained by the adoption of an Amendment similar in terms to the Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey). He did not in the least say that this was a necessary Amendment; but he thought that the object of those Conservatives who were in favour of Reform would be attained if the 1st of January, 1886, was made the date for the commencement of the operation of the Bill. That he thought was the natural date; and if that date were put in the Reform Bill he saw no reason whatever why this Bill should not pass into law, taking into account the declarations which the Government had made, that they intended to introduce a Redistribution Bill next Session. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley), who moved this Amendment in defiance of the appeals from all quarters of the House, certainly did not take this course from obstinacy or from discourtesy to the hon. Member for South Northumberland, because there was no more courteous Member in the House than the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; but he took this course, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) was afraid, from another motive, which was to damage the chances of those who wished to see the date, the 1st January, 1886, put in the Bill. He would briefly explain to the House why he thought that was so. If a date, in accordance with the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, the Member for South Northumberland, were put in the Reform Bill, the Bill must pass into law, and would not be likely, in his opinion, to meet with an evil fate in "another place;" but there were those who did not wish this Reform Bill to become law, and they knew that if a date was put into the Bill it would, coupled with the pledges of the Government, make redistribution certain, and they knew that in that case it would be hardly possible, or, at any rate, it would be in the highest degree dangerous, for the House of Lords to throw out the Bill. The course, therefore, which was being taken tonight, must be fatal to the hopes of those who wished to see this question of the franchise fairly dealt with by the Government; who wished to support the Government in the action they were now taking. The course which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was taking in this matter was intended to prevent the House of Lords from being placed in a position of very great difficulty in regard to the fate of this Bill. He regretted immensely that such a course should have been adopted; he could not understand Members of the Tory Party standing up and saying—"We will resist this Reform Bill; we hope it will be thrown out; let us go to the people on the question of Reform." He could not quite understand such a course, neither could he understand the attempt on the part of certain Conservative Members to take up a position calculated to impress the public with the idea that they were anxious to deal with Reform, when the line they were taking made it clear they were opposed to all Reform. That was an arrangement he would not be a party to. He believed they might fairly rely upon their position with regard to redistribution if a date were put in the Bill. In view of the pledges of Her Majesty's Government, he saw no reasonable danger at all from the adoption of such a course. He felt convinced that that was not a course which many Members of the Radical Party would like to see adopted. He believed there was a large number of Radicals in the country and in the House—possibly even, for all he knew, in the Government—who would be glad to see an Election take place upon what would be a deformed and monstrous constituency; and if hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House wished to play into the hands of the Radical Party they could not take a better course for the purpose than the one that had been suggested by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley). It was quite clear to him that the principle of the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was practically the same as the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland; but it was deliberately brought on at a moment when the Committee at large were indisposed to consider it. If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman went to a Division the principle of the Amendment would be fatally damaged, and the chances of the hon. Member for South Northumberland getting his views to prevail with the House of Commons would be hopeless. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) thought it was just as well the House should know exactly how these matters stood. There was a portion, and he believed a large portion, and a most influential portion of the Conservative Party—judging from the declarations hon. Gentlemen had made—who were honestly in favour of extending the franchise in the manner proposed by the Government—namely, by assimilating the county and the borough franchise; but there was a section of the Party who were not in favour of taking that course, but who would not say so, who pretended they were in favour of it, and yet took a course which completely ruined the chances of those who wished to see adopted a complete system of Reform.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) had informed the Committee that he had reached his present position on the subject in his desire, to use his own phrase, to be in accord with the Conservative Party. His noble Friend had made many efforts of that kind; but they did not seem to be crowned with absolute success, and the noble Lord had given him the credit—the most undeserved credit—of having converted him from his old to his new views on the Franchise Question by the remarks he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) made in Scotland. The noble Lord stated that he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) got up at a public meeting and contradicted him in every particular. He, however, had a very lively recollection of the incident to which his noble Friend referred; and what really happened was this. His noble Friend had made a very able and interesting speech on Reform; and he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was requested to move a vote of thanks to him. He undertook the task with extreme pleasure, and carried it through to the best of his ability. His noble Friend in the course of his speech stated that in his opinion the agricultural labourer was unfit for the franchise. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not pretend to have any intimate knowledge of the agricultural labourer of England, but he had a very intimate knowledge of the agricultural labourers of Scotland; and speaking in Edinburgh, as they were then, he felt bound to say that if they were going to bring in a Reform Bill and increase the electorate, there was no class in the Kingdom more fitted to receive the franchise than the agricultural labourers in the South of Scotland. That was the sole difference of opinion with his noble Friend that he expressed on that occasion; and he could hardly believe that it was simply owing to that very innocent remark that the noble Lord had changed the whole of the views which he entertained upon the Franchise Question. Now, his noble Friend occupied the greater part of his speech in unfolding to the public a dark plot, which he seemed to think existed amongst a large part of the Conservative Party in the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: On the Front Bench.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, the Front Bench. At all events, in the opinion of the noble Lord, there existed a dark and mysterious plot, invented, he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) presumed, on the Front Opposition Bench, and supported by half of the Conservative Party, by which, while appearing to go in for Reform, they really and truly meant to defeat it. He confessed that he had listened most carefully to the remarks of the noble Lord; but he had not been in the least able to discover in what the plot consisted. It appeared to him that the line taken by the Conservative Party was perfectly plain and consistent. His noble Friend was quite right in saying that the Conservative Party was not absolutely united on the question of the advisability of another Reform Bill. There were Members, like his noble Friend and himself, who had stated publicly that they were in favour of assimilating the county and borough franchise; but they had always associated that statement with another—that assimilation must go with redistribution of seats. Now, what was the argument they took up with regard to the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley), and that of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey)? His own view was that if either of these Amendments were carried, it would not be a good Bill. It would still be a very bad Bill. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) spoke the truth when he said that nothing could be more inconvenient, nothing, perhaps, could be more dangerous, and nothing certainly would create more discontent, than to pass a measure virtually equalizing the franchise in the boroughs and counties, and to have a Dissolution in which they did not allow people they had enfranchised to vote. He granted that absolutely; and he, therefore, hoped that as they had not been able to throw the Bill out in this House, it would be thrown out in the other House. Of course, he fully granted that the Bill would be amended by the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley), or by the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey); but still it would remain a very bad Bill, a Bill open to all the objections raised against it by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford. Was there anything disingenuous in this course? Was it not a plain and perfectly straightforward opinion. He could not see how any person holding that view could be supposed to have any dark idea of the character referred to by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill). He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said let them have Reform, but let them have it with redistribution; and if he voted, as he should vote, for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's (Colonel Stanley's) Amendment, it was because he looked upon it as a palliative.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought it would be very inconvenient and very injudicious if, when an Election took place after this Bill was passed into law, the new electors had not the power to vote; but he could not think they would have any reason to complain and find fault if such were the consequence of the mode of proceeding of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) seemed to think that if an Election took place after the Bill passed it would be a heart-breaking thing if the newly-enfranchised electors could not vote. The Bill would not come into force until 1886. What did the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) want to do by this Amendment? He did not wish to interfere with that arrangement, but simply to provide that there should be an opportunity afforded for the Government to do what they said they were anxious to do—namely, to introduce a Redistribution Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had repeatedly said it was their intention to bring in such a measure; and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had repeated that intention in most emphatic language. What, in reality, was the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley)? It was not that they should be obliged to settle the burning question as to whether Birmingham should have five or six Members, or Manchester three Members, but that some arrangement should be made for redistribution. He would mention the case of one county in the South of England, which would serve as an illustration of the necessity of redistribution. It was estimated that the Franchise Bill would add 20,000 electors to the existing 10,000 electors in South Hampshire. Now, where would those electors be found? In the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, Southampton, and possibly Christchurch. They were men who were already virtually represented by the two Members for Portsmouth, the two for Southampton, and the one for Christchurch; but they would be brought into the county constituency overwhelming the present electors to the absolute extinction of the great and varied county interests. That would be so great an anomaly, and so absurd a position, that he could not understand the Government not accepting the Amendment of this right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley). He had no doubt the Government would fulfil their pledges and introduce a Bill; but by accepting an Amendment of this kind, or an Amendment similar to that upon the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for South Northumberland, they would make their intention clear, and would make it certain that one Bill should not come into operation without the other. That seemed a moderate and reasonable proposal. It was one which the Government ought to accept in accordance with the pledges they had given; and he was perfectly certain that by accepting this or some such Amendment they would add immensely to the probability of the Bill passing through the other House of Parliament.

MR. BRYCE said, the Committee were indebted to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) for the interesting description he had given of the divisions amongst his political Friends. Some little while ago, there was much talk of a compromise or arrangement which had been entered into by mutually distrustful Members of the Conservative Party. In a case of compromise, the question was naturally asked —"Who has made the surrender?" After the speech of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), the Committee had the advantage of knowing who had not made the surrender. The speech of the noble Lord contained very valuable arguments against this Amendment. He (Mr. Bryce) did not think the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) was a good one, but it was better than that now under consideration; and it would be perfectly open for his hon. Friend (Mr. Albert Grey) to vote against the present Amendment and then propose his own. The cat was let out of the bag by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who admitted that this Amendment was a bad one, and that its defect was shown by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who pointed out how impossible it would be to ask a large number of persons who had been admitted by law to the franchise to stand by, with their power to exercise the franchise deferred, while others voted. The hon. Member for Hertford admitted, also, that this Amendment would have the effect of wrecking the Bill, and therefore, he said, he should vote for it. He (Mr. Bryce) thought that, after the exposure which had taken place, right hon. Gentlemen opposite would hardly think it worth while to go to a Division. It was impossible to conceive an Amendment which was worse both in principle and in practice than the present. It would create widespread discontent amongst the classes who were kept unenfranchised, and it would have the effect of postponing redistribution.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Bryce) had said the House was indebted to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) for having enlightened them as to the plots and plans of Her Majesty's Opposition; but he assured the hon. Gentleman that if he looked to his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock for the plans and schemes of Her Majesty's Opposition, he would look in vain. No doubt, if the noble Lord had been plotting and planning, or was cognizant of the plots and plans of his Friends seated on the same side of the House as himself, he would be the last man in such an arena as this to denounce and make them public. What his noble Friend might do if he found himself on such a platform as he described he occupied at Edinburgh, among his own particular friends, he (Lord John Manners) could not presume to say. Possibly the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) might express his opinion on the demerits of his friends and the merits of his opponents; but he was perfectly certain that in the House he would not take advantage of knowledge of what had passed among his political Friends and associates. Therefore, he (Lord John Manners) thought the hon. Gentleman was quite unjustified in the observation he had made. The noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) had appealed to him (Lord John Manners), as having moved the Amendment on the second reading of the Bill, to establish the truth of his position; and he said that the Conservative Party, on the second reading, wished to establish itself in the position of agreeing to the uniformity of the franchise. He was inclined to think that his noble Friend had forgotten both the speech which he (Lord John Manners) had made and the Amendment which he made, and which the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) himself voted for. There was no word in that speech or Amendment in favour of this or any other measure of Parliamentary Reform. He drew no conclusion from that, and he did not ask the House to draw any conclusion. His noble Friend must have been thinking of a cognate Amendment of 1866 by Lord Derby. Undoubtedly, that Amendment was to the effect that the House of Commons was prepared to consider a measure of Parliamentary Reform if redistribution were coupled with it. In the Amendment which he had moved, however, there was no such reference. What he asked the House to affirm was that it would not proceed further with the consideration of this particular measure, unless it was accompanied by a declaration on the part of the Government of the whole of their scheme of Reform. That was what he asked his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) to assent to. His noble Friend did assent to that view, and so did the united body of the Conservative Party. The noble Lord now said that he spoke on behalf of one-half of the Conservative Party.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I did not say anything of the kind.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that, whatever the noble Lord said, he appeared to speak on behalf of so many sections of the House that he (Lord John Manners) felt quite bewildered as to the people for whom he was really speaking, and, indeed, as to the cause which he was then espousing. He was under the impression that the noble Lord had accused his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) of entering into a plot to destroy this measure, and to put the House of Lords into an almost hopeless condition. His right hon. and gallant Friend had done nothing of the kind. Nothing could be more clear, distinct, frank, or loyal than the position his right hon. and gallant Friend had taken up from the first. The Amendment had been on the Paper for weeks, and everyone had known of his intention to proceed with it. Up to this moment, he had not been aware that it did not carry with it the sanction of his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill). He regretted that it had not the noble Lord's sanction; but when the noble Lord assailed his right hon. and gallant Friend with vigour, and ended by saying that he regarded the Amendment as an attempt to extricate the House of Lords from an unfortunate and dangerous position in which that Body might find itself, he (Lord John Manners) confessed, as a Conservative, that he did not know there was any great blame to be attached to the Amendment on that ground. Could it be supposed that an Amendment which would extricate the House of Lords from a dangerous and difficult position was really worthy of the condemnation with which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had assailed it? Towards the close of his speech his noble Friend said—"Why, after all, the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) is identical in principle with the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey)." Why, then, should the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend be denounced in the way it had been by the noble Lord? It might be a question which of those Amendments was the more entitled to support. In his opinion, it was worth while to support them both. If his right hon. and gallant Friend's Amendment were rejected, he should have very great pleasure in supporting that of the hon. Member for South Northumberland; but, for the reasons which had been already assigned, he was of opinion that, of the two Amendments, the wiser and preferable one was that of his right hon. and gallant Friend. His right hon. and gallant Friend had fulfilled the promise he had given to his Party and to the country; and he (Lord John Manners) sincerely hoped that he would go to a Division.

Mr. GORST said, that after the explanation which the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) had just made to the Committee, to the House of Commons, and to his followers, as to the motive which led him to move the Amendment to the second reading of the Bill, an Amendment for which the Conservative Party were induced to vote in a body, the noble Lord could not be surprised if some Members of the Opposition looked to the Amendments coming from him and his Friends with a little suspicion and a little caution before they voted for them. A great number of the Members of the Conservative Party voted for the Amendment of the noble Lord on the second reading under the idea that they were expressing, by their vote, the opinion which the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) just now expressed—namely, that they were favourable to the assimilation of the county and the borough franchise; but they desired to see it coupled with a scheme of redistribution, and thus made a complete measure. That was the idea with which he (Mr. Gorst) voted for the Amendment of the noble Lord. He had always held the opinion which was so eloquently and ably expressed just now by the hon. Member for Hertford; but the difficulty he had always found himself in was getting people to believe in it. Not only in the House of Commons, but even among one's own constituents out-of-doors, he found that the zeal of a Conservative Member for the principle of the assimilation of the county and borough franchise was apt to be looked upon somewhat sceptically; and he must say he did not wonder at it if the Conservative Party in general was to express such opinions as those expressed by the hon. Member for Hertford—namely, that while wishing to see the franchise in the counties and boroughs assimilated, while wishing to see a complete measure of Reform, they, at the same time, hoped devoutly that the House of Lords would throw out the present Bill. That represented a concatenation of opinions in the sincerity of which he found it impossible to believe. Look what would happen. Suppose the House of Lords passed the present Bill. Her Majesty's Government were pledged, as deeply as any Government could be pledged, to deal with redistribution next year. The fact was pointed out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that the newly enfranchised voters would not come on the Register and get their franchise until the 1st January, 1886; therefore, in all human probability—as far as anything could be considered probable in Parliamentary life—if the House of Lords passed the present Bill in this Session of Parliament there would be a Redistribution Bill passed next year, and some time in 1886 there might be an appeal to the new constituencies. Look what would happen if the House of Lords fulfilled the fervent hope of his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who had peculiar means of knowing the mind of the Tory Leaders in the House of Lords. Suppose the House of Lords threw out the present Bill. It would then be almost impossible for the Government to pass a Redistribution Bill before the close of the present Parliament. Government would then be driven to this dilemma—they must either pass no measure of Reform at all, in which case, when the Conservatives went to the constituencies, they would be called very severely over the coals, or the Government would have to pass a very partial measure, which the Opposition so strongly condemned and were so desirous not to see passed; if the House of Lords threw out the Reform Bill this year Her Majesty's Government would find it difficult to pass, during the present Parliament, that complete measure of Reform which he believed the Conservative Party so much desired to see. No one, probably, would believe him, but he really wanted to see the county and borough franchise assimilated; he wanted to see a Redistribution Bill passed; but he could not couple that desire with the earnest and fervent hope that the House of Lords would throw out this Bill. The Amendment that was put forward this afternoon seemed to be one very much intended to bring about that result; and he understood the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) to state that it was an Amendment to strengthen the position of the House of Lords. What would happen if the new clause of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) were adopted by the Committee? Why, as the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) said, and as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) said, it would be almost impossible for the House of Lords to throw out the Bill; and, therefore, he (Mr. Gorst) thought he was right in saying that the noble Lord, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and their Friends on the Front Opposition Bench, did not want an Amendment of such a nature to be inserted in the Bill. It was pointed out over and over again by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), who certainly was not open to any charge of disloyalty to his Party, that the moving of this Amendment this afternoon prejudiced the chance of the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland being inserted in the Bill. That was also pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) in response to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who moved the Amendment now under discussion. What conclusion must be drawn from the attitude assumed by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) and his Friends? The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) drew the conclusion that the Amendment was not intended to pass, but was meant to be defeated in the House this afternoon; that it was meant to prejudice the chances of the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland, in order that the Bill might go up to the House of Lords in a state in which that House would be more justified in throwing it out. He really thought this was an occasion on which the honesty and candour of their wishes might be tested. If they wanted the Franchise Bill to pass, accompanied by a Redistribution Bill, they could not want the House of Lords to throw the Bill out unless it was absolutely necessary to do so. If they wanted to send the Bill up to the House of Lords in a state in which it would be difficult for that Assembly to throw it out, they ought to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland, and they ought not to encourage the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) to spoil the chances of that Amendment by taking a Division upon the present Amendment.

Mr. LEWIS wished to refer to one subject of a practical character which he thought the Committee would admit was one of great importance—namely, how, under this Bill, registration was to work. As far as he was concerned, it was no part of his duty to answer the suspicions of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). Those Members of the Opposition who were not on the Front Bench had to sit by with great complacency and hear the attacks made from certain quarters of the House upon the right hon. Gentlemen occupying seats on that Bench. They were not aware of the suspicions alluded to by the hon. and learned Gentleman; and all they could do was to deplore the way in which persons, professing and advocating Conservative principles, thought proper to advance their views. He had to say, however, that he knew something of the constituency of Chatham. He knew something of the Conservative Party in Chatham; and he ventured to say that if that Party in Chatham were to be polled it would be found that nine-tenths of the hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. Gorst's) constituents were averse to the course the hon. and learned Gentleman was pursuing. He regretted that it seemed to be the delight of one or two Members of the Conservative Party to create day by day divergences, and to present points of difficulty. The Party to which he belonged were not seeking Office, and all they could do was to allow those who thought proper to stand in the way of the interests of that Party to indulge themselves to their hearts' content. As he had said, he wanted to draw the attention of the Committee to a point which he was pursuaded that the Attorney General would admit to be of vital importance. Taking this Bill as it stood, when could they obtain a registration of voters? Certainly not this year—that must be conceded by everybody; it was utterly impossible, considering the present stage of the Bill and the time of the Session—the 23rd of May—that any hope could be entertained of obtaining a registration of voters this year; consequently the Bill could not affect any election that took place in 1886. Now, let them see what the Government had proposed. The Government had said that they should have a Registration Bill next Session; but unless a Registration Bill passed before the month of June next year it would be impossible to get a registration of voters under the two Bills—the Franchise Bill and the Redistribution Bill—which could operate before 1887. He should like to know whether the Government had seriously contemplated that position of affairs? He challenged the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to deny that it was utterly impossible, under this Bill, to obtain a registration of voters, which should be effective, until the end of next year or the beginning of the following year. If the Government were sincere—

and he believed them to be sincere—in their promise to introduce a Redistribution Bill, unless a Redistribution Bill became law and received the Royal Assent before the end of June, 1885, it would be impossible to obtain a Registration Bill that would be operative until 1887. The consequence would be that in the year 1886, when, according to the Constitutional theory of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, there ought to be a Dissolution, they would be exactly in the state which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) so much deprecated—namely, that persons entitled to be enfranchised would be standing by while a General Election took place. It appeared to him that the Government had never really faced this most important question. It was a matter of vital importance as regarded the main question whether a Registration Bill ought not to be brought in side by side with this Bill. As to the Amendments—namely, that of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), he considered that in all probability the time fixed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland would be the very earliest date by which it would be possible to get both Bills, the Franchise Bill and the Redistribution Bill, into working order, although he himself had no hesitation in saying that he preferred the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley). He should certainly vote for the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend, because it was essentially necessary to point out to the Government how they were to deal with the question of registration in order to enfranchise the new constituents. His opinion was—and he thought most Members of the Committee would agree with him—that it was utterly impossible to suppose that a Registration Bill would pass both Houses by June in next year, unless the Government were to give up the whole of the time at their disposal for the purpose of carrying into law such a Bill. In the event of the Government not being able to carry such a Bill by that time, what would be the position of the persons whom it was now proposed to enfranchise? They would not be able to be registered as voters even in the year 1885, because hon. Members would recollect that the machinery of registration began in the month of July; and if they had new constituencies, if the present boroughs were materially changed, if the county constituencies were enlarged, and various other alterations made, the altered arrangements would necessitate many alterations in registration which would require that the overseers should do things in the month of July which at present they were not required to do. That was a practical question, and it ought to be dealt with in a practical way by the Government.

MR. RAIKES said, he scarcely thought, when some time ago he appealed to his right hon. and gallant Friend not to press his Amendment this afternoon, that he (Colonel Stanley) would have had such very considerable cause to regret the course he had taken, after what had taken place in that debate. He regretted exceedingly that his right hon. and gallant Friend had not seen his way to accede to the request he (Mr. Raikes) had made. With regard to the matters that had been raised in this discussion, he wished to point out for one moment how this Amendment differed from the previous Amendment which had been moved with respect to redistribution. When he moved an Instruction on going into Committee, he endeavoured to point out to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government and to the House what was the essential distinction between that Instruction and the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire. The distinction was that the one refused the Bill because it was incomplete, and the other proposed to supplement the Bill. Now, this Amendment did not propose to refuse or to supplement the Bill; but it proposed to suspend the Bill. He wished to draw some attention to that distinction, because, while he supported the Motion of the noble Lord and moved his Instruction, he found himself unable to support the proposition of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley). Much had been said, in the course of this discussion, to point out the extreme inconvenience which the Government had brought them into. What had been said by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton

(Mr. H. H. Fowler), by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) showed the enormous practical difficulties which they would have to confront in dealing with this question of the franchise by itself. They saw that if this question was dealt with according to the ordinary course of Business no Dissolution could take place, after redistribution, until the 1st January, 1887. In the event, therefore, of this Bill passing, and of a Dissolution taking place before 1887—before a Redistribution Bill, a Boundary Bill, and a Registration Bill had been passed, they would be in the precise difficulty and danger that had been indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford. He could not agree with what had been said by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) with regard to the impolicy of rejecting the Franchise Bill this Session on the ground that it would increase the difficulty of the position, because it seemed to him that if they could get rid of the Franchise Bill this Session, they would probably not have to confront any difficulty at all; they would probably have an opportunity of appealing to the constituencies and dealing with the question as it ought to be dealt with, on the hustings and at the poll. He felt there were two arguments adduced by the Prime Minister that had not been answered in the course of the discussion. The Motion, as it stood, did not contemplate a Redistribution Bill; it contemplated only a part of it; and he felt there had been no answer given to that objection. He also felt the great force of what had been said by the Prime Minister and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, that nothing could be more exasperating to the public mind of England than that they should pass a measure that should not effect a redistribution of seats, but which should provide for 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 voters being suspended for an uncertain time from the vote. He did not think that any practical politician would willingly contemplate any such proposition; and it was, therefore, with very great regret, that he felt himself unable to support the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley). He felt the Amendment would establish a state of things which would render legislation almost impossible. He did not believe that this House, he rather doubted whether any House of Commons would pass a Redistribution Bill unless it was associated with the motive power of the extension of the franchise. He had always thought that it had been one of the greatest mistakes that they should not, indeed put the cart before the horse, but that after having driven the horse through Parliament they should attempt the almost impossible task of getting the cart through by itself. He almost despaired of seeing a Redistribution Bill pushed through Parliament, even by the powerful majority which the present Government possessed. The Motion seemed to him to have been brought forward rather as a *reductio ad absurdum* than as a practical expedient. He declined to put Parliament in a ridiculous position; and, therefore, under the circumstances, though with the greatest possible reluctance, he found himself unable to vote for the Amendment.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said he certainly asked his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) not to bring forward this particular Amendment at the present time. He did so in order that they might have a redistribution scheme before them at the same time that they had a Franchise Bill. His great object always had been, and he fancied the great object of the whole of the Conservative Party had been, that a Redistribution Bill and a Franchise Bill should go hand in hand, and that they should not have the one without the other. He, for one, could not blame the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) for having proceeded with his Amendment. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman had proposed the Amendment upon his own responsibility; and he was sure that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, in putting his Amendment before the Committee, had only been actuated in what he considered his paramount duty. He believed that his right hon. and gallant Friend felt that, unless they had a scheme of redistribution before them, they had no guarantee that they would have a redistribution scheme at all to discuss. They could not forget, and the Prime Minister would not forget, that next year the Crimes Act in Ireland expired, and that that was a subject that would have to be dealt with. Next year they would also have to deal with the question of registration, not so easy a matter as might be thought under the present circumstances. It was for these reasons that he had always thought that they ought to have the whole scheme of Reform before them, and anything that could tend to place the whole scheme before them at the same time would always have his support; his only desire was that a scheme should be produced which should be acceptable to the country, which, he ventured to say, this one-sided scheme was not. Even as to the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), which specified the introduction of a particular date in the Bill, he believed that, unless some alteration was made in registration, the voters would not be in time for the particular date mentioned. He believed that the circumstances which he had mentioned with regard to Ireland would seriously hamper and prevent the Government from carrying out those pledges and promises. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister told them very distinctly that Ireland was to retain her full number of Members, and that a certain number were to be taken from the loyal and Conservative South of England. He presumed they were to be taken from the South of England and given to Scotland, being Liberal. The representation of Ireland was not to be interfered with; and he presumed that Wales, which was over-represented, being Liberal, was not to be touched; but they in the South of England were to be sacrificed. There was no wonder that this Bill had the support of the Irish Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway. He did not blame those hon. Gentlemen for extending their support to the measure—the responsibility rested with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. It was only because he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) desired to have the whole scheme of Reform before them at the same time that he should support the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, that earlier in the day he expressed the hope that his right hon. and gallant Friend would not persist in moving the Amendment in its present shape; and he yet hoped that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would not proceed to a Division. The principle of the Amendment was one that, in his mind, would be better raised when they had proceeded further with the Bill—as, for instance, when the time arrived for the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland to be submitted to the Committee. He entirely objected to any Bill of this kind becoming the law of the land unless a Redistribution Bill was introduced in the same Parliament. In the interest of the country this Bill ought not to pass, and he hoped it would meet with its proper and deserved fate in "another place." It would be most unsatisfactory to pass a Franchise Bill unaccompanied by a Redistribution Bill, because they must recollect that, however anxious the Prime Minister was to pass next Session a Bill for redistributing the seats in the country, next Session they would have the Irish difficulty to deal with. Next Session, also, there might be fresh Egyptian difficulties confronting them, and it by no means followed that the right hon. Gentleman would be in a position to carry out his will, even if he had the wish. It was, moreover, desirable, upon the question of Reform, that they should discuss the system of representation of minorities, a question in which he felt so strong an interest, and on which the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) and the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had on so many occasions addressed the House. It did not follow that the Government proposal to redistribute the seats would be satisfactory to hon. Members in the House, or to noble Lords in "another place;" and, therefore, it would be a most mischievous thing so far to sever the two questions, that they might have this Bill becoming the law of the land, while no system for the representation of minorities was introduced by means of a Redistribution Bill. He confessed that he did not desire to see the number of Members from Ireland materially reduced; he would much prefer to see fewer Members returned from Wales, because Welsh Members, undoubtedly, held views far more hostile to the interest of the country than Irish Members. It did not at all follow that next

Session this House, or the other House, would agree to what the Government might call a satisfactory measure of representation. That being so, the whole question of Reform ought not to be dealt with in the fifth Session of a Parliament, when there were all the difficulties of registration pointed out by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) to confront. The question of Reform could only be properly dealt with by a new Parliament. If they once passed this Bill, unaccompanied by a Redistribution Bill, and a Dissolution took place, they might find that men would not very easily give up their seats, so that many a long year might go by without a redistribution of seats. For these reasons he hoped that the Bill would meet with the fate it deserved in "another place."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, there had been two classes of questions under consideration that afternoon—one a question of principle, and the other a question of tactics. With regard to the question of principle, there could be no doubt in any candid man's mind that the Motion which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) had made was strictly and entirely consistent, and in accordance with the position the Opposition, as a Party, had taken up throughout the proceedings on this Bill. Various taunts had been thrown about from side to side with regard to the sincerity of those engaged in the discussion; but they might all be put aside as part of the language of debate. There were, undoubtedly, among the Conservative Party a considerable number of Gentlemen who desired to see the borough and county franchise assimilated; there were also those who did not desire to see it, but who were prepared to acquiesce in it under certain conditions. But whether they were opposed to it, or approved it, or acquiesced in it, or desired it, he believed that until to-day there was only one feeling amongst the whole Conservative Party, and that was that they ought not to give their sanction to any Bill for the alteration or assimilation of the borough and county franchise unless it were accompanied with a measure of redistribution. According to the views they had always held, they would not agree to any measure for the extension of the franchise unless that measure was accompanied by another measure for the redistribution of seats, or, at any rate, until the whole plan of the Government was disclosed. Unless they had some security given to them that a Redistribution Bill was to be introduced and passed, they were not justified upon their own principles in giving their consent to this measure. How was this to be done? Some said it should be done in the manner suggested by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley). Others said it was better it should be done according to the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey)—namely, by fixing a date. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) confessed he did not like the idea of fixing a date. He did not think it would do any good, because all it did was to say that the Bill was not to come into operation until such and such a time, and then it exposed them to all the inconveniences pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster); and if circumstances led to a Dissolution before the time fixed, the House would have to face the awkward situation suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. Either the Government were in earnest in their scheme for redistribution or they were not. If they were in earnest, hon. Members opposite would probably be contented with the promises of the Government. He was not contented with their promises, not merely because he had a natural distrust of Ministerial promises, but because he knew very well there might be many circumstances which might interfere to prevent them carrying into effect the very best promises. Then the Government might say—"Undoubtedly we meant to do this;" they might prepare a measure, and put it in the Queen's Speech; and yet it might be crowded out by circumstances over which they had no control. Look what a hold they would give the Government if they passed this measure of Reform in its present incomplete form. Next Session the Government would say—"We have got a redistribution plan, we approve of it; but if you do not like it, we are perfectly ready to withdraw it;" and they would fall back on the Bill of 1884; and the House would find themselves caught in that way, and entirely at the mercy of Her Majesty's Government. They had been asked to consider what power they would give to the 300 Gentlemen who sat in the House of Lords to stop a Reform Bill altogether if an Amendment such as that under consideration were passed. He imagined that if the House of Lords wished to stop a Reform Bill they had the power to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister seemed to think that they would, by passing this Amendment, give the House of Lords more power to say that a Reform Bill should not come into operation until the redistribution scheme was laid before Parliament. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) thought that was a rather absurd view of the situation. He maintained that if they passed the Bill without some such Amendment as his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) suggested they would put themselves into the hands of the Government, and they would enable the Government to resist altogether the necessity of bringing forward a Redistribution Bill; and, therefore, the Conservative Party, who had all along gone on the principle that they would only consent to an assimilation of the borough and county franchise on the understanding that redistribution should form part of the scheme of Reform, would be deserting their own principle if they did not take some steps by which they would secure a Redistribution Bill being brought in. The Prime Minister said that the language of the Amendment was such that the Amendment would not effect the object which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had in view. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was a great critic of the terms of Amendments, and he laid great stress upon some verbal distinction or other which he drew; but he (Sir Stafford Northcote) ventured to say that if the Amendment were passed the object of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would be attained. This was a Bill extending the household suffrage to counties; and what the Opposition wanted to know was how the Government intended to settle and describe the divisions of counties, and how the limits of cities and boroughs were to be determined? Speaking in one of the earlier debates of the order in which he intended to proceed, the Prime Minister said that when the Franchise Bill was passed the Government would consider the manner in which the redistribution of the electors was to be brought in and manipulated. This manipulation was a part of the scheme of Reform which the Prime Minister wished to keep distinct and separate, but which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) desired to tie to the other part; and he (Sir Stafford Northcote) considered that that was a legitimate, and natural, and inevitable consequence of the position the Opposition had all along taken up. He did not believe any Amendment they could bring forward would accomplish it, and they would be putting a powerful weapon in the hands of the Government if they enabled them to say—" Take care what you are about. We will dissolve if you object to such a course." Under these circumstances, although he regretted to find that their (the Opposition) view of the proper tactics to be pursued had not commended itself to some for whose opinion he had considerable regard, and to others who, he thought, were desirous really to acquiesce upon these matters —though he was sorry to find that this view of the proper tactics differed from theirs, yet being satisfied that he was right in principle, and being convinced, as he was, that the true tactics was to move now and not let the thing slide on until the time came when the whole Bill was done with, and they would have it demonstrated to them that it did not signify to them whether it was this year or next year. Taking all these considerations into view, he should support his right hon. and gallant Friend, and urge him to persevere with his Amendment; and whatever might be the decision to which the Committee might come, he thought the Amendment was one upon which they were bound to take the opinion of the Committee, and upon which their course was perfectly clear. He regretted very much that there should be a difference of opinion among those who, as he believed, took the same view of the danger of leaving this matter entirely open; but he could not help that, and all he could say was that he should support the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was anxious that there should be no misunderstanding outside the House as to what had taken place this afternoon. He should entirely concur in all that had fallen from the right hon.

Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), if it was in their power to compel the Government to accept such an Amendment; but the question was not what was best, but what they could get. There was a difference beween this Amendment and Amendments which, more or less, involved the principle of the Bill. There was an Amendment involving the principle of the Bill; but upon that the Committee had not yet decided. It was one upon which there was every reason to believe a considerable concurrence of opinion would be expressed from various quarters of the House; but by pressing this Amendment at the present moment they would prejudice the other question. His object was to secure the best possible chance for the Amendment involving the principle of the Bill in order to relieve the House of Lords from what he believed would be a most dangerous step—namely, getting into collision with the House of Commons with regard to this Bill. That was his object, and he did not see why he should conceal it. It appeared to him that that course was perfectly fair and frank, and for that reason he should urge the right hon. and gallant Gentleman not to press the Amendment.

Mr. WARTON said, that although this Amendment was proposed by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley), the real authors of it were the Government. They had, to a certain extent, misled the Radical Party. Many Members of the Radical Party, including that most prominent Member, the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), were under the impression that it was possible in this dying Parliament to pass a Franchise Bill which would enable some 2,000,000 of voters to have votes before any Redistribution Bill would or could be passed. That was the impression they were under; but now, after the statement of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and the approval of that statement by the Prime Minister, they must, he thought, have become undeceived. It was, therefore, perfectly clear that now there was no hope whatever of a Franchise Bill being passed which could affect them in the present year. Therefore, there could be no reason why the Government should not have brought forward a complete Bill this Session. If they had been in earnest with regard to redistribution, and really meant to bring forward a redistribution scheme, they would have brought it forward, and not have encumbered the House with a great number of Bills such as the London Government Bill. They knew perfectly well the impossibility of passing this Franchise Bill this year, or before the redistribution scheme should take effect on January 1st, 1886. Therefore, it was clear that it was they, and not the Opposition, who were responsible for this Amendment. With regard to the remarks of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock as to not being able to get this Amendment, of course, everyone knew that the minority could not always carry their schemes; but that was no reason why the Conservative Party, as the minority, should not persevere in laying before the country what was their firm determination, and that was to drive the Government to bring forward their redistribution scheme. He thought it more honest to this House and to the country, and more fair to the other House and to everyone concerned, that the Opposition should have a firm, resolute, and consistent policy, and should insist upon having the redistribution scheme before them. He did not wish to see this Reform Question mixed up with any other matters, because he was certain, with regard to that other place, which represented more than this House the intelligence and wealth of the country, it would be far better for that House to throw out this Bill on the intelligible ground that the whole scheme was not before the country. He was not so much in favour of Reform as some of his Friends were; but that was no reason why he should take a different course from them. The Government would save their own time, and the time of the House, by bringing forward their whole scheme this year; and the reason why they had received so much support was that hon. Members like the hon. Member for Ipswich had, in the innocence of their hearts, been misled by supposing that they were going to have a Dissolution with these 2,000,000 new voters before the Redistribution Bill was passed. Now they started up in alarm, and almost charged the Prime Minister with having gone from his word. It was impossible for him to resist saying that the Government had not advanced their proposals for this year by presenting an incomplete scheme.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 182; Noes 276: Majority 94.—(Div. List, No. 102.)

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in moving, in page 1, line 11, after "every man," to insert "capable of writing the name of the candidate for whom he records his vote, and," said, the Amendment was intended to sweep off the Register, or, at any rate, to reduce the number of, illiterate persons. There were a great many persons who, though able to write their own names, would be quite nonplussed if they were asked to write the names of other persons. This Amendment, therefore, would have a more sweeping effect than an Amendment merely to the effect that the voter must be able to write his own name. In this case he would have a blank sheet of paper given to him, and upon that he would have to write the names of those for whom he intended to vote. He did not know how many this Amendment would disqualify; but, according to a Return moved for by an hon. Member, there seemed to be more than 60,000 illiterate people in England alone. His Amendment would sweep off a great many more than 60,000 people. In the first place, this would have an educational effect; and he appealed to the Vice President of the Council to support the Amendment, because it would encourage education without any danger of its being influenced by religious teaching, of which his right hon. Friend had so great a dislike. Just before an election the itinerant schoolmaster would go about teaching octogenarian illiterates their letters; and it would be an edifying spectacle to see all these old men being taught to read and write, not in their early years, but shortly before they left the world altogether. The Amendment would also have the result of showing on which side of the House sat the "stupid Party." Of course, all Members of the "stupid" Party, and all stupid Members, would vote against the Amendment in a compact body; for their object would naturally be to keep as many ignorant people as possible on the Register. He would appeal next to the Prime Minister to support the Amendment, and would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider the state of mental darkness and ignorance which must exist in the mind of a person who had never read a single word of the speeches of the greatest statesman of the age. Surely a person must be unfitted to vote who had never read the praises of that good man in the columns of *The Daily News*. Such a person would surely not be ranked among those whom the Prime Minister had declared to be capable citizens whom he desired to enfranchise. The Amendment would also indirectly prevent bribery, and would, therefore, very much assist the operation of the Corrupt Practices Act; and on that ground he appealed to the Attorney General to give it his support. The plan adopted under the Ballot Act, when voters were bribed, was to make them vote as illiterates; and he was told that such persons went up to the poll declaring themselves either blind or unable to write, in order that the agent of the candidate, who was watching them, might see that they voted according to their price. He, therefore, claimed the support of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. At present there were the disqualifications of pauperism, criminality, and lunacy; and he only asked the Committee to add the disqualification of palpable and demonstrable ignorance. Many strange arguments and assertions had been brought forward in the discussion of this Bill. The Prime Minister had declared that the poorer the house in which a man lived the more reason there was that he should have a vote. The right hon. Gentleman had also declared that the further a man lived from London the more influence he should have on the Legislature in voting power. Would he go as far as to say that the more densely ignorant a man was the more right he had to a vote? The essence of the Bill appeared to be to level down; his Amendment was to level up. It would affect no one political Party; but it would raise the electorate. It would give no advantage to one side of the House against the other; but it would create better constituencies, would have a humanizing effect, and establish an intellectual standard.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 11, after "every man," insert "capable of writing the name of the candidate for whom he records his vote, and."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said he could hardly suppose the hon. Member was serious in proposing this Amendment. The objection to the Amendment in principle was clear, for it was directed against secret voting. It proposed that every voter should put on paper, or show that he was capable of putting on paper, the name of the candidate for whom he intended to vote; and that was directly outside the principle of the Bill. But that was not all. The hon. Member proposed to enact that before a man could be entitled to be put on the Register he must put down the name of the candidate for whom he intended to vote; and that meant that he was to be required to be capable of putting down in writing the name of a person of whom he might know nothing at the time when the Register was framed; and who might never be in existence as a candidate at all. Then he must not only write the name, but must be capable of writing. The test of his capability was not supplied, and consequently the Amendment would be entirely inoperative.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he had explained that every voter, on going to the polling booth, would receive a sheet of blank paper. That would not prevent his giving a secret vote. He would go into his secret chamber and write the name of the candidate; but if he wrote down a name which was not that of a candidate there would be no vote at all. The right hon. Gentleman did not perceive the difference between a vote being void and voidable. An "ignoramus" might be put on the Register; but when the time came to vote his ignorance would become apparent, and his vote would be nullified.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE pointed out that if the Amendment were adopted every vote so given would, under the Ballot Act, be void.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said he thought that if this proposal were agreed to, voters would be placed in serious difficulty with regard to names. For instance, the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland could never be successfully spelt by one-half of a constituency; and the name of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) would create a similar difficulty as to correct spelling. The Amendment seemed to have been put down in order to give the hon. Member an opportunity of displaying his ingenuity; and he hoped the Committee would not be put to the trouble of dividing upon it.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, "in page 1, line 17, after "and," insert "when registered."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (HIGHWAYS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board, under "The Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878," relating to the county of Montgomery, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

Bill *presented,*and read the first time. [Bill 226.]

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

CROWN LANDS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. CHEETHAM, in rising to call attention to the management of the landed property of the Crown by the various Public Departments charged therewith; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the management of the Crown Lands, and the principles to be followed in selling or leasing the same,"

said, the Resolution which he had to submit to the House was identical in terms with the Notice of Motion which the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) had given Notice of at the close of last Session. He was sure it would be a matter of regret to the House that the subject was not being brought forward now by one so competent to deal with it as his hon. and learned Friend. It was a question which had, from time to time, forced itself upon the attention of former Parliaments, and which had been invested with a fresh interest to the present Parliament by the discussions which took place last Session upon the questions of the Esher manor and the Southport foreshore. He would take for granted the proposition so clearly laid down by his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), in his evidence before the Select Committee on the New Forest in 1875—namely, that—

> "The Crown property is held by the Crown as trustee for the public, and that the House of Commons is to consider as to the best way that property can be used for the advantage of the public."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), in moving an Address to the Crown upon the question of the Thames Embankment, used almost the same words; and when the Prime Minister challenged on technical grounds the view then laid down, the House, by a majority of 50, affirmed the proposition which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster had set forth. He did not imagine that the House had gone back from that view. He might describe Crown property as of two kinds—first, property as to which the State, in its dealings, was concerned with private persons and interests, and in those dealings might claim to be governed by ordinary pecuniary and commercial considerations. But there was other property in which there was an admixture of rights and interests of a public or semi-public character; and in regard to the administration of property of this kind reference must constantly be made to higher considerations than how to extract from it the greatest possible amount of revenue. As to property of the first-mentioned description, he did not propose to raise discussion beyond saying that it appeared to him the management might with advantage be made the subject of inquiry. Representations, for instance, had been made to him with respect to the management of the mineral property of the Crown; and he had been told that the leasing of this property was now so much fettered by restrictions that mining ventures were being seriously retarded and very much prejudiced. But it was with the second description of property that he proposed to deal on that occasion. He might include within this category the Crown forests, manors, and foreshores of this country. With regard to the administration of foreshores, now happily transferred to the Board of Trade, it was a satisfaction to know they were regulated by the admirable Memorandum of the Board of November, 1867; and if the Commissioners of the Office of Woods and Forests had been guided by the enlightened considerations of the public interest embodied in that statesmanlike document, there would have been no occasion, so far as concerned that Office, for the inquiry which he now asked for. But the Woods and Forests absolutely repudiated any obligation beyond the simple regard to revenue. In illustration of this he might give various references. In Epping Forest the Crown possessed forestal rights, the due exercise of which would have gone far to prevent encroachments and secure to the Metropolis the enjoyment of the Forest; but the Office of Woods and Forests, concerning themselves merely in making the most pecuniarily of the Crown forestal rights, so used those rights that they effected rather than prevented encroachments, for they issued notices inviting encroachers to come forward and settle with the Crown. In the Report of the Select Committee there was a paragraph very like censure on the Department, for the Committee said they considered the issue of notices in 1857 inviting encroachers to purchase had acted in a way to increase the number of encroachments in the Epping Forest. In the New Forest the Crown possessed not only the forestal rights, but also the soil subject to the rights of the commoners; and the object of the management seemed to have been to minimize these common rights as far as possible. Reference was made in the Select Committee on the New Forest to a famous letter from an official surveyor, recommending the use of powers of inclosure in a manner to cheapen the rights of commoners when the time came for buying them out. The object of the Office of Woods and Forests appeared to be to get rid of the commoners somehow or other; but nothing could be stronger than the evidence given before the Committee of the great value of these commonable rights, not only in securing an independent body of labourers, but in also preserving a very valuable class of small freeholders. The First Commissioner of Works, who was a great authority on this question, referred to the subject in a speech he delivered at Reading in the Autumn; and the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out the great injury done by the process of indiscriminate inclosure to the agricultural labourer, and to that most valuable class, the English yeoman. It might be said that he had been alluding to cases that had occurred 10 or 20 years ago, and that public opinion had advanced since then, and that the views of the Department of Woods and Forests had advanced also. There was, however, no evidence that that Department had advanced, its policy, apparently, being unchanged and unchangeable. The case of the Esher and Bagshot Commons was last year brought under the notice of Parliament by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). The Crown had sold the estate of Claremont, a perfectly proper proceeding; but they also sold the manorial rights over the common of Esher; and his hon. Friend pointed out the dangers to which the common might be exposed by that sale. That danger was nearer than his hon. Friend imagined, for it shortly afterwards came to the notice of the Commons Preservation Society that a small inclosure was being carried out by the owner of property abutting on the common. Representations were made by the Society, and in the result an equivalent bit of land was thrown into the common. It was a trifling quantity of ground, not more than a quarter of an acre; but size did not affect the principle, and it was through these small encroachments that our commons were rapidly disappearing. It was a defence made by the Secretary to the Treasury that it was the duty of the Department to look to the revenue, and that they could not forego, in the interest of the locality, an amount of profit to be made for the nation at large; but if they went on sacrificing one local interest after another, how much, in the end, would there be left of the aggregate interest of the public at large? Another instance had recently occurred in the sale of Crown waste land in Anglesea at a nominal price. The purchaser inclosed it. The Woods and Forests sold the land, of course, subject to the common rights; but the commoners had a right to complain that, by the sale without any guarantee for their rights, they were left pretty much at the mercy of the incloser, and could only defend their rights by costly litigation. Another case was the sale of property in the parish of St. James's, in Little Pulteney Street, which had recently attracted some attention. On the expiration of the subsisting leases an area that had been densely occupied by some 500 persons, mostly of the poorer classes, was cleared for the erection of new buildings; and the Vestry of St. James's, seeing the favourable opportunity which that clearance would afford for providing suitable dwellings for the families of workmen, entered into communication with the Office of Woods and Forests. The incumbent of the neighbouring parish of St. Peter seconded the action of the Vestry in a matter so vitally affecting the welfare of the parishioners. The Crown officials appeared to approve the views of the Vestry; and subsequent communications with the Department warranted the Vestry in concluding that arrangements were being made with one of the artizans' dwellings companies; but it afterwards oozed out that the ground had been actually let in great part to a person who had been in private negotiation with the Office, and who had been five times convicted of serious offences in respect to the sanitary condition of property belonging to him in the district. There had been no competition for the site in question, either by public auction or tender by contract. This was contrary to the recommendation of a Select Committee upon Crown Lands which had sat in 1834, and had recommended that there should always be a public auction, except in cases where it was obviously inconvenient or unfair. There was another branch of the subject to which he would call the attention of the House—namely, the administration of the Duchy of Lancaster, as instanced in the case of the foreshore at Southport. The offer which the Corporation of the town made for the purchase of the foreshore, though fully equal to, if not better than that of lords of the manor, was rejected in favour of the latter. The news of the sale to the lords of the manor was received with general dissatisfaction throughout Lancashire; and the great Corporations of Manchester, Salford, Birmingham, Derby, Brighton, and many other local Governing Bodies memorialized the Prime Minister, deprecating the injury which had been done to Southport by the alienation of its foreshore into private hands. The Chancellor of the Duchy, replying to a Question put by him (Mr. Cheetham) in the House at the close of last Session, said that the Memorialists must have been under some misapprehension as to the facts, and that there was a dispute as to title between the Duchy and the lords of the manor. He was not aware that there had been any previous dispute; but the question of title was really beside the question, because the Corporation of Southport in their offer had undertaken to accept the title, and to be at the sole cost of its defence and maintenance. The Papers laid before Parliament had sufficiently proved the injustice done to Southport. It was, however, found impossible to undo what had been done in the matter. The agreement with the lords of the manor was binding, and could not be set aside. He was able to say that the people of Southport had accepted the settlement proposed by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with the greatest possible reluctance, and only as the lesser of two evils. They were of opinion that if the public property in the foreshore was to be disposed of at all, the rightful recipients could alone have been the Corporation, as the local representative of the public interest. They considered it a great hardship that they should be denied possession of more than one-fourth part of their own foreshore, and that for the price of that fraction they should have been assessed—he might rather say mulcted—in a value which was really the product of their own enterprize, and of the immense outlay they had made in seeking to render their town the most attractive resort in Lancashire. But for their great outlay those barren sands would have had little or no commercial value. He considered that the action of a responsible Department of the State, resulting in consequences such as these, could only rightly be characterized as a serious miscarriage of public justice and a grave error of public policy. He was persuaded the instances he had adduced afforded sufficient evidence of the failure of some of the Departments charged with the administration of the public property of the Crown to have due regard to the public interest, and of the need of that Parliamentary inquiry for which he had now the honour to move.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON said, that in seconding the Motion he should deal with certain special points only with which he was personally acquainted. Before he dealt with those points he would call the attention of the House to the history of the Civil List as dependent upon the Crown lands. On the accession of Anne an Act was passed that prohibited all grants from the Crown except for short terms. At that date the income derivable from the land revenues of the Crown was only about £10,000. Although no Commissioners were appointed for dealing with Crown lands, this Act was worthy of notice as an illustration of the right of Parliament to step in and interfere with the absolute right of the Sovereign to deal as he pleased with the Crown lands. It was also the first record in legislation that the Crown was only the life tenant of a property of which the nation were the trustees, and were to insist that the lands should be managed so as to make the largest profit out of them. On the accession of George III., the revenues were handed over to the State, and a Civil List was provided. It was not until 1794, when leases began to fall in, that any large increase in value began. From that date, however, up to 1829, a very rapid increase occurred—namely, from £20,000 per annum to £172,700 per annum. In 1850 the income had risen to £205,700, and at the present day it amounted to £380,000. The point which he would bring before the House in regard to these facts was the manner in which the Commissioners of Crown lands were, in the time of George III., the champions of Parliamentary rights. They appeared then as the servants of the Crown, not as against the rights of the commoners, but they had to maintain the principle that the Crown was not an absolute owner. It was a question whether the Treasury was bound to accept the high and dry principle of being a trustee to the Heir Apparent to the Crown, though they had often acted on that principle. Mr. Howard, the Chief Commissioner of Woods from 1856 to 1881, said, in reply to a question in a Parliamentary Committee of 1875—"We want to get as much as we can out of the forest." On the other hand, Sir Thomas Farrer, in an official Minute on the question of foreshores, admitted that a great deal of the prejudice which existed upon the subject of leasing or selling the foreshore arose from the fact that the Office of Woods had been bound to get the best possible price, and it was not unnaturally alleged that they had been ready to sacrifice important public rights if they could only get high prices. If these were the principles upon which the Crown was bound to act, the case of his hon. Friend in moving for a Select Committee was clearly proved. The law could be placed into more harmony with public policy. But he regretted to say that the danger under the existing state of things was not an imaginary one. Last Session a Crown Lands Bill was brought forward which, by Clauses 7 and 8, made provision for the compulsory purchase and extinguishment by the Crown of the fuel rights in the New Forest, and by Clause 4 extended the power of the Crown to dispose by lease of the public rights over the foreshores of the United Kingdom. Although the Crown, upon a technical plea to the Petition being presented too late, refused to hear the Petitioners against the Bill, who were to be compulsorily deprived of their rights, public opinion induced the Treasury to strike out the fuel right clauses, and the Bill as amended this Session was without those encroachments; but it asked for powers to lease common land for roads. In 1877 an effectual stop was put upon further inclosures. But before a Resolution in that direction, proposed by the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), was passed in 1871, 4,000 acres of perhaps the most beautiful natural woodland scenery in the world was cut down. Great stress had been laid upon the difficulty of providing for the fuel rights of the commoners, because it necessitated an injurious interference with the timber; but this was absolutely untrue. The area for the supply of fuel rights comprised, according to the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods, 1871, at least 8,500 acres of disinclosed plantation not ornamental, and 5,000 acres of wild woodland to supply annually less than 400 loads. Fuel wood was annually sold by the Crown which would more than suffice for the supply of the fuel owners. Upon a very careful analysis of figures extending over 30 years, he found that the proportion of the fuel wood, as compared with the annual sales of wood of all sorts in the Forest, was as one to 68. One of the most interesting features in the New Forest was the history of the commoners. He could not speak with statistical certainty; but, so far as he could gather from various computations, there were about 900 owners of common rights in the New Forest. The theory, the official theory which pervaded Whitehall and its underlings, that the Crown ought to make the most out of the Forest, was one which was opposed to the rights of these people. He congratulated the President of the Board of Trade upon having spoken out against the policy pursued in the past of robbing the poor of their rights in commons. The earliest record that he could find of Parliamentary interference with the commoners was in 1698. An Act was then passed to inclose a portion of the wastes for the growth of ship timber, whereupon the commoners petitioned against the Bill, in which they described the Forest as immemorially "a great nursery for breeding cattle." The effect of this Petition was to obtain an insertion in the Act to the effect that that land only should be inclosed which could be best spared from the commons and highways. The Crown had endeavoured to substitute the view of the New Forest being a nursery for ship timber to the exclusion of the view of its being a nursery for breeding cattle. He might be told by the Secretary to the Treasury that the rights of the commoners were respected, and that the Office of Works did not intend to deprive them of their rights. They knew perfectly well what all that meant, and they were not to be lulled into confidence by official assurances. The fact was, the rights of the commoners were, in spite of any legislation, in spite of any assurances to the contrary, being insidiously encroached upon.

The old policy of diminishing the rights of the commoners in order to increase the value of the Crown's interest was as active as ever; and if it was not as successful as it had been, it was only because Parliament had placed more obstacles in the way. There was a very insidious form of encroachment going on, which was that of leaving Scotch firs that were planted as nurses on the outside of the inclosure plantations to self-sow the waste. By that process whole wastes of good pasturage to the commoners were being gradually covered with Scotch firs, to the exclusive interest of the Crown, to whom the timber belonged. An unanswerable argument against any policy of interfering with this system of rural economy was not merely the value of the system on public grounds, but the fact that commutation of common rights was not compensation. The Clerk of the Ringwood Guardians stated, before the Committee of 1875—

> "To a fair specimen of the industrious forest labourer forest rights are invaluable; and, as many are owners of their little freeholds, any action with the most liberal compensation would be a serious blow to their present prosperity."

Moreover, you could not appreciate the value of a commoner's rights; and, if you could, compensation to the owner would be no compensation to the tenant, and the value of these rights was greater to the tenant than to the owner, and to one tenant than another. According to the seasons, one might profit more and another less in proportion to circumstances and individuality. It might be possible in some cases to commute fairly the common rights to a commoner for his life; but the man was bribed by money down to part with the secret of his thrift, and to sell the birthright of his successor. There were over 500 commoners owning less than 10 acres. Mr. Esdaile said he had not found one small commoner who would willingly agree to be compensated for the right he had. On the question of foreshores, the traditions of the Board of Trade were far more liberal than had been those of the Office of Woods and Forests; and Sir Thomas Farrer's Memorandum was animated by a wise responsibility for the interests of the nation; but the Board of Trade was placed at a disadvantage by the state of the law. Where there were local Acts it could not enforce public rights. Sir Thomas Farrer recommended, in 1867, that a Bill, or Bills, should be brought in—

> "To enable the Board of Trade more effectually and summarily to protect navigation and other public interests, to give the Board express powers to compromise disputed titles to the soil on the footing of reserving the rights and enjoyments of the public, and to enable the Board of Trade to deal more liberally with the title of the Crown in the case of works of public utility."

These recommendations had never been acted upon. The state of the law, as regarded foreshores, remained the same as it did in 1867. Since then the importance of maintaining the rights of the nation in its foreshores had increased, and it was increasing. At present the public had the advantage of being served by so public-spirited a public servant as Sir Thomas Farrer; but he complained of the state of the law as prejudicial to an intelligent policy. The nation should not rest satisfied with the happy accident of so vital a matter being intrusted to reliable hands. Prudence demands that it should legalize, and render it impossible in the future, to abuse the present traditions of the Board of Trade. His hon. Friend made a very moderate request. All he asked for was investigation, and that, he hoped, the House would grant.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the management of the Crown Lands, and the principles to be followed in selling or leasing the same,"—(*Mr. Cheetham,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, he desired to direct attention to an aspect of the administration of our Crown lands which had been overlooked in this discussion — namely, the development of small occupancies and small ownerships, or what might be described as peasant holdings and peasant proprietorships. Those who had carefully watched public opinion during the last year or two must have been struck by the feeling evinced among the masses, and especially the working-class population, in favour of a change in the land system of the country. He doubted whether Members of that House were aware of the deep and growing dissatisfaction which prevailed, and which might at some future time assume volcanic forms unless it were dealt with by wise legislation. It was quite true that the movement originated by Mr. George had, to some extent, subsided, and that his revolutionary measures had been so exposed as to have lost their hold upon the public; but still there was a residue of strong dissatisfaction, which might give us trouble in future. There was an increasing tendency to the consolidation of holdings in large farms, accompanied by a steady decrease in the rural population. To some extent these tendencies arose from causes which legislation could not remedy, such as the increase in the price of meat and the decrease in the value of cereals, which led to the extended laying down of pasture; but he believed it was beginning to be recognized that the system of large farms in this country had been carried much too far even upon economical grounds. He believed that many proprietors would gladly return to the system of small holdings if they had capital enough to provide the requisite farm buildings. The Crown had in its hands a large property which it might experiment upon in the interests of the nation; and he strongly recommended that, instead of letting these Crown lands in farms of 500 to 1,000 acres or thereabouts, the Commissioners intrusted with the management of them should steadily keep in view the importance of making an experiment in the direction of small holdings. He believed there existed in the country a demand for these small holdings which ought to be gratified in a legitimate manner. The peasantry suffered much from the want of stepping-stones towards improving their social condition; this was due, to some extent, to causes that were beyond legislation. There was a great gulf between the farmer and the agricultural labourer, and the Crown lands might be let out so as to be a ladder from one class to the other, and as a means of furnishing the stimulus of hope to the class that most required it. It was most desirable to give facilities to the rural labourers to obtain small holdings, and, when possible, to become peasant proprietors. The example of France and Belgium showed that peasant proprietorship encouraged thrift and industry; and although he could not hope that our institutions should be framed upon that model, it was earnestly to be wished that the number of peasant owners and cultivators should be largely increased. He looked forward with considerable apprehension to what England would become if present tendencies continued to develop. England would consist of a large number of huge overgrown cities, while the rural part of the country would become deserted. There was serious danger that the present drift of things might lead to a widespread agitation of a Communistic character. He thought, therefore, an endeavour should be made to arrest this dangerous tendency. It might be said that the Crown lands, after all, represented only a few hundred thousand acres, and even if they were all cut up into small holdings of 10 acres each they would not make up more than 30,000 or 40,000 holdings; but he believed if the example were once set by this public Department its advantages would speedily be seen, and it would be imitated. In his opinion no better use could be made of Crown lands—in part, at least—than to sell them in small parcels, and to apply the money so obtained to the diminution of the National Debt. He believed that proprietors of land were finding out that it was a mistake to expose land for sale in large lots. It was within his own knowledge that land which was sold in parcels of six or eight or 10 acres brought a much higher price than when it was sold in large blocks of 1,000 acres or more. He gladly supported the Motion.

Mr. DODDS supported the Motion, and wished to draw particular attention to the River Tees, which was exempted from the Act of 1866 relating to foreshores, and where there was a vast quantity of reclaimable land capable of high cultivation. In order that this matter might be investigated, he trusted that the Government would consent to the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. COURTNEY said, that while he admitted that the subject was a very fit one for discussion, he had not heard any arguments which convinced him of the necessity or expediency of appointing a Select Committee. He was willing to accept the principle that the Crown held these lands as trustees for the nation; and he did not find that the manner in which they were at present administered was at all at variance with that principle. The technical legal position was that these lands had been relinquished by the Crown during the life of the Sovereign in exchange for a Civil List, and the power of the Government over these lands was limited to this lifetime; but he was bound to say he did not lay much stress on the technical argument. At the same time, to deal with that property in such a manner as had been suggested by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) would involve very great changes; and it was impossible to approach such a proposal without recognizing that, if adopted, it would altogether change the relations between the Crown and the nation. It was true the Commissioners of Woods and Forests held the property as trustees for public purposes; but he would ask what was the meaning of the words "public purposes?" He felt that the issue turned upon that. Were they to understand that the Commissioners were to administer the land solely in the interests of the persons who resided in the immediate vicinity of the Crown lands? He said last year, and he repeated it now, that the Commissioners held this property for the benefit of the nation at large, and that their first duty was to administer it in the interests of the nation at large, though not without paying due regard to the advantage of the persons who lived in the immediate neighbourhood of the property. The national property was most unevenly distributed; and if they were to disregard the interests of the nation at large, and to prefer those of the particular persons who lived in the neighbourhood of the national property, they would administer what was a great national fund upon a haphazard principle. His hon. Friend the Member for North Derbyshire (Mr. Cheetham), in his criticisms on the administration of the Crown lands, had referred to three matters—namely, the Crown interests, the manors, and the foreshores. To the latter he need not allude, as they were administered by the Board of Trade. His hon. Friend praised the policy and action of the Board of Trade; yet it was remarkable that the noble Lord, who seconded the Motion, persistently opposed a Bill now before the House because it was designed, among other objects, for the purpose of strengthening and confirming the power of that Board in respect of their administration. With regard to the Manor of Esher, he might remind the House that he spoke on that subject last year. The reversion of the manor was held by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, who sold it to the Crown, and the claim of the hon. Member for North Derbyshire went to this extent—that whenever the Crown happened to be possessed of a manor it should not sell it at all. It was impossible for the Crown to sell a manor and yet to reserve to itself the whole control over it, and the property sold would pass to the new proprietor without derogation in any respect of the rights of the commoners. Reference had been made by his hon. Friend to the case of a piece of Crown land situated in the parish of St. James's being let to a person in the neighbourhood, who had been summoned four or five times before the magistrate at Marlborough Street, in consequence of his property being in such a bad condition. According to the person's own statement, however, he had been summoned at his own instance, in order to oust those who had got hold of the fag ends of his leases, and over whom he had no control. It had been further objected that this transaction with this person had been made secretly behind the back of the Vestry; but the fact was that those who were responsible for the management of the Crown property felt themselves called upon to give a pre-emption to those who had been tenants of the Crown on the land cleared, and this person had been for many years a respectable tenant of the Crown on this particular property. He regretted, however, that the whole matter had not been fully inquired into before this particular lease was granted. As to Epping Forest, the grave fault committed some 16 years ago was that the rights of the Crown were given up too readily for a nominal consideration; but that had now been remedied. As to the New Forest, he believed that the action of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests was governed by a desire to preserve the forest character in its entirety. On the whole, he did not think that the cases which had been brought forward would justify the appointment of a Committee, He doubted very much whether the Crown lands could well be utilized for the purpose of developing peasant proprietorship on a large scale. It would involve a large expenditure with an uncertain return to break up land to let it in small plots in the fashion advocated. Still, the sale of land in small plots might be carried on with advantage in some localities. A suggestion had been made some time ago that part of Delamere Forest might be broken up in this way, and the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had been quite willing that the experiment should be tried; but no one had ever made a practical offer to put the experiment in motion. On the whole, no sufficient case had been made out for a Select Committee, and he hoped it would not be granted.

Mr. BRYCE said, that vague general statements were not enough; general principles required to be considered in and tested by their application to some particular cases. Those who were in favour of the appointment of a Select Committee by no means contended that the interests of localities were mainly to be regarded. What they did contend was that the Treasury and the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had, in their management of Crown lands, shown no adequate consideration for the interests of the public. Two years ago they sold the reversion of the Manor of Esher, and for £1,000 they put it in the power of the private purchaser to inclose and to destroy the rights and interests not only of the commoners, but of all the people of London. He maintained that the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had misrepresented or misconceived the contention of the hon. Member for North Derbyshire (Mr. Cheetham), and had failed to meet the instances brought forward; so he hoped the House would agree to grant a Select Committee.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter
after Eleven o'clock
till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 26th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Mostyn, after the death of his grandfather.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) (109).

Second Reading—Commons Regulation Provisional Order * (100).

Third Reading—Water Provisional Orders * (92); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) * (84); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (Alton-Barnes, &c.) * (85); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) (Bovey-Tracey, &c.) * (86); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) (Ashill, &c.) * (87); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) (Acton, &c.) * (88); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) (Ashen, &c.) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) (Abberley, &c.) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) (Abergwilly, &c.) * (91); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (The (Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * (64); Greek Marriages * (96); Colonial Prisoners Removal (44), and *passed.*

RAILWAYS—CONTINUOUS BRAKES—LEGISLATION.—QUESTION.

Earl DE LA WARR asked, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the Continuous Brakes Bill as proposed this Session?

Lord SUDELEY: The Regulation of Railways Bill was introduced and read a first time on Thursday last in the House of Commons. It has been distributed this morning; and Section 10 provides that the Board of Trade may, at any time, order a Railway Company, within a limited time, to provide continuous brakes of some pattern approved by the Board. This provision will, I trust, meet the noble Earl's wishes in the matter.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, that he wished to ask, after the decision of that House last week in reference to the Wellington Statue, Whether the Government have decided upon the course which they would adopt? There were a great many schools of thought as to what should be done with the statue;

but none, he believed, who wished to leave it as it was. He was told that a Vote of £6,000 had been taken in the House of Commons for the erection of a new statue. It was obvious that that would not be sufficient in the present state of the statue to do all that was required. He wished to know what action Her Majesty's Government intended to take; and, whether they proposed to ask for a further Vote from Parliament to carry out the intention which had been expressed?

LORD DE ROS said, he did not consider that this was the case.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he would like to know who had paid for cutting off the head?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he understood that there would be no further application to Parliament beyond the Vote which had been sanctioned. The present statue would be removed by the military authorities to Aldershot, where it would be erected upon a suitable site. The cost of the removal of the statue would be borne by the fund to be raised by the Prince of Wales's Committee. With regard to the Question put by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Redesdale), he had to say that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was very sorry indeed for what had happened. The taking of the statue to pieces was begun early next morning after the Vote. Out of deference to their Lordships' decision, his right hon. Friend had sent early in the morning to the military authorities to stop the taking of the statue to pieces; but the men from Woolwich were already at work, and he could not stop them in time to prevent the head being taken off.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY asked whether the cost of the decapitation was to be borne out of the Prince of Wales's fund?

[No reply.]

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, who had given Notice to call attention to the means of abating smoke in the Metropolis; and to present a Bill upon the subject, said: My Lords, it would take up too much time and verge too much on egotism to explain all the circumstances which have led me to this Notice. It may be enough to say that during many Sessions I have been on the point of giving it, whenever the moment seemed to be propitious. It occurred to me some time ago to suggest to a few persons the formation of a society for abating smoke in the Metropolis. Although my efforts were not of much value, the same impressions afterwards led others to organize a body in the very sense which I had contemplated. It exists under the auspices of the noble Duke the Master of the Horse. It is sustained by various distinguished Members of the Legislature. A considerable movement has grown up under its auspices. At the South Kensington Museum the best contrivances for abating smoke have been exhibited. An extraordinary stimulus has been given to invention with regard to them. Last year, on the 16th of July, a public meeting to abate smoke was held at the Mansion House. The support of the late Lord Mayor was obtained, and the whole subject powerfully ventilated. The upshot is that many propositions, which ten years back it would have been necessary to establish slowly and minutely, may now be rapidly submitted to the House without much fear of having to contend with them. For instance, it is now widely known that so early as 1300 a Royal edict against smoke was promulgated by one of the most enlightened as well as the most active of our Sovereigns. In the Reign of Queen Elizabeth the matter occupied the Legislature. In the Reign of Charles II., Evelyn, the author of the celebrated Diary, brought the question before the King, who urged him on to prosecute it further. During the present century there have been various inquiries—in 1819, in 1843, and in 1845. They led on to the measures of Lord Palmerston just before the Crimean War, when he presided at the Home Office. Reduced to what might seem for him an insignificant Department, he took advantage of obscurity to promote the interests of daylight, and, unable to act upon the world abroad, conceived a germ of Metropolitan improvement of which the fruit may long survive the Treaties he originated. However, the essential point to be remarked is that these Acts were but preliminary in their character.

They are imperfect for two reasons. They do not reach the aggregate of smoke arising from domestic houses. They are but partially enforced, in consequence, if I am not mistaken, of that very limitation. It is in some degree invidious to proceed against furnaces, which at least contribute to the public wealth, and leave untouched the ordinary fireside, which only burns for the advantage of the circle who surround it. Although, perhaps, it ought not to exist, there is a lurking conscience in executive authority. Inspectors, constables, and others, in theory machines of State, are not devoid of an unconscious sensibility, which makes them rigorous or lax, according to the estimate they form of laws intrusted to their maintenance. The Acts of Lord Palmerston, as a first step, have been invaluable. But they will not be thoroughly enforced till something more is done, and if they were enforced in every case, would leave an intolerable residue of evil to be otherwise disposed of. So much is commonly admitted, and there are other points, which, owing to the labours of the movement, are deemed to be beyond the range of controversy at this moment. It has been shown by the Hon. Mr. Russell, in a striking pamphlet which the Society under the noble Duke the Master of the Horse has circulated, that fogs which must, in any case, arise from exhalations of a tidal river, derive their yellowness, their blackness, and their odour from the smoky or carbonic particles which mingle with them; that if these particles were absent the fogs would not be graver than those which now exist at Eton and at Windsor, or than the mists which frequently repress the latent sunshine of the Highlands. It has been shown that the actual type of fog is deadly in its consequences, not only fertile of disorder, but conducive to mortality. In the week ending February 7th, 1880, remarkable for fog, the number of deaths, above the average, was 1,657, of which 1,118 were put down to complaints in the respiratory organs. Without statistics, we are well aware that, from the atmosphere which smoke involves, London is avoided more than otherwise it would be; that after Parliamentary Divisions, which bring men from a distance, there is a rush into the Provinces; that down to the beginning of the Session the Metropolis is nearly empty; that when the Session closes no one will remain more than a week, who has the power to absent himself. We know also that many hundreds who are prosperous and educated prefer the heavy inconvenience of daily locomotion to their offices and warehouses by railway to the evil of residing altogether in the capital, thinking it better to shorten life, which probably they do, than to depress vitality, the sole alternative presented. It is not necessary either to insist with much detail on the advancing nature of the influence which smoke exerts over the atmosphere of London. It is calculated in the works which the Society distribute that every year adds more than 25,000 houses. If we allot three chimneys to a house, 75,000 chimneys increase the aggregate of smoke during the twelvemonth. Even in 1819 it was shown by medical authority to the Select Committee of the House of Commons to what injurious extent the atmosphere was vitiated. Let such a process be permitted to go on till the end of the century to adopt another and a smaller capital will be a probable necessity. It is true that if you glance over the world, or think of St. Petersburg, Madrid, or Berlin, capitals have frequently been altered. But there are many risks in the transition. Public Offices and Parliaments might be located elsewhere without insuperable difficulty. But a serious decline in the value of house property would follow. This tendency was shown in Dublin after the Irish Union. Lord Cloncurry, in his Memoirs, has given curious examples of it. Leaseholders would sell at no little disadvantage. Proprietors would lose immensely on the leases being exhausted. The middle classes, in the absence of society, would see their profits rapidly declining. The demand for labour would be in consequence impaired; and although, no doubt, the labour would be wanted elsewhere, you cannot, without a period of much embarrassment, replace it. The conclusion which arises is, that an evil which threatens to impose another capital upon us requires much consideration, and even justifies enactments which would not otherwise be tolerated. My Lords, my first intention was only to move for an inquiry by a Select Committee of your Lordships. Those who are entitled to be heard, and whose support I was bound to aim at, were not disposed to such a method. They may have deemed that the evidence collected before the Acts of Lord Palmerston were carried now suffices; or that the Association of the noble Duke the Master of the Horse is better qualified than any other body to augment it, where deficient. It has, undoubtedly, augmented it, and may augment it further. I have been forced into the position of a legislator on the question. When it is remembered that Governments, with the command of every intellect, of every adviser, of every document they wish for, with Chancellors to warn, Law Officers to guide, the most accomplished Bill-drawers to help them, are often hurried into errors which form the staple of discussion, both in Parliament and out of it, it is not likely that an unofficial person will entirely avoid them. At least, instead of needing, as some do, three hours and three-quarters to explain it, this Bill may be at once submitted to the judgment of your Lordships. It will give authorities the power of directly acting against what may be termed exceptional and aggravated smoke in dwelling-houses by repealing a few words in the Sanitary Act of 1866. But this is not a leading or even necessary feature of the measure. It enables local bodies to form bye-laws, under the revision of the Home Office, by which in all existing houses smoke may be gradually abated. It enables local bodies, who now administer the Building Acts, to form bye-laws, also under the revision of the Home Office, by which in a short time new houses will be rendered smokeless. It extends—but this is an entirely subordinate provision—the area in which the Acts of Lord Palmerston are valid. My Lords, every project has a tendency to arm the mind against itself. Men may be inclined to listen to the proofs of a considerable evil. They may hear with moderate indulgence a train of reasoning to show that some new measure is desirable. But when its character is stated, when its modes of acting are betrayed, antagonism usually and unavoidably suggests itself. It is well, perhaps, that it should do so, otherwise the Statute Book would be more full of crude and mischievous enactments than it is at present. The defence of this scheme resides in the impossibility of all alternative proposals. To compel its adoption at once, directly, universally in London has been objected to by a noble Lord who once presided at the Home Office on the ground of its indicting a whole people. It would not be supported by opinion, the essential basis of all coercive legislation. Again, Parliament might choose a quarter, such as South Kensington, or Mayfair, or the squares of London, in which trees deserve a vigilant protection, and thus tentatively operate. I have dwelt much on that expedient, and unwillingly renounced it. But it might lead to many controversies as to the quarter to be chosen, and even reclamations from the quarter when preferred. The transfer of the power to local bodies is the only mode of settling the difficulty. If one local body acts the object is attained. Either the example would be followed by the others, or stringent legislation would be based by Parliament itself on the experience afforded. There are many reasons for anticipating that at least one local body will exert the powers which are given to it. I shall not mention them this evening. It is not worth while, by a measure which involves so little hazard and so studiously consults the temper of the age, to prevent London from being abandoned as a capital, which, if the evil is allowed to grow unchecked, is not a visionary prospect. It may, indeed, appear to some that however much the atmosphere deteriorates, that result will never happen. But there are still considerations which may guide them to the necessity of legislative action if the existing capital is certain to remain. The influence of smoke on architecture to those who value London is a melancholy drawback to improvement. Until this obstacle is gone London can never rank with Florence, or even Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg in the approach to classical perfection. Not only colour is important, but light is known to be indispensable to excellence in building. When light is wanting effort languishes, conception fails, and there is a perpetual struggle between beauty and deformity. That struggle is the ruling character of London at this moment. St Paul's excites the admiration of the world, and there is a hideous viaduct in front of it. The Thames Embankment is regarded justly as a Metropolitan improvement, and it is effectually marred by railway bridges which no edile would have sanctioned. St.

Martin's Church is allowed to do honour to its great designer, Sir Christopher Wren, and almost in a line we see the long-regretted domes of the National Gallery. The cause of the deficiency is found in the collision of two principles which springs out of the want I have referred to. At one moment it is felt that London exists only for purposes of commerce and of business; that it is not a home for the Fine Arts; that no sacrifice to beauty is desirable within it; that economy, convenience, and despatch, are the only aims to be considered. At another, it is fancied that as a seat of Government and Empire it ought to assert itself and challenge admiration by its edifices. In this frequent balance of ambition and despondency, wealth is lavished, splendour unattained. To remove smoke is not the only course essential to a different principle arising. It is a requisite preliminary. No Pericles would have succeeded in making Athens what it afterwards became, unless the atmosphere had seconded his effort. The object is not unimportant, or confined to a small number of appreciating judges. The architecture of a city is the only education the grown-up masses cannot possibly escape from. You may have lectures, galleries, and theatres; but it is not compulsory to profit by or enter them. It might be shown easily that men engaged in public, and still more in official life, are deeply interested in this question. But they are a minority, and they may frequently absent themselves from London for a day or two. The burden of the climate falls more heavily upon large classes without the power to escape it. We should reflect upon the distant melancholy suburbs of Islington and Camden Town without the life which Clubs or Courts of Justice, or Legislative Bodies furnish, and which would scarcely be inhabited except by families too much reduced to find refuge elsewhere—their means would not permit them to escape from time to time into the country. We should reflect upon the condition of domestic servants, who must be more stationary than the masters they live under. It well becomes also the dignity of this House to realize the state of men and women behind counters who must be all the year, except a week or two, in the Metropolis. Your Lordships will remember also that the whole female sex, from the highest to the lowest, have not the same facilities as men for moving a short time out of the smoke of the Metropolis. As regards the over-crowded numbers who inhabit Eastern London, whose cause has been so ably and so conspicuously supported, there is something to be added. Do what you will, their mode of life must act unfavourably on the domiciles they enter. To allot space to inmates—the essential change—demands such legal interference that in a free country it is scarcely possible to compass it. But while you can do little for their domiciles, you may do something for their atmosphere. The happiness of these classes must be mainly out-of-doors, because it cannot, from their narrow circumstances and sordid hearths, be indoors. But if out-of-doors they are exposed to darkness instead of light, to leaden fogs instead of purifying breezes, they have no escape from their depression except the public-house, which, in the long run, inevitably aggravates it. The whole tide of recent agitation on the domiciliary condition of the most abandoned class may fairly be directed to the object which this Bill is meant in some degree to forward. It may be asked, however, when the Bill is read a first time, what consequence will follow. It is not easy for anyone, unless the Leader of a Party, to carry a Bill through all its stages in this House, and it would not be possible to do so in another. But it is a maxim, not I think unknown in political society, that if a Bill adapted to an object which requires legislation is launched in either House it never perishes, however great the obstacles it meets, however long the interval which bars its entrance to the Statute Book. It may be but a stitch in legislation, but such a stitch is wanted at this moment. It is not likely to complete itself until the Liberal majority is more awakened to its great responsibility as to measures and to men, and thus more free to act in unison with those who labour for its object. I now present the Bill, and move that it be read a first time.

Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis—*Presented* (The Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL).

LORD MOUNT TEMPLE said, that it was characteristic of the British public that they liked to grumble at the laws and the administration of them, and especially with local government. It was another British characteristic that when a man had had his grumble he was often content to let the grievance slumber. But his noble Friend, after a good grumble, had attempted to deal with his grievance in a practical manner, though his threat, that a continuance of smoke might drive the Legislature to some other town, was not very alarming. There was no doubt that further legislation was required on the subject. The clumsiness of our mode of warming our dwellings caused a large portion of the fuel to escape unconsumed. It mixed with the air, concealed the sunshine, scattered showers of "blacks" everywhere, and made London dull, unhealthy, and murky. The Smoke Act of Lord Palmerston in 1853 was the best that could be passed at the time; but the area in which it was applied was smaller than the present Metropolis, and its application was imperfect. The fines imposed were frequently below the minimum mentioned in the Act. The over-indulgence towards the offenders might have arisen from the circumstance that the magistrates had not the scientific knowledge that might enable them to determine whether the smoke could have been properly consumed. They ought to be assisted by experts or scientific officials, as under the Alkali Acts. The river steamers also ought to be brought under the Act. Their smoke might easily be diminished to one-fourth of what it was at present. Furnaces belonging to many trades were not brought under the operation of the present Act. Open grates were still a difficulty, for they had not yet been contrived to burn bright, cheerful coal without smoke. He was grateful to the noble Lord trying to deal with this question, and hoped he might be successful.

Bill read 1ª; and to be *printed*. (No. 109.)

METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE—"UNWARNED STORMS."

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE, in rising to move for a—

"Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast,"

said, the Motion which stood in his name on the Paper was a renewal of the Motion in reference to which he had the honour of addressing their Lordships a week or two ago. He, therefore, need not address their Lordships on the present occasion at any length; but there were two points on which he desired to say a few words. A suggestion was made to him by the noble Earl on the Front Bench that he should alter the extent and scope of the Motion. He had taken counsel on that matter, and had come to the conclusion that for the purpose he had in view the Motion as it stood was more simple and more likely to be effective. Consequently, he had not altered his Motion. The other point was this. Since the last discussion of this subject, the noble Lord who represented the Government in matters of this kind had placed in his hands the Report of the Meteorological Council of the Royal Society for the year ending the 31st of March, 1883. There were in that Report some sentences which entirely supported his Motion. For example, it was stated that last year formed no exception to its predecessor in the fact that more than once serious storms occurred of which no warning was issued. The Report went on to describe the arrangements, which certainly could not be regarded as satisfactory, for signalling the approach of storms. There was some little difficulty in identifying storms, and in guarding against the error of counting them twice over; but, as far as he could make out, about 10 storms reached our coasts in the year 1882 without any warning having been issued by the Meteorological Office. The matter, therefore, was a very serious one, and deserved careful consideration. The Report to which he had already referred stated that in the month of May the Council was requested by the Foreign Office to express its opinion on a proposal emanating from the Danish Government to lay a telegraphic cable to Faroe, Iceland, and Greenland. The Council thought that the scientific importance of such a cable was indisputable, but added that the financial considerations did not come within the province of a conference of meteorologists. In point of fact, the whole question was one of money; and, consequently, it must be decided by the nation. If we could increase the number of our stations and improve our system of telegraphing, he trusted a mere question of money would not prevent this great nation from doing its duty.

Moved, That there be laid before this House—

"Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast."—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

Lord THURLOW said, there was no objection to be made to the Return, provided the right rev. Prelate thought it worth while, and was desirous to persevere with his proposal; but he might, however, point out that much of the information required was already accessible in Blue Books. Would the right rev. Prelate be satisfied if the whole of the information sought for by the Return were included in the future publications of the Meteorological Office?

The Bishop of CARLISLE said, that the noble Lord's reply would be satisfactory if it were merely a matter of satisfying his personal curiosity. What he wanted to do was, if possible, to bring this matter before the mind of the public, and to influence public opinion upon the subject; and he thought that for that purpose a tabular statement for 10 years would have a very useful effect.

Motion *agreed to*.

Return *ordered* to be laid before the House.

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS) BILL.—(No. 98.)

(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord SUDELEY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to enable the Metropolitan Board of Works to direct what proportion of the expense of the improvements should be defrayed by the parishes.

The Marquess of SALISBURY, interposing, inquired whether this was not a privileged Bill?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, the Bill simply affected the rates, and the practice was less severe with regard to rates than it was with regard to taxation.

The Marquess of SALISBURY observed that this might be made a precedent for future occasions.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, it was remarkable that when it suited the Government they pleaded that Bills were privileged; but, on the other hand, when they wanted to go on they ignored the question of privilege. He hoped the question would be settled on this Bill.

Lord SUDELEY said, that as there appeared to be some doubt on the matter he begged to postpone his Motion for the second reading of the Bill until after Whitsuntide.

Second Reading *put off* to *Tuesday* the 17*th of June* next.

CUSTOM HOUSE—SEARCHES OF PASSENGERS' LUGGAGE—THE NEW REGULATIONS.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord LAMINGTON rose for the purpose of calling attention to the new Custom House Regulations at Folkestone and other English ports, under which every small box or parcel belonging to innocent travellers was opened and its contents examined with rigorous strictness. In his own case, a small despatch box had been stopped because the key was not forthcoming at the moment, although his name was painted upon it. He was quite sure that it did not contain anything like such explosive matter as was introduced to the notice of the House every night by the noble Earl in those ominous-looking red boxes which were brought to him. In another case a box containing a wedding cake, sent to a friend of his, was not only broken up, but the wedding cake itself was chopped up to see whether it contained dynamite. He hoped that something would be done to mitigate the severity of these regulations; they were absurd, and more especially so when they were carried out in the case of persons who could not be expected to have any complicity with dynamite outrages. He did not object to a reasonable examination; but he thought that such instructions should be given as would enable it to be carried out with as little inconvenience as possible, and without that ridicule which at present attached to the proceeding.

EARL GRANVILLE: I am not personally responsible for these instructions, which were simply issued through the Foreign Office; but I have no desire to escape from any responsibility that may attach to me officially for their promulgation. I can entirely sympathize with the annoyance which the noble Lord must have felt at his luggage being stopped; but the necessity for these examinations has arisen from a very odious reason, and as some justification for the issue of these regulations I can point to the fact that only yesterday at Dover a large quantity of dynamite was discovered in one of those innocent-looking carpet bags to which the noble Lord has referred. As it is necessary in the present state of circumstances to make these examinations, it would only make them much more unpopular and invidious if the luggage of any particular class of persons were exempted from them. Anyone who has the most superficial acquaintance with my noble Friend must be convinced that he would not bring over dynamite. But the very fact of his not having the key of his box, and of the box being therefore passed without examination, would have created what would have been little short of a mutiny on the part of his fellow-passengers.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am very glad that the noble Lord has brought this matter before the House, because his speech will convince some of my correspondents that they are not the only persons who are subject to these regulations. A learned and excellent gentleman who has been a candidate for a seat in Parliament, and who may be so again, seems to be incapable of being persuaded that there is no special suspicion directed against himself. He will now probably alter his opinion when he sees that the luggage of the noble Lord has been subjected to the examination of which he complains.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, he rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether Mr. Gray, just appointed a Sub-Commissioner of the County of Cork, was the same Mr. Gray who had been acting in a similar capacity in Donegal? This gentleman was a farmer, and previous to his appointment in 1883 he had been known as a stump orator in the North of Ireland. He had in his hand a list of 14 speeches made by him during the years 1880, 1881, and 1882; but he did not propose to refer to those delivered in the two former years, inasmuch as great excitement prevailed, and as with others so with him there might have been much said which it was not desirable should be revived. He would, however, quote from two speeches made in the year 1883, and one particularly, in which, referring to the uselessness of Griffith's valuation, he said, if he took it and found that ground was valued by it at £1 per acre, he should deduct the taxes, 3*s*., and then reduce the amount by half. Thus the unfortunate landlord would get something like 8*s*. 6*d*. per acre. In the next speech he denounced Mr. Justice O'Hagan, Lord Monck, and others. Mr. Gray, however, was effectually muzzled by being appointed a Sub-Commissioner. He (Viscount Midleton) did not wish to blame the Government for having appointed Mr. Gray, for from the manner in which recommendations and testimonials were given, not only in Ireland, but elsewhere, it was quite possible that they had been led to believe that he was a proper person to be appointed a Sub-Commissioner. But since Mr. Gray's appointment the attention of the Government had been called to the matter, and the Lord Privy Seal had promised to look into it. That was no more than he expected of the noble Lord, because he remembered that Lord Spencer, in a letter to Sir Thomas M'Clure, mentioned that the qualifications that would be looked for in Sub-Commissioners were judicial experience, independence of character, and complete impartiality. He asked them, now that they knew something of Mr. Gray, to say whether he possessed these qualifications, especially in view of the fact that about 80 appeals from his decision had been made to the Land Commissioners? It was important that Sub-Commissioners should command the confidence of both parties; and the fact that there were so many appeals from one Sub-Commissioner was more inconvenient to the tenant than to the landlord, because of the expense that was involved. It was now reported that Mr. Gray was to be transferred to the South of Ireland to exercise his duties in that part of the country of which he knew nothing, whether as to the character, the climate, or the conditions under which agriculture was carried on. Was it fair or just to those who were to be the subject of Mr. Gray's decisions that a gentleman who had failed to command confidence with those with whom he had had to deal in the North should, as a matter of convenience, be sent to the South of Ireland, where he would be more completely ignorant of his business than he could possibly be in the North? He did not mean to say Mr. Gray would administer justice in the South of Ireland worse than he had administered it in the North. What he was now dealing with was Mr. Gray's fitness for the post, and he denied that he possessed any one of the three qualifications which Earl Spencer said were absolutely necessary for the office.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that he was, of course, not personally responsible for Mr. Gray's appointment. It had been his duty, however, to acquaint himself with the facts of the case, and he would give all the information in his power. As to the transfer of Mr. Gray as an Assistant Commissioner from the North to the South of Ireland, he was not able at that moment to tell the noble Viscount the particular reason for that change in the composition of the Sub-Commission. But then he (Lord Carlingford) knew that, whatever else might be said about Mr. Gray, he was at least admitted to be a first-rate farmer, and a man of the fullest and best agricultural experience; and he (Lord Carlingford) did not doubt for a moment that he would be perfectly capable of performing his duty in the county Cork, or any other county, so far as skill and experience as a farmer were concerned. As to the express language said to have been used by Mr. Gray in a certain speech or speeches, he (Lord Carlingford) had not been made aware of the number of speeches to which the noble Viscount had referred; but there was no doubt that before his appointment Mr. Gray had taken rather an active part in connection with certain meetings in the North of Ireland. With respect to the speech which had been the main subject of inquiry—namely, a speech delivered by that gentleman at Armagh before his appointment, Mr. Gray had been asked for explanations, and had given them. Mr. Gray entirely denied that he was correctly understood, or reported, as laying down that 8*s*. 6*d*. per acre was the proper rent for a landlord to obtain for his land. The reference to 8*s*. 6*d*. an acre was not given as an opinion of his own, but was used in illustration of an argument which he was directing against the doctrine that Griffith's valuation was a fair and proper valuation for rent. He argued that the proper basis upon which to fix rent was contained in the actual capabilities and situation of the farm, and not Griffith's valuation; and he stated that the sentence referred to by the noble Viscount was never intended to bear the construction which the latter put upon it, and was not used as expressing any opinion held by the speaker. What passed at the meeting had been totally misrepresented. Mr. Gray had been made responsible for certain seditious cries which were raised at that meeting in favour of persons who were at that time called "suspects." The fact was that those cries which were raised by a small number of persons were directed against Mr. Gray and his friends. As to those speeches by Mr. Gray which had not come to the knowledge of the Lord Lieutenant, he (Lord Carlingford) must say—and the noble Viscount seemed to be aware of it—that the Lord Lieutenant had received the most favourable recommendations and testimonials as to Mr. Gray's fitness in all respects for the post of Assistant Commissioner. These testimonials included some from landlords—from Mr. Gray's own landlord, he believed—certainly from his own agent—and were of the strongest kind as to his experience, ability, intelligence, and impartiality. Nevertheless, the Lord Lieutenant would not have appointed Mr. Gray if his attention had been called to the fact that he had taken a somewhat active part in the land agitation in Ireland. But the Irish Government had ascertained from the Land Commissioners that they had no evidence that would justify them in recommending the dismissal of Mr. Gray. The legal Assistant Commissioner with whom Mr. Gray had been working (Mr. Ulick Burke) had given very strong testimony to the fairness and impartiality, as well as ability, with which Mr. Gray had fulfilled his duties since his appointment. He had said that Mr. Gray was a perfect farmer, and that he did not care in the slightest degree whether he offended landlord or tenant. Under these circumstances the Lord Lieutenant, feeling bound to look, not to the speeches at land meetings which Mr. Gray had made before his appointment, but to his conduct since then, did not consider it his duty to take any action in the matter.

The Earl of WEMYSS said, that although, when the Act was passed, it was stated by the Government that these appointments would not be of a partizan nature, unquestionably many of the appointments had given rise to the impression that they were of that character. As he had previously pointed out, there could be no doubt that much difficulty arose in the choice, not only of the Sub-Commissioners, but of the Chief Commissioners. It might be possible there was no one in the whole Kingdom more fitted to fill the post of one of the three Commissioners than Mr. Litton; but unquestionably the fact was that Mr. Litton had throughout shown himself a thorough partizan with regard to the law that he was called upon to administer.

The Marquess of HERTFORD said, he was sorry that his first address to their Lordships should be of a personal nature; but, as his name had been mentioned in connection with this matter, he wished to say that he had not strongly recommended Mr. Gray for the appointment, and he was surprised if anything which he wrote concerning the gentleman caused the appointment to be conferred upon him. He denied that he really made such a recommendation. To the best of his belief, for he had not kept a copy of his letter, what happened was this—Mr. Gray, who was a small tenant of his, wrote to ask him to recommend him for the post of Sub-Commissioner. He declined; but some time after he received another letter from Mr. Gray saying that he thought he was likely to be appointed, and asking for a character. Upon that he wrote back saying that Mr. Gray was a very respectable man and a good farmer. That was all that passed until the other day, when he received another letter from Mr. Gray asking him to recommend him for reappointment, and that he declined to do. He could not vouch for the actual wording of the letter, but these were, he believed, the true facts of the case; therefore, he thought it hardly fair to attempt to throw the responsibility for Mr. Gray's appointment on his shoulders, as he believed had been done in "another place."

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council) said, he did not desire to make more of the noble Marquess's testimonial than was justifiable. The letter was not addressed to Lord Spencer, but to Mr. Gray himself. It was practically the same as had been described by the noble Marquess, but it was only fair to all parties that he should quote the exact words. The letter contained such statements as these—

> "I regret that the letters have remained so long unanswered. I cannot write to Lord Spencer himself, as I hardly know him; but I shall be happy to answer any questions that may be put to me as to your character and ability as a farmer, as I believe you to be a thoroughly respectable man and a good farmer as far as I can judge."

And again—

> "Having heard that you are anxious to be appointed Sub-Commissioner, I have every reason to believe that if you obtain the appointment you will discharge the duties successfully."

He (Lord Carlingford) thought that was a distinctly favourable letter; but it was not that letter alone, but others of a similar nature, which had induced the Lord Lieutenant to appoint Mr. Gray. A much stronger recommendation was received from the noble Marquess's agent, whose letter testified to Mr. Gray's great skill, and his knowledge of land, and the successful manner in which he had cultivated a large farm, and spoke of him as a model for the other tenants. The agent also said that he had every reason for believing that Mr. Gray would discharge his duties conscientiously.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE said, it was satisfactory that they had now for the first time a distinct acknowledgment from the noble Lord that a certain Sub-Commissioner would not have been appointed if the Lord Lieutenant had been acquainted with his antecedents. In that case, he thought if the antecedents of the Commissioners from the highest to the lowest had been considered they would never have been appointed, because their antecedents were such as would have shown that it was impossible they could have acted impartially.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that the antecedents to which he had referred consisted in the fact that the gentleman in question had taken an active part in tenants' meetings in Ulster.

THE SUGAR TRADE—WEST INDIAN SUGAR.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he rose to ask, Whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies had arrived at a decision with regard to the questions relative to the West Indian sugars, submitted to him by a deputation from the West India Committee on 4th of April last? The total amount of sugar imported from the West Indies had fallen off since 1878 by nearly one-third, while side by side with this there was a large increase in the consumption of sugar. It was perfectly clear, therefore, that while the West Indies exported less, the United Kingdom imported more. On the Continent, on the other hand, the production of beet sugar had, since 1878, greatly increased. The result was that the West Indies were in danger of being completely shut out of the market. The United States were importing large quantities of beet sugar, and they had agreed to Treaties with Mexico and the the Sandwich Islands, by virtue of which sugar would probably be introduced in very large quantities. In that direction, again, the West Indies were likely to be very badly off, and their trade to be placed in a position of very great difficulty. The Petition of the West India Committee submitted three questions to the noble Earl—Whether Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to promote an International Conference with a view to the abolition of bounties; secondly, whether they would do all in their power to procure a Favoured Nation Clause from the United States; and whether they would encourage the West Indies to conclude an arrangement of a reciprocal character with the United States. They had no power of themselves to make such tariffs, and it could only be done subject to the control of the Imperial Government. He was afraid a West Indian Conference would have very little chance indeed, because it was hardly likely that any argument that could be used with foreign nations would induce them to abolish the bounty system. The Favoured Nation Clause, he believed, would be a reasonable proposal. The West Indian Colonies had had so much trouble and difficulty that they deserved the favourable consideration of the Government. The noble Earl concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, it is not a difficult or disagreeable task to answer the Questions which have been put by my noble Friend, because in his statement of fact to which I have listened there is nothing from which I can dissent. It is quite true that there has been a very considerable falling off in the importation of sugar from the West Indies coincident with the very large increase in the general consumption in this country; and although that is partly balanced by the increased exportation from the West Indies to other countries, there is no doubt that the sugar-growing interest in the West Indies is in a state of depression. That does not imply a corresponding depression in all industries, because the Native population are developing various others, some of them with considerable success; but the planting interest is still by far the most important. I am afraid that the history of that interest during the last 50 years would show that its condition in that time has been much more frequently disastrous than prosperous; and I do not at all dispute the noble Lord's proposition that the condition of the planting industry is such that we are bound to do anything which may reasonably be in our power to remove the difficulties under which it labours. Now, the noble Earl referred to three questions that were raised by the deputation which called upon me at the Colonial Office and to which I gave a reply. The first question is that of bounties given by Foreign Governments to exporters of sugar from their country; the second is that of extending the most-favoured nation treatment by the United States to the West Indian Colonies as regards their production of sugar; and the third is the question whether special arrangements of a reciprocal character shall be made between the West Indies and the United States. Upon none of these points have I anything material to add to what I stated to the deputation. As to the bounties, I do not see any more now than I did then any prospect of inducing Foreign Governments to depart from the system which they have adopted. They are not likely to yield to any representation from us. They are within their rights, and it would be impossible, consistently with present ideas, either to give bounties ourselves or to impose differential duties on goods which have received bounty in their own country. We could not tell them that they should alter their system because it injured the trade of the West Indies, for, if we did, I anticipate they would reply that they found it benefited their own trade, and that was what most concerned them. The only question is whether we can take any steps to make it to the interests of those countries to abandon the system? I do not think that in this country the idea of granting corresponding bounties prevails to any great extent, or that it is likely to prevail. A system of bounties is, undoubtedly, faulty in principle, and not likely to be acceptable to the English taxpayers. No doubt, we might impose countervailing duties upon the goods coming from the countries where bounties prevail; but there, again, we should be acting contrary to all modern practice; and apart from that question, with regard to which a great deal may be said, the attempt to return to differential duties would lead to many complications and difficulties, and hold out such opportunities for fraud that the disadvantages arising would be far greater than the benefits. As to the system of foreign bounties, I am not going to defend it in principle; I think it indefensible; but, taking the English nation as a whole, it is not to us an absolutely unmixed evil. In effect, France and Germany are giving some hundred thousands yearly to provide England with sugar at an exceptionally low rate. Frenchmen and Germans may have much reason to complain; they are taxed that we may buy cheaply; but to the English consumer it is a gain. Sugar is an article of universal consumption, and the price of it affects the poor more than any other class. It may be asked, further, are the present low prices likely to last? I do not think that the present state of things is likely very long to continue. There is overproduction of sugar just now, and exceptionally low prices follow as a natural consequence; but if all our beliefs in these matters are not delusions, overproduction will remedy itself, prices will return to their normal level, and the superiority of cane sugar over beetroot will show itself. We may hope, therefore, that our sugar manufacturing industry will hold its own, notwithstanding the disadvantage of bounty. As to the practical step of calling an International Conference to deal with this question, I told the deputation that I would consider the matter. I have considered it, and consulted my noble Friend at the Foreign Office, who came to the conclusion, in which I entirely agreed, that, at any rate, at the present time it would be useless to call a Conference for the purpose. I am bound to add that I do not believe that there is any chance of Foreign Powers agreeing to a Conference with a view to abolish bounties. If it were possible, this Government would readily join; but it does not seem possible now. The next proposal of the deputation was to obtain the most favoured-nation treatment from the United States for the West Indian Colonies. The matter has often been discussed before, and we have not hitherto succeeded in attaining that object; but we hold the case to be a strong one, since we give the most favoured-nation treatment to the United States. I have been in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject, and a despatch has gone, or is going, out to Washington upon it. It is better, if possible, to obtain what we want in that way rather than by separate negotiations between the West Indies and the United States, because these might involve giving to a Foreign Power advantages in regard to the trade of a British Colony which the Mother Country and the other Colonies do not enjoy, which is a contingency not to be overlooked, and certainly not to be desired. But I do not ignore the fact that the natural market for West Indian produce lies rather in America than in Europe, and I am not disposed to veto any special arrangement which might have the effect of increasing that traffic if it did not seem likely to inflict practical injury on our trade here. The first thing to do will be to endeavour to obtain the most favoured-nation treatment from the United States with the West Indian Colonies, and then, if that negotiation fails, we shall have to consider some other and more special arrangement, if any of a satisfactory character can be come to.

C NTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House all correspondence relating to the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Cambridgeshire, and to that brought by the steamship 'Toronto.'"—(*The Lord Harlech.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY asked whether it was true that there had been an alarming outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Lincolnshire which had not been properly dealt with by the local authorities?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he regretted there had been several cases in that county, and he looked upon every outbreak as alarming, because the disease had been reduced to such a small compass in this country, and any neglect which might lead to its spreading again was certainly a matter for alarm. He was sorry to say that in Lincolnshire there had been the greatest neglect on the part of the local authorities; but the Privy Council had sent down an Inspector, who was now in communication with those authorities, and they had complied with all the advice given to them, and the infected places were carefully watched by the police, as they ought to have been at the first. He should be glad to give the Return moved for by his noble Friend.

Motion *agreed to.*

Return *ordered* to be laid before the House.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE BLENHEIM PICTURES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL CADOGAN asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it was true that some of the most valuable pictures of the Blenheim collection had been offered for sale to the country by the Duke of Marlborough; and, if so, whether such offer had been finally declined by Her Majesty's Government? Since he had come down to the House he had heard that a legal decision had been given upon the question whether the Duke of Marlborough had a right to dispose of those pictures. That decision left very little doubt that those pictures, in some form or other, would before long be offered for sale. Under these circumstances, and considering the historical and artistic value of the pictures, he ventured to hope that the noble Earl would inform the House whether any negotiations had been carried on between the Government and their owner, and whether the correspondence could be produced for the information of their Lordships without detriment to the Public Service or to the negotiations. He would further express a hope that the Government would not come to a final decision in the sense of refusing to treat for the purchase of these valuable works of art until after the Whitsuntide Recess.

EARL GRANVILLE: It is perfectly true that the Duke of Marlborough is prepared to sell the pictures at Blenheim—12 for £420,000, or five for £173,250. The offer was communicated to the Director and the Trustees of the National Gallery, and the reply of Her Majesty's Government to the Trustees was, that the Government were prepared to entertain and consider with care any definite proposal which might be made for the sale and purchase of these valuable pictures, but that the scale of price asked by the Duke of Marlborough was excessive. The Trustees were further asked to state a sum at which they valued any picture the purchase of which they recommended. I conceive it would be inconvenient if the negotiations for the purchase of pictures with a Government agent were published and placed in the possession of other agents.

EARL CADOGAN said, he would again say that he hoped the Government would not come to any final decision until after the Whitsuntide Recess.

EARL GRANVILLE: I very much doubt whether the negotiations for the sale of any of the pictures will be brought to a close within a fortnight.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE said, that, as a Trustee, he wished to mention that the pictures in question comprised the famous Ansidei Raffaelle—an equestrian portrait of Charles I.—by Vandyck; two full-length portraits by Rubens, probably the finest pictures he ever painted; also other allegorical pictures by Rubens. The Government had declined the offers, and there did not at present seem any great chance of the negotiations ending successfully in a national purchase; but the letter of the Government to the Trustees did not preclude further negotiation. The responsibility of recommending a purchase rested with the Trustees. Undoubtedly, the prices asked were high, but the pictures were unique; and, in every way, it would be deplorable if they were allowed to be bought by another country.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, there was a strong feeling at Oxford that these treasures should not, if it could be avoided, be allowed to leave the country, as works of art, books, and manuscripts had done within the last two years.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—THE BOROUGHS OF IRELAND.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD WAVENEY said, he rose to call the attention of the House to the numerical proportion of the boroughs of Ireland. The urban boroughs had a most remarkable history. They had been an important means of administering English law in the country some 300 years ago. In some there was a distinct line of demarcation between the English city and the Irish city, and in others between the Scotch city and the Irish city. By modern changes those towns had ceased to be the centres of political and municipal life which they used to be. There were three periods at which such Returns as he asked for had been given. The first was in 1832—the period of the great Reform Act, the second in 1851, and the last in 1866. Out of the 32 Irish boroughs two, Cashel and Sligo, had been disfranchised. Almost every one of those boroughs had diminished in population, both absolutely and relatively to the increase in other parts of the United Kingdom. It was evident, therefore, that some change must be made. Since he had the opportunity of placing the Question on the Notice Paper a valuable Return, which was moved for by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Limerick), had been presented to the House. That Return contained most accurate information. The new suffrage would be a household suffrage, and the Return to which he referred gave the number of inhabited houses in Ireland, dividing them into four classes. First, there were houses of £12 a-year and over; next, those between £4 and £12; then those between £1 and £4; and, lastly, those under £1. In most of the boroughs the last class needed hardly to be taken into consideration; but under the first three classes were included no fewer than 130,715, as against 58,051 on the present register. It was quite evident that in such a state of facts some new arrangements would have to be made. Now, there were few boroughs in Ireland, excluding Dublin, Cork, Belfast, Galway, and Waterford, which were entitled to independent representation. There was one method of dealing with the subject which he hoped would not be adopted, although it had been adopted in Scotland and England to some extent—that was the grouping of boroughs. The circumstances of Ireland were totally different from those of Great Britain, and the principle of grouping was totally inapplicable to that country. The Bill which was now being discussed in the other House would soon come before their Lordships, and it was desirable that they should be prepared to deal with the vast questions which would shortly come like a flood upon them, and it was for that reason that he had ventured to bring forward the question for their Lordships' consideration. In conclusion, the noble Lord said he had carefully formed the opinions which he had expressed, and which he believed would be verified whenever the subject was fully discussed by their Lordships.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): I rise for an instant, in order that I may not appear to treat my noble Friend with any want of civility, but also for the purpose of saying that I have nothing to say in reply to the speech which he has just delivered. Whatever valuable observations I might make on that speech, if I chose, is a secret known only to myself; but it is not my duty, on the part of the Government, to express an opinion on the subject of redistribution of seats in Ireland. The whole question of redistribution as applied to the Three Kingdoms the Government hope in due time to take in hand, and it will not be their fault if their proposals are not laid before Parliament in a very early future. In the meantime, I think my noble Friend will hardly succeed in forcing the matter upon the attention of your Lordships' House. I must leave without comment the remarks he has made, which, from the circumstances of the case, must be somewhat in the nature of a soliloquy.

COLONIAL PRISONERS REMOVAL BILL.

(*The Earl of Derby.*)

(NO. 44.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a."—(*The Earl of Derby.*)

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH pointed out that, under one of the provisions of the Bill, the sentences passed on soldiers and sailors by courts martial in the Colonies might be altered and reduced at the pleasure of the Secretary of State. He did not object to such a power being vested in the hands of the present Secretary of State for the Colonies; but persons might be appointed to the Office who entertained peculiar views concerning military and naval discipline, and he should object to their having power to interfere with the sentences of courts martial without first referring to the First Lord of the Admiralty or to the military authorities.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, he was glad that the Bill had been scrutinized by the noble Viscount with such minute care. He thought, however, that the danger apprehended by the noble Viscount was of an imaginary kind. No doubt, the Bill conferred upon the Secretary of State the power to alter and shorten sentences in the case of a prisoner being removed from one Colony to another; but the object was not to lessen the punishment, but to prevent its being aggravated in consequence of the prisoner's removal. In regard to the removal of naval or military prisoners, the Colonial Secretary would, doubtless, in all cases consult the naval or military authorities as a matter of course.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read 3^a accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed,* and sent to the Commons.

LAW AND POLICE—POLICE PROTECTION OF HER MAJESTY'S MINISTERS.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ASHBURNHAM inquired of Her Majesty's Government, How many members of the police force are employed in the protection of Her Majesty's Ministers; what is the total annual cost of such protection; and what proportion of such annual cost is borne by the ratepayers of this Metropolis?

EARL GRANVILLE: I have communicated with the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and he is distinctly of opinion that it is not desirable that I should make any statement in reply to the Question of the noble Earl. I venture to remind your Lordships of the great authority with which the Secretary of State for the Home Department speaks upon this subject, and of the immense responsibility of the constant and continuous duty of the police to meet threats and attempts of a perfectly monstrous and unusual character against life and property in this country.

THE EARL OF ASHBURNHAM asked whether the noble Earl would object to answer the latter portion of his Question?

EARL GRANVILLE: I have no statement to make in reply to the latter part of the noble Earl's Question.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Seven o'clock, till To-morrow,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 26th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£6,519,368, Consolidated Fund.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Purchase of Land (Ireland), *debate adjourned.*

Ordered—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) *.

Ordered—First Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) * [232]; Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2)* [229]; Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment * [231]; Universities (Scotland) * [230].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4) (Nenagh Union)* [202]; Local Government

(Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) (Unions of Cashel and others) * [205]; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [186], *debate adjourned*; Customs and Inland Revenue * [206].

Select Committee—Strensall Common, *nominated*.

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (*Clause* 4)—R.P. [Fifth Night].

Committee—Report—Metropolitan Police * [209].

Considered as amended—School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) * [224].

Withdrawn—Sale of Spirits (Mixed Traders) * [79].

QUESTIONS.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-PERSIAN AND AFGHAN FRONTIERS.

MR. JERNINGHAM asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it be possible for him to state to the House, whether negotiations have now been entered into by Her Majesty's Government with the Governments of Russia and Persia for an early and definitive settlement of the Russo-Persian and Afghan frontiers?

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether the Foreign Office has received any information from Teheran respecting the alleged incorporation of Sarakhs into the Russian Empire?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to the Question of my hon. Friend, and to that of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire, I may state that communications are taking place with the Russian Government, but they have not reached a stage at which it would be desirable that I should make any statement as to their nature. Her Majesty's Government have been informed by Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran that it was rumoured at Sarakhs that the Russian Commander-in-Chief was coming there to take possession, and make over to Merv Turcomans' lands on the right bank of the Heri Rud.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked, whether it was true, as stated in a telegram from *The Times* Correspondent at Calcutta, that the Indian Government was more anxious about the state of affairs in Central Asia than it was willing openly to admit?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that that was a Question which ought to be asked of the Under Secretary of State for India.

FRANCE AND CHINA—TREATY OF TIENT-SIN.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the article in *The National* with regard to the recent Treaty of Tien-Tsin, in which it is stated that the French

> "Do not plume themselves on an exaggerated Liberalism in tariff matters; and, though they will not shut out Foreign trade from their new markets, yet they will make it pay its share of the expenses of the conquest and occupation;"

whether the freedom of commerce in the provinces of Southern China will, in future, be hampered by prohibitive duties, and henceforth dependent on the goodwill of France; whether China has infringed the letter of her engagements with other Powers by her concession of exclusive rights to France; and, whether he will take any steps, and, if so, what, to prevent the destruction of British interests?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The questions alluded to by the hon. Member are engaging the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government; but it would be premature for them to express any opinion at present, inasmuch as the Treaty of Commerce between France and China contemplated in Article 3 of the recent Treaty of Tien-Tsin has not yet been concluded.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878—MOVEMENT OF CATTLE.

MR. PELL asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, having regard to the narrow limits to which cases of foot and mouth disease in Great Britain are reduced, and for the better security of districts entirely free from disease, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to issue orders, under the powers conferred on them by "The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878," prohibiting or regulating the movements of Animals out of the districts of local authorities in which cases of foot and mouth disease may exist?

MR. DODSON: We are giving practical effect to the hon. Member's suggestion by sending Privy Council Inspectors to make inquiries in the few districts where foot-and-mouth disease still exists, and to settle the boundaries of infected areas sufficiently large to prevent it from spreading into other parts. A Circular has been addressed to all local authorities, pointing out the heavy responsibility which will rest upon them if by any neglect on their part the disease, which has now reached a lower point than it has touched for some years past, should again spread through the country.

ARMY (INDIA)—PENSIONS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he is able to say when the Treasury Minute will be laid upon the Table dealing with the amounts recently received from the Indian Government, and yet to be paid into the Exchequer for the capitalised value of the pensions of men belonging to the Army, and serving on the Indian Establishment?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), in reply, said, he hoped to lay the Minute referred to by the right hon. Gentleman on the Table very shortly. There were some details still the subject of correspondence.

COINAGE BILL—PROFIT AND LOSS OF MINTAGE.

Mr. ANDERSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What is the percentage of profit on the issue of the bronze token money; what profit has been made upon it, in all, since its first issue; and, whether he will add statements on these subjects to the Papers he has promised regarding silver?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I propose to lay on the Table for the consideration of hon. Members, before the further stages of the Coinage Bill, a Return showing the profit and loss of the Mint yearly, in connection with gold, silver, and bronze coinage respectively, during the last 10 years.

POST OFFICE—FREE POSTAGE.

Mr. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, Whether, when a large number of the people of Ireland were in danger of death by starvation four years ago, and were only saved by appeals to the charity of the world, application was made by the Mansion House Relief Committee to the Post Office to transmit their letters free of postage, and the application was refused; whether communications on the business of the Fisheries Exhibition last year were, and communications on the business of the Health Exhibition this year are, transmitted through the Post Office free of postage; and, whether he is aware that the former Exhibition made a considerable profit last year?

Mr. FAWCETT: The case is correctly stated by the hon. Member. The difference is this—that precedents exist for opening non-paying accounts for postage between Royal Commissions appointed by Her Majesty's Government and the Post Office; but, so far as I can ascertain, there is no instance of such a privilege being conferred on any body not appointed by the Government.

Mr. GRAY: Upon what principle are these non-paying accounts opened? Do all public bodies open these accounts?

Mr. FAWCETT said, he had simply to administer decisions. So far as he was able to ascertain it, the test was that a Royal Commission was a Royal appointment, and was supposed to hold a trust for the public.

Mr. GRAY: What I want to know is, whether all such bodies enjoy the privilege of free postage?

Mr. FAWCETT could not say that all such bodies did. But, so far as he had been able to ascertain, there were many precedents for conferring this privilege upon Royal Commissioners.

Mr. GRAY: I shall take an early opportunity of calling attention to the subject.

Mr. BIRKBECK asked whether it was not a fact that free postage had been granted to all International Exhibitions in London when space had not been sold and speculation had been excluded; and, further, whether in cases where free postage had been granted for Exhibitions, they had not been national undertakings beyond the sphere of personal profit and for the sole interest of the community at large?

Mr. FAWCETT explained that there had not been time for him to obtain the information asked for; but if the hon. Member would postpone his Question until after Whitsuntide, he would very gladly answer it.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. HAMPDEN EVANS TENER AND MR. ST. GEORGE LAWRENCE WILLCOCKS, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Hampden Evans Tener, whose name appears in a Return to an Order of the House of the 14th November 1882, as holding the Commission of the Peace for the county of Tyrone, is the same person who for many years managed a loan fund bank in that county, and, about two years since, fled from the Country, taking with him the moneys deposited in his bank by the farmers, labourers, and servants of the district, and has not since returned; and, whether it is intended to retain his name in the Commission?

MR. TREVELYAN: On inquiry made, the facts appear to be substantially as stated, and they having been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, he has directed that Mr. Tener's name shall be at once struck out of the Commission of the Peace. It is right to add that hitherto the circumstances have not been brought officially to the notice of any Lord Chancellor.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether St. George Lawrence Willcocks, whose name appears in a Return to an order of the House of 14th November 1882, as holding the commission of the peace for the county of Tyrone, and further described in the Return as being of "no profession or occupation," is a cottier, with no visible means of support; whether, about ten years ago, the then Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Lord O'Hagan, sent him a letter of supersession on the ground that he was without means of subsistence; and, if so, how it happens that his name is still included in the list of magistrates; whether he presided in the Petty Sessions Court at Cookstown in August last, when cases of party assaults were tried, and so conducted himself that he was several times rebuked by the resident magistrate, Captain Trench, and by the Crown solicitor, Mr. Alexander Morpley, who went so far as to threaten to retire from the case; and, whether Mr. Willcocks will now be superseded from further acting in the commission?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Mr. Willcocks lives in a small house at Arboe, near Lough Neagh, in the county of Tyrone, and that his means of subsistence are believed to be very small. It is the fact that in February, 1873, he was superseded in the Commission of Peace by the then Lord Chancellor, Lord O'Hagan; but it is also the fact that he was reinstated by the same authority in the following April. The grounds of the supersession are not recorded. With regard to the occasion in last August, when he presided at Cookstown Petty Sessions at the hearing of certain assault cases, Captain French, the Resident Magistrate, reports that his (Captain French's) interference was limited to securing for the representive of the Crown the right to conduct the cases without interruption. While I think the circumstances of the case, as at present shown, are not sufficient for a reference to the Lord Chancellor, and are somewhat exaggerated in the Question, they are such as appear to call for some further inquiry on the part of the Executive—which I shall cause to be made.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT BENCH OF COOKSTOWN, CO. TYRONE—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, of the fifteen magistrates in the Petty Sessions district of Cookstown, county Tyrone, nine are Episcopalian Protestants, five are Presbyterians, and one is a Methodist; whether, in view of the fact that there is no Catholic magistrate in the district, the Catholic clergy and principal Catholic inhabitants have united in recommending to the Lieutenant of the county, and to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Mr. John Quin, Poor Law Guardian, of Cookstown, an extensive merchant, for appointment to the Commission of the Peace; and, whether Mr. Quin will be appointed?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Government are not aware of the precise constitution in point of religion of the Cookstown District Bench. However, it is not now the fact that there is no Roman Catholic magistrate in the district, as the Lord Chancellor has just appointed Mr. James Devling, of Cookstown, a Roman Catholic gentleman, to the Commission of the Peace, on the recommendation of the Lieutenant of the County, Lord Charlemont, who, the Lord Chancellor informs me, has shown the strongest desire to redress the inequality in the representation of the different religious denominations. With regard to Mr. Quin, it is the case that his name has been brought before the

Lord Chancellor, who will duly consider it.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. WILLIAM GRAY.

Sir PHILIP MILES asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. William Gray, a tenant farmer, who was, in January, 1883, nominated by Earl Spencer to the judicial appointment of Sub-Commissioner for fixing fair rents in Ireland, is the same person who is reported in *The Belfast Morning News*, of January 17th 1882, to have used, on a public platform at Armagh, the following language:—

> "Notwithstanding the howl of distress that was given vent to at a meeting in Dublin, landlords would, at 8*s*. 6*d*. an acre, have plenty to live on; indeed, as much as was good for them. Pity the poor landlords;"

whether he is aware that, at a public meeting at Coleraine, as reported in *The Belfast Northern Whig* of October 9th 1882, Mr. Gray used the following language:—

> "Now that this Act has been handed over to landlord partizans to do what they like with it, it was high time that the farmers should speak out and look to their interests. If the Government thought that they would succeed in satisfying the landlords there were more cabbage-headed men among them than ever he thought. He was afraid that if the Government did not remedy this mistake it would tell against them when the General Election came round;"

and, further, to ask whether, in view of the qualifications which His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant laid down, when he stated—

> "That a studious search should be made for men whose integrity of purpose, impartiality, and independence of position and character, would make their decisions respected by all parties coming before them in their judicial capacity,"

Mr. Gray will be maintained in the office of a Sub-Commissioner?

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of Mr. Gray's letter, explaining how he reconciles the statement that he only alluded to Griffiths' valuation as repudiating all valuations, although he founded an argument in figures upon that particular valuation; also, on what grounds he states that the seditious cries were used against him, instead of with his approval, as he is not reported to have dissented from or reproved the use of them; whether he will lay upon the Table of the House copies of the letters of recommendation of Lord Yarmouth, Sir Richard Wallace, and Mr. Stanners, on which he relies, as justifying the appointment and reappointments of Mr. Gray for the office of Sub-Commissioner; whether the Government was aware of the language complained of early last year; whether Mr. Gray has expressed any regret for the language used by himself and others in his presence; and, whether he has withdrawn the sentiments expressed on the platforms referred to?

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he was aware that, at a meeting held at Dunmurry, county Antrim, Mr. William Gray, a few weeks previous to his being appointed to the judicial office of Sub-Commissioner to fix "fair rents," made use of the following language, as reported in *The Belfast Daily Post* of October 26, 1882:—

> "We deplore that men in whom the farmers have confidence have generally been excluded from the position of Sub-Commissioners, and that the Courts, being mainly composed of landlords and agents, are not doing justice to the people;

whether he, at the same meeting, spoke of Chief Commissioner O'Hagan as follows:—

> "The judicial mind is fearfully and wonderfully made. It loves to make mysterious and incomprehensible that which is clear as daylight. It is never so much in its glory as when turning plain common sense into nonsense, and commend me to the judicial mind for making things as clear as mud;"

and, whether Mr. Gray would be maintained in the office of a Sub-Commissioner?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have no objection to lay on the Table so much of Mr. Gray's letter of explanation as refers to the points which the hon. Baronet (Sir Hervey Bruce) mentions. But it is not desirable to lay on the Table of the House letters of recommendation of candidates for offices. I have no objection to show the letters of Lord Yarmouth, Sir Richard Wallace, and Mr. Stanners privately to the hon. Baronet. With regard to the speeches of Mr. Gray, which are quoted from in the several Questions, the Lord Lieutenant was not aware of the various expressions used until they were referred to recently in a speech made by a noble Lord in "another place." Mr. Gray has given an explanation of language used by himself and by others in his presence. His Excellency would not have appointed Mr. Gray had he been aware that he had taken an active part in Party discussions of the Land Question; but, having appointed him, the Government can only have regard to his conduct as an Assistant Commissioner, and do not propose to take any action in respect of words spoken by Mr. Gray before he was in the Public Service. From a conversation which His Excellency has had with Judge O'Hagan, Mr. Litton, and Mr. Vernon, the Government learn that there is no evidence before the Commissioners as to Mr. Gray's action as an Assistant Commissioner which would, in their opinion, justify their recommending his dismissal. The testimony of Mr. Bourke, the legal Assistant Commissioner, with whom Mr. Gray has been associated, is strongly in favour of his independence and impartiality as well as his ability. Mr. Bourke says of him—

> "He is a perfect farmer; he does not care a brass farthing whether he offends landlord or tenant."

MR. J. LOWTHER asked how long would his appointment last?

MR. TREVELYAN said, the appointment of nearly all the Sub-Commissioners would terminate, he thought, at the end of about two months—at the end of four months from the beginning of the present financial year, and only a comparatively small number of them would be reappointed. There would be 10 Sub-Commissioners instead of 17.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked, was he to understand that the Lord Lieutenant was not aware of Mr. Gray's language when he reappointed Mr. Gray?

MR. TREVELYAN said, His Excellency, as a matter of fact, was not aware of Mr. Gray's language until quite recently. His Excellency admitted that it was mentioned in "another place" a year or a year and a-half ago; but His Excellency was not aware of it until within the last two or three weeks.

ARMY (INDIA)—ARREARS OF NON-EFFECTIVE ARMY CHARGES.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the correspondence between the Government of India and the Home Government, referred to at page 6 of the Financial Statement, with regard to the claim made by the Home Government for more than two millions sterling on account of arrears of non-effective Army charges will be laid upon the Table of the House at an early date; and, whether the Secretary of State has agreed to the proposal of the Government of India

> "For the payment of the large arrears still outstanding as well as of current charges under a system which will not lead to any increase of expenditure over the sum originally provided in the Estimates of 1883-4 on this account,"

and which will obviate for the future those "sudden and unforeseen fluctuations," which Sir Auckland Colvin complains of, and which are so disturbing to regular and economical financial administration?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I hope that the Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India respecting the arrears of non-effective Army charges will shortly be complete, when there will be no objection to lay it upon the Table. In reply to the second paragraph of the Question, I may say that arrangements are in progress, by which the "fluctuations" mentioned by Sir Auckland Colvin will in future be avoided.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Committee upon the Public Prosecutor's Office have reported; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of the Report upon the Table in sufficient time for it to be considered before the Vote on that office is taken in Supply?

MR. HIBBERT: The Report was laid upon the Table of the House on the 13th instant, and can be seen by Members in the Library. It is passing through the Press, and will, doubtless, be circulated before the Vote in question is taken.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—SALE OF CARCASES.

MR. GRAY asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether

English Boards of Guardians sell for use as human food the carcases of cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia, and slaughtered under the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act; and, if so, whether he can state approximately the number of animals so disposed of, and the average price received for the carcases?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have no information of anything of the sort being done by English Boards of Guardians.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE OLDCASTLE UNION.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has arrived at any decision regarding the gentlemen recommended for the Commission of the Peace, three months ago, by the guardians of the Oldcastle Union; and, if not, when does he expect to report his decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Lord Chancellor informs me that two several Memorials, received on the 2nd and 9th of last month, referring to the names of nine gentlemen recommended for the Commission of the Peace, are now before him, and he hopes to give his decision thereon in a short period.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON THE PERSON—CASE OF MR. M'GAUGHEY.

Mr. LYNCH asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a case heard recently by Mr. Buchannan, J.P. at the Omagh Petty Sessions, in which a woman named Ellen M'Ellhill charged Mr. M'Gaughey, commercial traveller, with having struck her with a whip. Mr. Buchannan, in the absence of the defendant, and upon the sole evidence of the complainant, refused an adjournment, inflicted a heavy fine, and issued a warrant for arrest of the defendant, although his brother attended in court, and informed the magistrate that the defendant, being absent on a business journey, had not been served with the summons to attend, and had no notice whatever of the hearing; and, whether the Executive will cancel the warrant, and order a new hearing of the case?

Mr. Gray

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have inquired into this case, and find that it was heard before a Bench of four magistrates, of whom Mr. Buchannan was one. The defendant, who was a commercial traveller only in the sense that he was a hawker of tea in small quantities, was summoned for assaulting a married woman named M'Ellhill, who was near her confinement at the time. The defendant did not appear, and an application for adjournment was made; but the magistrates did not believe it to be *bonâ fide*, and proceeded to hear the case—perfect service of the summons having been proved. The complainant and two other witnesses proved a wanton and unprovoked assault, and the magistrates imposed a penalty of 40*s.*, or two months' imprisonment in default. The defendant appealed; but the County Court Judge confirmed the sentence. The defendant has since absconded. There is clearly no ground upon which the Government could or ought to interfere in this case.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is intended to take any steps to improve the position of the officers and attendants in public lunatic asylums in Ireland in respect to salaries and pensions, so as to make these more in correspondence with the scale in English asylums, as recommended in the Inspector's Report for 1881?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Recommendations are from time to time made to the Government in favour of increase of salary to individual officers and attendants in lunatic asylums by the respective Boards of Governors, and such recommendations always receive the most careful consideration; but no representation has been made to the Government, nor, so far as the Government are aware, to the Inspectors, which would establish the contention that the salaries in these institutions are generally inadequate; nor are the Government aware that there is such a difficulty in obtaining suitable persons to fill vacancies therein as would require them to make inquiries on the subject. As regards pensions, they are awarded according to the Regulations in force for the Civil Service, which receive a liberal construction in their application to the cases of officers and attendants in lunatic asylums.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CHESTER PRISON.

Mr. TATTON EGERTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will delay closing the prison at Chester to give an opportunity for discussion in the House; and, whether, in the future, any Prison Rules involving the closing of prisons will, at the time of being laid upon the Table of the House, be also communicated to the Members for the county or borough in which such prison is situate, and also to the Chairman of Quarter Sessions or Chairman of Visiting Justices?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The Order has been suspended. Orders as to closing prisons—*i.e.*, as to the cessation of committals to prisons—are necessarily communicated to the committing authorities. The process does not involve laying any Rule on the Table of the House, except in certain particular cases. Any Order which is laid on the Table would necessarily be issued to the county and borough Members.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE RECORD OFFICE AT VENICE.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Who has been appointed to carry on the work undertaken by the late Mr. Rawdon Browne for the Record Office at Venice, and under what conditions has the appointment been made?

Mr. COURTNEY: After the death of Mr. Rawdon Browne, the Master of the Rolls asked the Treasury to sanction an annual allowance not exceeding £200, and five guineas per printed sheet, to be paid to such persons and in such amounts as his Lordship should specify for the purpose of completing the work of Mr. Browne. Sir Baliol Brett explained that he proposed that the money should be paid to various persons in England and Italy, including some who had been already employed by Mr. Browne, the whole to be under the unpaid editorship of the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), who was Mr. Browne's sole executor, and who, his Lordship added, "is familiar with the Venetian archives, and very familiar with the Italian language."

Mr. DILLWYN asked if the Correspondence relating to this appointment would be laid on the Table?

Mr. COURTNEY: No.

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES—TABLE OF INTEREST AND SINKING FUNDS.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will direct a Table to be prepared, showing the Annuities required to cover the interest on Loans, at as many varying rates as are charged by Government; also the Sinking Funds to pay off Loans at different periods, having regard to the variations in amounts of the Annuities consequent on their being paid quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly?

Mr. COURTNEY: This information can be found in any volume of mathematical tables, such as Willich. Any intending borrower can also ascertain the figures applicable to his particular case on reference to the lending body. Under these circumstances, I think we should be scarcely justified in printing the information as a Parliamentary Return.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—STATEMENT OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN—THE VALUERS.

Mr. NORWOOD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the three gentlemen who estimated the insurance value of certain steamers made the usual survey and examination of the vessels and their machinery to enable them to arrive at a just conclusion; whether two of them, viz. Mr. White (underwriter to the Marine Insurance Company) and Mr. Stringer (formerly a shipbroker)—are professional valuers; and, whether he, before accepting their valuation as authoritative, took any steps to inform himself as to their possessing any scientific or practical acquaintance with the construction and values of ships and machinery?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have communicated with the several gentlemen named by the hon. Member with reference to the points raised in his Question, and have received the following replies. Mr. Stringer informs me that he was for many years the managing partner in one of the largest shipbroking and insurance businesses in London, and for nine years represented the subscribers of

Lloyd's on the Salvage Association. He says his intimate knowledge of shipping, arising from his experience as charterer and insurer, enabled him to form an accurate estimate of the value of the various vessels he referred to, and that the values at which he arrived were confirmed by professional valuers. I have also received a telegram from Mr. White, who says—

> "It is not customary to employ professional valuers to fix insurance values. The great number of vessels that have come under my notice during my past 18 years' experience as an Underwriter enables me, generally speaking, to arrive at a fair valuation for insurance purposes. Before sending my estimates to the Board of Trade, I submitted the same to a gentleman of considerable experience in valuing steamships, and the difference between us was under £3,000."

Messrs. Bayley and Ridley, who are professional valuers, have written to me as follows:—

> "We do not in any case make a survey and examination of the vessels and their machinery, but form our opinions as to values from the description given of the vessels in *Lloyd's Register* and *The Liverpool Registry of Iron Vessels* (of present and past years), carefully noticing the records of surveys and repairs, and assuming that the vessels were fully up to the description given. We also assumed the accuracy of the particulars printed in the Board of Trade Reports when they were supplied to us."

Mr. J. Wimshurst, who is Surveyor of the Board of Trade, says—

> "I first inquired the prices at which ships had recently changed hands, and also the prices at which other ships were offering for sale; from this data I deduced a fair current standard value for each type and condition of ship. Then as each list was sent me I looked up in both the Register books the dimensions, the several tonnages, the date of build, type, class, power, and type of engines, age of boilers, and the date of last survey. With these and the above current standard value I determined the estimated values. Actual survey might, no doubt, enable me to more accurately judge the particular merits of one ship in relation to any other ship; but granting that the Register fairly gives the above particulars, I state unhesitatingly that actual survey is not necessary for the purpose of arriving at the fair estimated market value."

Mr NORWOOD: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, under the circumstances, these gentlemen, not having inspected the vessels, what they did was not mere guess-work?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I think that the letters I have read from these gentlemen show conclusively that it is nothing of the kind; that they took pains to arrive at a fair estimate; and that they adopted the course which is usual in the vast majority of these transactions.

Mr. C. M. PALMER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is his intention to publish and circulate throughout the Country his speech on the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill before the resumption of the Adjourned Debate? Would the right hon. Gentleman also state when he proposed to issue the Memorandum which he promised to the House respecting the re-casting or re-modelling of the Merchant Shipping Bill; and what was the earliest date on which he proposed to take the Adjourned Debate?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The last Question ought to be addressed to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, because I have no control over the Business of the House. As regards the Memorandum promised, it was laid on the Table of the House on Friday evening, and will, I hope, be in the hands of hon. Members before the holidays. As to the other Question, I think it is put under some misapprehension. I have not expressed any intention whatever to circulate my speech throughout the country. What I have undertaken to do is to correct very carefully the Parliamentary report, which is prepared by Mr. Hansard. I have offered at the same time to send a copy of this report to any individual who may write to me for it, and who is specially interested in the question.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—APPLICATION FOR FAIR RENT—CASE OF PATRICK CASSERLAY.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the hearing of an application made by Patrick Casserlay for a reduction of his rent before the Land Commission Court held at Longford in March; whether the farm held by Casserlay on the shore of Loughrea, county Longford, was formerly let at five pounds a year, and whether, on a change of ownership some years ago, the rent was raised to sixteen pounds; whether Casserlay applied to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed; and, whether it is true that the applicant received no notice of the decision against his claim until after the time had passed when he could appeal from that decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me as follows:—Casserlay's application to have a fair rent fixed was heard by the Longford Sub-Commission. His holding had been let up to 1872 for £5. But the tenement valuation is £13. His rent was £16, at which amount it has been fixed by the Sub-Commission. The Sub-Commission gave judgment on the 28th of April. Notification of the decision was sent by post to the tenant on the following day, and the time within which the tenant can appeal has not yet expired.

POOR LAW (SCOTLAND)—MR. D. ROSS, PAROCHIAL INSPECTOR OF CROMDALE—REMOVAL BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISION.

Sir GEORGE GRANT asked the Lord Advocate, If it is the case that Mr. D. Ross has been removed from the office of parochial inspector of the parish of Cromdale by order of the Board of Supervision; and, if he will lay upon the Table the Report by the inspector in reference to the case?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): It is the case that Mr. D. Ross, Inspector of Poor of the parish of Cromdale, has been removed from his office by the Board of Supervision. I have no objection to lay upon the Table the Inspector's Reports, and the correspondence, from which the grounds of the Board's action will appear.

ARMY—INVERNESS BARRACKS.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the new barracks at Inverness, which have been in construction for two years, have no system of drainage provided, and are consequently not available for occupation?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The difficulty in regard to the drainage of the regimental depôt barracks at Inverness has been to find an outfall which should not be open to objection from the neighbouring proprietors. Negotiations are now in progress, and it is hoped that the difficulty will soon be surmounted.

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL—SUSPENSION OF WORKS.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has any information showing whether any works in connection with the Channel Tunnel are now being continued on the French shores of the English Channel?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The latest information which I have on this subject is contained in a Report from Her Majesty's Consul at Boulogne. This Report, dated March 19, states that—

> "The works at Sangatte for the proposed Channel Tunnel have been entirely suspended. At the beginning of 1883 the piercing of the gallery or heading was rapidly proceeded with . . . . but on the 17th March, 1883, the work was finally stopped. . . . At the end of March the quantity of water leaking into it was . . . 447 gallons per minute. As no further work was to be carried on, it was decided to block the gallery at about 350 mètres from the shaft. This was done by means of a masonry wall two mètres thick, which was finished on the 22nd May."

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO RIVER—DETENTION OF THE YACHT "MAUD."

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the information contained in the Liverpool papers describing the forcible seizure and detention of the British yacht *Maud* by the Portuguese authorities in the Congo River is accurate; and, if so, whether any representations have been or will be made to the Portuguese Government on the subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: We have had no information respecting this. If the hon. Member can furnish the Foreign Office with any information, the matter will be attended to.

ARMY—EXAMINATIONS FOR PROMOTION.

Earl PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the advisability of allowing those officers of the Army who gained five marks in the aggregate, and passed in every subject at the last examination for promotion, to be reckoned as qualified for promotion from the date of the conclusion of the next examination, without obliging them to appear again before the examiners on that occasion?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he had looked into this question with every disposition to provide against arrangements which would cause inconvenience to the officers of the Army. He was afraid it was beyond the scope of the New Regulations to make them retrospective, even if they were limited to the last examination, the results of which for unsuccessful candidates had been cancelled. It would probably lead to demands from officers similarly situated at former examinations, and raise questions of supersession which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to entertain.

EARL PERCY asked the noble Marquess to explain how the retrospective operation of the Regulations would have the effect he had indicated.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON replied, that what he had stated was the result of inquiries he had made. It would really be impossible for the Department to consent to make the Regulations retrospective in this matter.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—ROTHWELL SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it is true that he has ordered a School Board to be formed at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, in direct opposition to the wishes of the householders and ratepayers, as declared by a considerable majority at the poll held on the 29th of March, and of the protests of a deputation representing four-fifths of the rateable value of the parish, and notwithstanding the fact that the managers of the national school offered and were prepared to provide whatever additional school accommodation might be required by the Education Acts?

MR. MUNDELLA: It is true that a School Board has been ordered for the parish of Rothwell, a small town in Northamptonshire, under Section 12 (2) of the Act of 1870. It appears that for the last half-century the educational requirements of the district have been supplied by two schools, one National and the other British, and the population is largely composed of Nonconformists, who have been established there for more than 200 years. The buildings of the British school having been condemned, it was found necessary to replace them. The managers, however, failed to raise the sum required, and an attempt was made to pass a resolution in favour of a School Board. This was rejected by 310 to 255, a majority of 55 in a population of 3,000. The managers of the British School now find themselves obliged to close the school, and have given notice to that effect to the Education Department. Under these circumstances, the Department issued the order for a School Board, and practically they had no alternative. It is quite true that the managers of the National School offered to build an additional school in order to supply the deficiency; but for several reasons this would not have been a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. There would have been no provision for the children pending the erection of the new school, and the whole of the school accommodation would have been monopolized by one religious body. Such an arrangement would certainly not have been suitable to a population which for half-a-century has enjoyed a choice of schools, and would neither have been conducive to the peace or the educational interests of the district.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Do I understand, Sir, that there was a deficiency of school accommodation?

MR. MUNDELLA: The schools were closed, and it was necessary to provide for the educational wants of the district.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the First Commissioner of Works, What preparations have been made for the reception of the equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington at Aldershot?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Arrangements have been made for the erection of the statue at Aldershot. A site has been selected for it near the head-quarters, overlooking the permanent barracks and the town. The erection of a pedestal will be undertaken by the military authorities. Any outlay incurred will be defrayed out of the fund raised by the Committee appointed by the Prince of Wales.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: I wish to ask for a word of explanation. I should like to know how it came about that when it was decided that the noble Duke was to be beheaded, that no arrangement was made by hoarding or otherwise to hide so painful a spectacle?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I regret to say that no arrangements were made; but I gave orders that a tarpaulin, or something else, should be erected during operations. I found, however, that it had been removed; and I have again given orders that nothing more should be done without some such screen.

POST OFFICE—FEMALE TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. W. REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, If a female telegraphist in the service previous to a Rule at present existing, "prohibiting her marrying and retaining her situation," may not marry without being called upon to resign; and, if not, is she not entitled to compensation for a service of about thirteen years?

MR. FAWCETT: The Rule to which the hon. Member refers has been in operation for many years; it makes no exception in favour of women who were in the service at the time it was established. All, whether appointed before or after the date of that Rule, must resign on marriage; and on their resignation they are not legally entitled to either pension or gratuity in respect to the years they have served.

EGYPT—FORCED LABOUR.

MR. VILLIERS STUART asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any steps have yet been taken to reform the forced labour system in Egypt, by supplying the peasants with food and tools, instead of requiring them to dig with their fingers, and to depend for food upon the supplies sent by their friends from their native villages; and, if not, whether, having in view the importance of winning the good will of the people at the present crisis, Her Majesty's Government will use their influence to obtain this reform for them without delay?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are well aware of the objection to the system of forced labour which my hon. Friend has so forcibly brought out in his Reports, and Mr. Egerton will take every opportunity of pressing upon the Egyptian Government the necessity of remedying the evils alluded to; but such reforms depend on the restoration of the finances of Egypt, which is the principal object now in view.

THE MIDDLESEX REGISTRY—THE STAFF.

MR. INCE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What are the number of *employés* engaged at the Middlesex Registry, and which of these is it proposed should be taken into Government employ at the Land Transfer Office, and out of what funds are those to be so taken at present paid?

MR. COURTNEY: I am informed that there are nine officers now employed at the Middlesex Registry besides a number of copyists. They are paid out of the fees of the Registry. Should the Registry be transferred to the State, as proposed, we would endeavour to effect some reduction in its cost; but we cannot at present judge whether this is possible.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—STATUS, DUTIES, AND LEAVES OF CLERKS.

MR. W. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that for four years after the inauguration of the Lower Division system, the clerks of that Division appointed to the office of National Education, Dublin, were in the enjoyment of six weeks' annual leave; whether, without any reason being assigned, this leave was in 1880 curtailed to two weeks; whether, also since increased, there is yet a marked disparity between their vacation and that granted to the other clerks of the Department; whether there is any difference in the duties which would warrant this disparity in the leave; and, whether, under the circumstances of the case, he will use his influence with the Commissioners to obtain for these gentlemen the leave of absence formerly enjoyed by them?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Education Commissioners inform me that it is the case that at one time the clerks of the Lower Division in their Office were allowed six weeks' leave; but that it was found not only that the requirements of the Office made this inconvenient, but that it was at variance with the practice in other Departments. These clerks are now allowed three weeks' leave, which is more than is enjoyed by those in a similar position in many other Offices. The Establishment clerks are allowed, as formerly, six weeks' leave. There is an essential difference, both as regards status and duties, between the two Divisions of the Service. It is sometimes the case that some of the

Lower Division clerks are intrusted with certain duties in common with some of the Establishment clerks; but this is resorted to only when an Establishment clerk is not available. The Commissioners do not intend to alter the present arrangements.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) —LEGISLATION.

Mr. RICHARD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can hold out any hopes that the measure for Intermediate Education in Wales, twice mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and so often promised by the Government, will be introduced at an early day after the Whitsuntide Recess?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The measure to which my hon. Friend refers is ready, and Her Majesty's Government have every hope, and as far as depends upon them every intention, of passing it during the present Session. With regard to the particular day for introducing it, if my hon. Friend will communicate with the Vice President of the Council he will be happy to consider what is best to be done for the purpose.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ASSIZES.

Mr. WHITLEY asked Mr. Attorney General, If it is true, as stated in a paragraph in *The Daily News* of Friday, May the 23rd,

> "That the proposed re-arrangement of Assize Courts, suggested by a Committee of Judges, had been abandoned in deference to strong objections which had been raised in many parts of England and Wales, and that the Judicial Bench will be strengthened so as to meet the difficulty arising from the present condition of overwork of the Judges?"

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, it was correct that representations had been received objecting to the removal of the Assizes from different counties. Full attention had been given to those representations; but it was not correct to say that any scheme had been abandoned. No scheme had been prepared. There was no intention of increasing the number of Judges.

PARLIAMENT—THE WHITSUN HOLIDAYS — ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Dr. CAMERON: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether there is any chance of his moving the adjournment at the Evening Sitting? The right hon. Gentleman was good enough to say that he would consider the matter; and I beg, therefore, to ask him whether he can give any hope of a change in his previously announced intention?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think I mentioned on a previous occasion what is in our power in this matter. My hon. Friend relies, I think, on the precedent which occurred at Easter last; but I am afraid it will be of no avail to him, because at Easter the adjournment was moved at 9 o'clock, and, of course, on the adjournment there arose discussions of all miscellaneous questions that any Member was disposed to raise. I doubt very much whether, under present circumstances, it is in our power to take the course suggested by my hon. Friend; and therefore I think the best course—indeed, I think I am pledged to the House—to take is the usual course. At the same time, I cannot help saying that I regret extremely that my hon. Friend will not have an opportunity to-morrow night of calling attention to a question which is certainly somewhat urgent; and I hope that some arrangement may be come to by which there may be a discussion on the subject during the present Session.

Dr. CAMERON: Did the right hon. Gentleman hold out no hope of an Evening Sitting?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he was afraid he could give no further answer.

ARMY—BILLETING.

Mr. LYNCH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the persons in the town of Lifford, upon whom men of the 5th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers are billeted, are obliged to furnish fuel and light, as well as lodgings, in consideration of the allowance of four pence per man per day for lodging; and, whether, since Paragraph 1, Section 6, of the Official Circular on Recruiting, states that, whilst out for the recruit drill, all Militiamen are entitled to allowances for fuel and light, as well as for lodgings or billet, such allowances for fuel and light will be paid to those who supplied them?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Recruiting Circular referred to defines the advantages a Militiaman enjoys, enumerating accommodation in barracks or billet, with daily rations of bread, meat, fuel, and light. It has no reference to the innkeeper or person on whom the men are billeted. The duty of the latter is defined in the Army Act—namely, that in consideration of 4*d.* per day he must provide—

> "Lodging and attendance and candles, vinegar, salt, and the use of fire, and the necessary utensils for dressing and eating his (*i.e.*, the Militiaman's) meat."

ARMY — RELIGIOUS SERVICES FOR SOLDIERS (BARBADOES).

Mr. FRASER MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that at present, and for some months past, one hundred and fifty Presbyterian soldiers of the Royal Scots, now at Barbadoes, have no religious services performed for them by any duly qualified person; whether these men were satisfied with a non-liturgical morning service by the Wesleyan chaplain; whether General Brown, commanding, not only disallowed the bill of this chaplain for the special allowances granted for extra services, but, in a formal minute (No. 9), inter alia, thus expressed himself—

> "I consider that commanding officers are the best judges of the requirements of their men in spiritual as well as temporal affairs;"

and, thereafter, on 22nd December 1883, issued the following order—

> "Presbyterians will parade at 11 a.m. in the Brick Barracks, the service to be conducted by the senior officer or non-commissioned officer present,"

which order still stands; and, whether he will at once order that, failing regular supplies otherwise, instructions be given that the early morning services by the Wesleyan chaplain be resumed and the usual remuneration allowed?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No Report has been received from the station of the circumstances of the case; but, so far as the remuneration is concerned, the General Officer commanding appears to have acted in accordance with Regulations. Under these circumstances, I cannot give the order which the hon. Member asks for; but I will look into the Regulations, and consider if they require amendment.

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—ABERYSTWITH COLLEGE.

In reply to Mr. Rendel,

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that the claims of Aberystwith College had been under the consideration of the Government; and it had been decided that the amount asked for by the Governing Body —£2,500 a-year—should be granted, in consideration of a sum of £1,000 a-year and some other matters being provided by private subscription.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, Whether it was the intention of the Government to proceed with the National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill that night; and what would be the order of Business after the holidays?

Mr. GLADSTONE: We shall proceed with the Representation of the People Bill in Committee this evening, and will move that Progress be reported in fair time to take the National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill. The right hon. Gentleman is aware of the arrangements for to-morrow. On the re-assembling of the House on Thursday after the holidays Supply will be taken; and at 2 o'clock on Friday we propose to resume the Committee on the Representation of the People Bill.

EGYPT—PUNISHMENTS—USE OF THE "CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS."

Mr. GRAY asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he was in a position to state if the cat-o'-nine-tails had been used in the prisons of Egypt; whether a special cat-o'-nine-tails had been invented by Mr. Clifford Lloyd; and, whether he would now state the result of his inquiries into the allegations made by the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan)?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I was not aware my hon. would have asked me that Question to-day. Would he put it down for to-morrow?

Mr. M'COAN said, with reference to the statement he had made on this subject, his authority was, in the first instance, *The Kölnische Zeitung*, which he need hardly say was a German paper, and that of a person of very high authority on the subject of Egyptian affairs. In place of the courbash Mr. Clifford Lloyd had introduced a whip "*perfectionné et chargé de plomb.*"

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had denied that statement the other day.

COLONIES—RETURN OF COINAGE OF GOLD.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, When the Return respecting the gold coinage of the Colonies, moved for on the 5th May, will be presented to the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The Return will be circulated to-morrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[Bill 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 23rd May.*]

[FIFTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Extension of the Household and Lodger Franchise.

Clause 2 (Uniform household and lodger franchise).

Dr. CAMERON, in rising to move, as an Amendment, at the end of the clause to add the words—

> "And if the qualifying premises be situated in a borough or county returning more than two Members to serve in Parliament, every man registered as a voter in respect thereof shall be entitled to record one vote for each of a number of candidates equal to the number of Members to be elected,"

said: If I were a younger Member of the House, I should propose this Amendment with the full confidence of success.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT: I rise to Order. I wish to know whether this Amendment is in Order, seeing that the Bill is one which deals with the qualification of electors; and the proposal of the hon. Member deals with a subject-matter altogether different. It proposes to deal with what are known as three-cornered boroughs or counties; and we may be led into an entirely useless discussion, because, when the Bill comes into effect, there may be no such thing in existence. The Amendment itself is altogether inconsistent with any proposal included within the four corners of the Bill, and any discussion which may take place upon it may be entirely wasted. I beg to ask if the Amendment, under these circumstances, is in Order?

The CHAIRMAN: In answer to the hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot), I have to say that I do not think this is the most appropriate opportunity on which to introduce the Amendment; but, having regard to the fact that this is an enfranchising Bill, and that the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) proposes to give to the electors, in certain constituencies, three votes, where they only now have two, I am not prepared to say that the Amendment is out of Order.

Dr. CAMERON: If my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire had considered the full effects of the Bill as an enfranchising Bill, and had had any experience of the disadvantages of the system of three-cornered constituencies, he would probably have appreciated the importance of this Amendment. It certainly appears to me to be quite as important as the giving of a vote to the agricultural labourer, or to any other portion of the community. I was about to say, before I was interrupted by my hon. Friend, that if I had been a younger Member of the House I should propose this Amendment in full confidence of its success, and with the anticipation that I should only have to explain its object in order to earn for myself the everlasting gratitude of the constituencies which have now been labouring for so long a period—no less than three Parliaments—under a sense of injustice. The question is not now brought under the consideration of Parliament for the first time. In 1867 it was discussed and received the support of all but a very small minority of the Liberal Party—even including the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) and the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who, in those days, were found speaking in support of it. It was supported by the Leaders of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords, and also in this House, on considerations of prudence. If I were able to predicate what course may be taken by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—and I, at least, have the consciousness of knowing that any feeling of uncertainty in that respect is shared by the natural Leaders of the Conservative Party, and that my present position is no worse than that of the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and still more recently by the right hon. and gallant Member the late Secretary for War (Colonel Stanley)—I should then have the consolation of knowing that the principle I advocate is approved by the Leaders of that Party. What can be more disproportionate than the representation of the large constituencies of the Kingdom at the present moment? Previous to 1867 there were eight constituencies in Great Britain which returned three Members, in addition to the City of London, which returned four; and as in places returning one Member each elector had one vote, and as in places returning two Members each elector had two votes, so in places returning three or four Representatives each elector was entitled to three or four votes. But when the Reform Bill of 1867 was before this House, Mr. Lowe brought forward an Amendment, by which he proposed, in constituencies returning more than two Representatives, to allow the electors to distribute their votes. In other words, what he proposed was to give an opportunity for the adoption of the cumulative principle of voting. This principle was supported by two classes in this House—by the more ancient class of Tories, who regarded the Monarchy as dead, the aristocracy doomed, and the democracy triumphant; and by some *doctrinaire* Radicals, who said it was not altogether what they wanted, but a step in the right direction. But when Mr. Disraeli, who was then the Leader of this House, came to deal with the proposition, he gave it its death-blow. He said—

> "The result of adopting the principle must be that you would effectually neutralize the great bulk of the representative system. By far the greater number of places in this country are represented by two Members; and if you adopt this principle, the consequence is that opinion is neutralized in all those places. But what would be the further consequence if all the constituencies thus represented by two Members are thus neutralized? It appears to me that the Government of the country would be thrown into the hands of those constituencies which are represented by only one Member each."—(3 *Hansard*, [188] 1111.)

He further pointed out that there were a larger number of such constituencies in Scotland and Wales than in any other part of the Kingdom, and that the effect of the proposal, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would be to place the Government of the country in the hands of a minority of the people. But even Mr. Disraeli did not regard the proposal from such a strong standpoint as the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister, who very firmly put down his foot upon it. He denounced the proposal, and all kindred ones, as the schemes of coteries, and not the politics of nations; and he pointed out that, if adopted, it would lead to discomfiture and confusion. Well, Mr. Lowe's proposal was negatived by a majority of 141 in the House of Commons. When the Bill went up to the House of Lords, Lord Cairns cast about for a proposal which should equally neutralize the democracy, and he hit upon the device which had been brought forward for the first time by Lord John Russell in his Reform Bill of 1854, under which the voter in a tripartite constituency was to be entitled to two votes only. Lord Aberdeen, who was at the time at the head of the Ministry of which Lord John Russell was a Member, said it was a conundrum, a phrase which the present Prime Minister adopted and endorsed in 1867 when he spoke of a similar proposal as "a conundrum" in many points of view. But if this system of voting was a conundrum to the right hon. Gentleman, what must it have been to the multitude in the large cities? Lord Cairns, in supporting his Amendment, mentioned that in three out of seven constituencies—for the eighth had been divided into two—that in three out of seven the representation was divided between the two political Parties; and in three only was it monopolized by one Party. He did not mention that, in the cases where it was monopolized by one Party, it was monopolized by the Conservative Party, nor did he mention that, in the cases where it was divided, the Conservatives had two Members against one Liberal Member; but in order to secure this check against the tide of democracy in the large towns, he simply gave up the advantage of three seats which had been possessed by the Conservatives in the existing tripartite constituencies without giving any advantage elsewhere. As a matter of fact, Manchester and Liverpool had neutralized each other. Birmingham and Glasgow, as the Committee is aware, had managed to evade the working of the Minority Clause, and a similar organization had to be established in Leeds, in order to enable the same result to be achieved. In the House of Lords, the Government of the late Lord Derby offered the strongest opposition to the proposal. The Duke of Marlborough, speaking on behalf of the Government, expressed a—

> "Strong belief that the acceptance of the proposition would be attended with very serious dangers to our Constitutional system."

He pointed to the likelihood of electioneering tickets and other undesirable practices being introduced. The proposal, however, was carried, despite the opposition of Lord Derby. The mischief of the clause is only to be bounded by the extent or the narrowness of its operation. A number of other objections were raised in the House of Lords; but I will only allude to one of them—the very obvious objection that if a minority Member died, or accepted Office, or succeeded to the Peerage, his successor would be elected by the majority. To that objection Lord Cairns replied that if that result happened in one constituency the opposite would happen in another—in other words, that the accidents in one constituency would be neutralized under the law of averages, and that the result would work out all right —perfectly oblivious that, if the law of averages were imported into the question, the entire case for the representation of a local minority fell to the ground. Among all the objections brought forward to the proposal, there was not a single one raised as to its relevancy to the Bill. I say this, because my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire has objected to my Amendment on the ground that it does not come within the scope of the Bill; but I say that, if precedent means anything, it is perfectly within the scope of the Bill. The Reform Bills of 1867 and 1868, all three of them referring to England, Scotland, and Ireland, were divided into two parts. In one part the question of the franchise was dealt with; while the other dealt with the question of redistribution in England and Scotland. There was no occasion for dealing with the matter in the Irish Bill, because there was no tripartite constituency in that country; and both in the English and in the Scotch Bill the proper place for dealing with it was considered to be in the Franchise Bill. It is quite evident that it must be dealt with there, and nowhere else, because it deals with a number of existing constituencies; and if, at a subsequent stage of the Bill, the proposal to enfranchise the large towns, by granting an extra number of Members, be thrown out, that would simply be a question of disfranchisement, and would have no title whatever to be considered in a Redistribution Bill. It appears to me that, if it was within the scope of the Franchise Clauses of the Bills of 1867 and 1868 to introduce the Minority Clause, it is equally within the scope of the present Bill to introduce an Amendment proposing practically to repeal that Minority Clause, by restoring to the constituencies affected by it the system of representation which they enjoyed between the years 1832 and 1868. When the Bill came back from the Lords to the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli said—

> "This proposal was opposed on the part of Her Majesty's Government in the House of Lords with all the authority that a Government can fairly exercise over a deliberative Assembly; but it was carried by an overwhelming majority. . . . . . Although Her Majesty's Government on principle opposed that proposal, although I do not say that I approve it, still in deference to the spirit of compromise and conciliation in which this Bill has been carried through the other House, ... it seems to me prudent and becoming to support the clause which their Lordships have introduced."—(3 *Hansard*, [189] 1110-11.)

Well, in fact, the Government had determined to throw out all the important Amendments the Lords had introduced into the Bill, and it was considered necessary to leave them something by way of conciliating their *amour propre.* The great constituencies of the Kingdom—the tripartite constituencies and the City of London—were accordingly thrown in as a sort of sop to Cerberus. The right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) moved the rejection of the clause; the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) spoke strongly against it; and the right hon. Member for Bradford was one of those who voted against it. But it was left to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to demolish and utterly pulverize every argument brought forward in support of it. He said there could be no doubt that the view of the House was adverse to the clause introduced by Lord Cairns, and that the question to consider was whether there was any sufficient reason for waiving that adverse opinion. He said the conclusion at which he arrived was that not even those reasons of prudence suggested by Mr. Disraeli were sufficient to justify the House of Commons in waiving its objections to a proposal so mischievous. He stated that to be his opinion, and the result of his deliberate consideration; and he added, that he could regard the matter from a more impartial standpoint than most Members of the House, because he had been officially responsible, as a Member of Lord Aberdeen's Government, to the principle of tripartite representation. He could not help seeing, however, the mischief which lurked beneath the surface of the Minority Clause; and if the proposal were adopted the tripartite system of representation would be doomed. He complained that the House had only been allowed nine days for the consideration of a proposal which virtually amounted to a change of the whole method of our representation. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The House of Commons has, from its first beginning to this day, been founded, and founded exclusively, upon the principle of the representation of communities, and communities alone. If this change is adopted, you ought, for consistency's sake, to alter the language of the writs addressed to the citizens of London, and to South Lancashire, Manchester, Liverpool, and so forth. Those writs ought hereafter to say that the majority in those respective communities is directed to return so many Members, and the minority so many."

He went on to say—

> "There is no denying that, to the extent of one-fourth in London, and of one-third in the tripartite constituencies, you are about to inflict disfranchisement upon the electors."—(3 *Hansard*, [189] 1168-9-70.)

He further denounced the injustice that would be inflicted upon the great towns and counties with tripartite representation as so gross as almost to be penal. He said—

> "The charge of injustice which, apart from the novelty of the proposal, I make is this—that you are going to treat most unjustly the majorities in those constituencies which you have 'selected,' forsooth, to try your experiment upon. And why are the most powerful constituent bodies in the Kingdom selected—those bodies which, more than any other, lead the opinion of the country. On the Slave Trade, on Emancipation, on the Corn Laws and other questions of Free Trade, on Parliamentary Reform, in what centres was it that thought was matured and elevated so as to bring the public mind to that state of maturity which enabled these great changes to be effected? It was in these great constituencies. The charge I make is this—that you are going to place these constituencies . . . . in a position of privation and penalty."—(*Ibid.* 1170-71.)

With prophetic eyes the right hon. Gentleman saw that the electors under the clause would be treated as mere equivalents of each other, and would be made to vote for A and B, A and C, or B and C, as was thought proper by some exterior influence. That is what I say literally results at elections for Glasgow and Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman regarded the proposition as a most dangerous one. He said—

> "I therefore entreat the House not to give to these great and powerful communities, armed as they will be with such considerations of reason and justice as have been pointed out, opportunity and provocation to enlist their great energies and powers, and their facilities of acting on the public mind of the country—energies and powers which will be sharpened by a sense of wrong and disparagement inflicted upon them, and of having been selected from others for that wrong and disparagement; do not let us give to them opportunity and provocation to lead on a new agitation, excited and heated, as they cannot fail to be, by a sense of wrong and disappointment.—(*Ibid.* 1174.)

The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the clause, if adopted, would certainly drive the constituencies in the large towns and counties affected by it into demands which, he said, would be bold. It would probably induce them, he said, to demand electoral districts then only advocated by the Chartists. I am sorry to say that in the City of Glasgow, at public meetings, I have heard references to electoral districts greeted with nothing but cheers. Such a state of things cannot but react upon the Representatives of the country; and it is owing to that reaction that I now stand before the Committee the abandoned Radical I am. A good many things have happened since 1867; but I do not know if anything has happened to induce the right hon. Gentleman to change his opinion on this subject. If he has not changed his opinion regarding the evil of this system of three-cornered voting, it seems to me that he is bound to take the opportunity before the next General Election of putting an end to it. Now, I do not care, providing an end is put to the system, how it is done. The Amendment I propose to move would have precisely the same effect as the opposition to the clause of Lord Cairns, if it had been successful, and which was specially supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; and it certainly appears to me to be as much within the scope of this Bill as was the proposition of Lord Cairns within the scope of the Franchise Bill of 1867. What I want to get rid of is the grievance. I do not care how it is done. I do not quarrel with those who contend that the Amendment is not within the scope of the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister thinks it would be more within the scope of the Redistribution Bill, and will undertake to deal with the question in any other equitable manner, either by the repeal of the Minority Clause, or by the division of tripartite constituencies, I shall be perfectly content to leave the mode of dealing with it in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman, provided only that he will deal with it quickly, with a reasonable hope of bringing about a change before another General Election. But if he cannot see his way to such an undertaking, I think it is a duty I owe to my constituents, deprived as they are of all opportunity of expressing their individual views, to press this Amendment, in order to prevent their influence in this House from being degraded to that of the smallest pocket borough. By being required, as they now are, to vote for A and B, A and C, or B and C, just as they are directed, they are obliged to place their political consciences at the disposal of the Party managers to an extent undreamt of in other constituencies, and to stake their chance of obtaining even a preponderance of one in the representation of this House on the correctness of an arithmetical calculation. I must, under all the circumstances, however hopelessly, ask the Committee to divide in support of an Amendment which is intended to put an end to a rankling injustice denounced by every successive Prime Minister who has held Office in this country for the past 20 years. I beg, Sir Arthur Otway, to move the Amendment which now stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end, add—"And if the qualifying premises be situated in a borough or county returning more than two Members to serve in Parliament, every man registered as a voter in respect thereof shall be entitled to record one vote for each of a number of candidates equal to the number of Members to be elected."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE: In some of the propositions which have been urged by my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) I certainly can express my concurrence. In the first place, there can be no doubt as to the right of my hon. Friend to ask the Committee to insert this Amendment in the Bill as he proposes. That, however, is a matter of form; but, likewise as to the matter of substance, I may express my sympathy with my hon. Friend in regard to his position in the great constituency he represents. In fact, I think, upon that matter, there is a disposition, both on behalf of the friends, and also of the opponents, of the minority vote, to admit that the thing cannot stand as it does now. When I say it cannot stand, I do not mean to say it cannot stand independently of the passing of this Bill, but that the question of the representation of the people cannot undergo any re-settlement without a large consideration of this subject. Everyone must see that, upon principle, if minority voting is to be considered an advantage and a blessing to those who possess it, it ought to be extended to other constituencies; but if, on the other hand, minority voting is in the nature of a penalty and a disparagement to the constituents who have it, then it ought not to exist at all. In any way, it ought not to exist in the shape of a selection by a small body of constituents. Of that there can be no doubt. As far as I am concerned, I do not think I require to do more than refer to the former speeches I have made on this subject, and to add that what I have said on my own part I now venture to say on behalf of the Government—namely, that unquestionably, in the view of my Colleagues, as well as of myself, a most thorough consideration and examination of all the questions of minority voting must be an essential part of any new settlement of the representation of the people. With regard to the hope and desire that my hon. Friend has expressed that that may take place in the present Parliament, we reciprocate that hope and desire, and the pledge he has asked for that the question may be thoroughly inquired into and examined, I think, may be given; but if I am now asked to say what may be the result of that examination—if we were to give our opinions upon a matter of this kind, which, I think, would find its proper place in a Redistribution Bill, we shall open a field of debate which we would wish to avoid. Therefore, I think, there can be no doubt, and I think my hon. Friend will admit it, that the argument is extremely strong for an adjournment of this question, and I believe he will not object to an adjournment after what I now say. It is perfectly true that, in the Act of 1867, a Minority Clause was inserted. This clause was inserted by the House of Lords as a new clause; but its position in that Bill cannot be taken to represent a decision upon any great political or Constitutional principle, because its insertion in that particular place merely represented the opinion of the Clerk as to what was the most convenient place in which it could be inserted. Of course, the place in which it appears in the Bill is immaterial, especially when that Bill embraced redistribution along with enfranchising clauses. It is quite plain that the extension of the minority principle, or its exclusion, must depend upon the way in which it is associated with political and representative areas; and, that being so, it cannot be considered without taking us right into the very heart of the subject of redistribution. I venture, therefore, to hope that it will be thought sufficient if I express my desire to profit by the prospect my hon. Friend has held out; and I, therefore, trust that the matter may be held over for the present, always hoping to deal with it at the first convenient stage.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The observations of the right hon. Gentleman are another illustration of the very great inconvenience of the course we are now pursuing. There can be no doubt whatever that this question of the minority representation, in any form, is one of very great importance, and which must have a large place in the consideration of the question of Parliamentary Reform, when it is brought forward in a Bill which is to make so great a revolution in the franchise of the country as this Bill is intended to make; and it becomes a very serious question what the effect of the extension is to be if, instead of proceeding to the consideration of that question, we are stopped by being told that it belongs to a different branch of the subject, which ought not, and cannot, be considered now, but which is to be considered, if at all, in some future year, when we have passed this Bill. I do not, of course, dispute the argument of the right hon. Gentleman that this matter is largely connected with the question of redistribution, and I do not intend to raise any discussion now that does not properly arise; but I think it right to point out that this is a strong illustration of the inconvenience of the course we are now pursuing.

MR. ANDERSON: I venture to hope that, after the remark of the Prime Minister, my hon. Colleague will be content, and will not press on the question of minority representation now. I am fully conscious of the importance of the question, and no one who has had any experience of the effects of a three-cornered constituency could do otherwise than look upon the matter as I do; but, in face of what has been said, I could not press it, although our friends in Glasgow are obliged, under the existing system, to sink their individuality altogether—they have to be told that they are not to have any individual preferences nor any opinions of their own as regards certain candidates, and that they vote according to what may be the initial letter of their names. Anything more unintelligent than that I can hardly conceive. But we are driven into it by the miserable system of three-cornered constituencies, and I am not suprised that my hon. Colleague has taken the first opportunity afforded him of bringing the subject before the House and proposing an Amendment. But after what the Prime Minister has said I hope my hon. Friend will reconsider the matter with a view of making his proposition upon the Redistribution Bill, with regard to which it is certainly more pertinent, and I hope the Amendment will not be pressed now.

Dr. CAMERON: What my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said is quite satisfactory to me. I think I have made it perfectly understood that I do not care one straw how the matter is dealt with, provided that the grievance of which I complain is got rid of. It is perfectly immaterial to me whether it is got rid of by giving three votes to the electors in the three-cornered constituencies, or by applying the same principle generally throughout the country.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: The hon. Gentleman opposite (Dr. Cameron) says he does not care in what way the matter is decided. Now, I confess that I approach the subject with very different feelings. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has taken on himself to say that the framers of the last Reform Act placed this clause in a wrong portion of the Bill. [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head in dissent; but the right hon. Gentleman went so far as to charge the accident of this provision appearing in the Franchise Clauses of the Bill to the act of the Clerks in the House of Lords. I do not know upon what evidence the right hon. Gentleman has based that somewhat strong statement. I know very well that lengthy discussions took place upon the subject; whereas, from what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, it might be imagined that this question was sprung upon Parliament in the eleventh hour by the unexpected action of those who legislate for the country in "another place." Now, what are the real facts of the case? Those of us who were present then will remember that the matter was first of all introduced to our notice by a very eminent man on the other side of the House—the late Mr. John Stuart Mill. I had the pleasure of listening to the able statements which Mr. Mill put forward, and he was a great authority upon such matters. So far as I am aware, the subject was not treated as a pure Party question. Mr. Disraeli, as a matter of fact, expressed, on more than one occasion, his belief that the proper duty of a minority, if it found itself in that unfortunate position, was to convert itself into a majority. Now, I never myself could look upon the matter from that point of view. I think that, if Parliament and the House of Commons is to be truly representative of the nation at large, it ought to be constituted of not merely the Representatives of what happens to be at the moment the majority, but that it should be the reflection as far as possible of all classes, sections, and interests in the community. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has, this afternoon, studiously avoided giving us even an indication of his own opinion on the subject. Indeed, I am afraid that, in common with many Members of the House, I have reason to doubt whether the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, when the time comes for giving full expression to that opinion, will be in accord with that of Mr. Stuart Mill, or of some of the deepest thinkers of that political Party which, at the present moment, the right hon. Gentleman happens to adorn. What is the case? The greatest political thinkers, the highest authorities and the greatest exponents of Liberal opinions throughout the world, have, in a great number of instances, pronounced unhesitatingly in favour of some adequate system for the representation of minorities. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) says, very properly—and I am very much disposed to agree with him—that this clause has not had the effect which its authors originally anticipated. I do not apologize to the Committee for inviting its attention to the subject at the present time. It is pre-eminently a branch of the subject of Reform. It must be considered in connection with the franchise, and I would even go so far as to say that it would run the risk of being ruled out of Order in a pure and simple Redistribution Bill. In a Bill dealing simply with the apportionment of seats, I do not see where it could have a place. With regard to the provision itself, I I think it is a very incomplete means of carrying out a great principle. It does not go half far enough. It does not go even as far as the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), who I do not see at this moment in his place. My hon. Friend proposes that every man registered as a voter shall have power to record "his vote for one candidate only." That, I need hardly say, goes somewhat too far.

But the question of the adequate representation of minorities is one which I think, nevertheless, we are bound to make some provision for. The Committee will be aware that there have been many suggestions made on this subject. I do not now see in his place the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). Perhaps the cause of his absence is one in regard to which we should offer him our congratulations. At the same time, I think the hon. Baronet, or some of those in conjunction with whom he has taken up the subject, ought to be called upon at this stage of the Bill to explain what their views really are. [*Cries of* "No!"] All very well. I am afraid that I see hon. Gentlemen present who took a prominent part in the initial stage of these proceedings at the commencement of the Session, and who ominously rose to Order with the view of what may be vulgarly termed "snuffing out" this question. I sincerely hope that the Committee will not allow it to be disposed of in that way, although the process might find favour with mere partizans who simply look on the House of Commons as a machine for constituting Ministries and manufacturing statutes. I can quite conceive that from that standpoint the Representatives of majorities may view this Minority Clause in the light of a nuisance; but those who take the view I venture to take, as to the proper constitution of any representative body, will be disposed to think that no Government is justified in presuming to deal with the all-important question of Parliamentary Reform, without being prepared to submit to Parliament some adequate scheme for the representation of minorities. We all admit that the present system has proved inadequate. I do not propose to go in detail, or even cursorily, into the various rival schemes, nor to repeat the arguments of Mr. Mill with respect to what is known as Mr. Hare's scheme, which I admit to be unworkable in connection with our present or any possible electoral system in the country in future. But the Prime Minister is aware that there are many other systems which recommend themselves to those who take an intelligent interest in the subject. There is a plan which has found favour with our own race in the United States of America. I need only mention the State of Illinois, where the very point raised in the Amendment placed on the Paper by my hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough—namely, the power of applying the representation of minorities to a constituency returning two Members, is dealt with. ["Oh, oh!"] Of course, hon. Gentlemen who are deeply impressed with the horrors of the American system of representation will not pay much attention to the illustration of Illinois. Hon. Members below the Gangway, however, ought not to be disposed to sneer at suggestions which come from that quarter. In the State of Illinois, every elector is allowed to vote in such a manner as he thinks fit. Complete freedom is accorded to every elector; and in constituencies returning three Members every elector can vote for which of the candidates he chooses—he can vote for all three, if he likes, or give the whole of his three votes for one, or he may give one and a-half votes for each of two. He can give his three votes for two candidates, and in that way his votes count for one and a half for each. This is a matter which I have mentioned in this House some years ago, and I admit that it provoked some amusement in that section of the House which is never tired of admiring Radical institutions unless they have some element in them which may tend to give protection to minorities, or the Conservative element of the State. Now, I hope the Committee will not allow this matter to drop without eliciting from Her Majesty's Government some more satisfactory statement than that which has been vouchsafed by the Prime Minister. It is all very well to say that this matter may stand over until some distant time which the right hon. Gentleman is too cautious more clearly to indicate. What guarantee, I ask, have we that the subject will be dealt with in a comprehensive spirit; or that it may not be regarded as a question with which the Government are not required to deal with at all, contenting themselves with a simple proposal for the abolition of the representation of minorities? I venture to hope that when the matter is approached hereafter, Her Majesty's Government will be prepared with some efficient scheme for the adequate representation of minorities.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Amendment be, by leave, withdrawn."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Mr. GOSCHEN (who was met by *Cries of* "Withdrawn!"): I will not stand in the way of the withdrawal of the Amendment for more than a moment. I merely rise to endorse what has been said by the Prime Minister as to the great inconvenience of discussing this Amendment now. There are few Members in this House who care more for the great principle of the representation of minorities than I do; but I know that the cause would be distinctly prejudiced by a discussion which is out of place. I understood that, in the view of the Leader of the Opposition, it would be better to drop the discussion at the present moment.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: He did not say so.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not see how the Business of the House is to be conducted if, after that declaration—

Mr. J. LOWTHER: The right hon. Gentleman did not say so.

Mr. GOSCHEN: If, after that declaration, another right hon. Gentleman, sitting on the same side of the House, is to get up and continue the discussion.

Mr. RAIKES said, he had no desire to continue the discussion; but he wished to take notice of one expression which had fallen from the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). The hon. Member had spoken of the great humiliation and degradation some of his constituents were subjected to by being driven to the poll with a sort of necessity imposed upon them of voting not for the candidates they preferred, but for the particular candidates they were told to vote for. He was sure that what the hon. Member had said was fully appreciated on that side of the House, and would be appreciated throughout the country. He wished, however, to point out to the hon. Member that the course taken by his constituents was the consequence of the determination of the Liberal majority to take an unfair advantage of the law, and to drive into a majority what really ought to be the minority vote.

Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he felt bound to protest against the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House (Mr. Raikes). He (Sir Edward Colebrooke) had not intended to open his mouth upon this subject; but he sincerely hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not commit themselves in any way upon a question of this kind. If he were called upon to express an opinion on the subject, he should certainly say that he was very strongly in favour of the principle of the representation of majorities, and the manner in which it had been carried out in Glasgow reflected credit upon the ingenuity of the citizens. The Minority Clause was based on the assumption that wherever three Representatives were given, one-third of the electors must be deprived of representation; and that the majority should only elect two Members. That was the object and aim of the Minority Clause of the Bill of 1867; and to his mind it was a monstrous proposition. He would repeat, that the manner in which the difficulty had been got over by the constituency of Glasgow reflected great credit on them for their ingenuity in proving that they were the preponderating majority, and in securing the return of three Representatives. He would only make one other remark. He thought this question of the representation of minorities was bound up with the question of redistribution; and he thought Her Majesty's Government might take into consideration the question whether the same object might not be equally arrived at by dividing the constituencies, rather than by requiring a constituency to return a large number of Members, and then depriving the electors of their votes. The evil of large constituencies was, in his opinion, very great; and he thought it was desirable to deal with them in some different and more intelligent way. It was the division of the representation which at the present moment enabled the House to represent all sorts and shades of opinion; and if the same principle were adopted in the case of the large and overgrown constituencies, instead of a system prevailing in which the minority were enabled to turn the majority out-of-doors, all classes would secure adequate and equitable representation. Although, to some extent, he was responsible for the adoption of the minority principle in connection with the school boards in Scotland, and although he agreed that in constituencies returning a large number of Members the minority should enjoy a portion of the representation, at the same time he thought that result might be arrived at by some better means than those now adopted.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I have a somewhat important Amendment to move, which I hope will receive the careful consideration of the Committee. I beg to move, at the end of the clause, to add—

> "Provided, That the man possessed of such qualification for such county or borough respectively shall have himself personally paid the rates in respect of such qualifying premises."

The Amendment, in my humble judgment, raises a very important question; and as we are about to extend the franchise in the way proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in his Bill, I think we cannot do better than carefully consider, at the present moment, this very important question. The right hon. Gentleman may, perhaps, find some difficulty in taking in what I mean by the Amendment; and, therefore, I may explain that what I mean is this—that no man, unless he personally pays his rates, shall be entitled to a vote. It has always been the plea of the right hon. Gentleman, and especially of hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway on the other side of the House, that taxation and representation should go hand-in-hand; and I should be glad to hear any argument from them which will justify them in endeavouring to divorce the one from the other. For my part, I do not think it would be a very easy matter to throw off the old love; but hon. Members sitting on this side of the House do know that, whenever it suits the convenience of those sitting opposite, they invariably throw it in our teeth that the one thing they wish and desire is that taxation and representation should go hand-in-hand together. Now, I know that one of the first difficulties with which I shall be confronted is the next clause to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in this Bill—namely, the Service-voting Clause. All I have to say about that—and I pass it by very lightly, because I do not wish to go into a question which will have to be discussed presently—is that the right hon. Gentleman distinctly laid down, when he proposed that service franchise, that it was intended specially to meet the case of those who live in good and large houses, and who, in consequence of paying no rent, could not otherwise possess the franchise. I say at once, in regard to that class of persons, that if they wish to have the franchise, and do not pay rates, they ought to be required to contribute something towards the Income Tax; and I should be prepared to assent to a proposition that they should have a vote provided that they paid Income Tax. I will go a step further, and take the case of the Scotch agricultural labourer. The carter and the cowman, and all that class of persons are, to a great extent, paid by having a house, as well as receiving weekly wages, and they are as much paid in regard to the house as in regard to the weekly wages. An arrangement could easily be made between them and their landlords that they should pay their own rates; and, in that case, any man who wished to possess the franchise would show his sincerity by paying his rates.

MR. NEWDEGATE: And in most cases the sum paid would be returned to him.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Not only that; but, by contributing something towards local expenses, he would place himself in the position which the Act of 1867 intended to place him in—namely, that he should only have the vote on the condition of contributing something towards the rates. The Bill of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) in 1869 allowed owners to compound for their rates. Now, compounding is a very easy process; and I am not aware that there is any great value attached to it, except that it enables overseers, and officials in that position, to get the amount of the rates with less trouble than would be necessary if they had to collect the money from the individual ratepayers themselves. I venture to think that that is one of those questions which ought not to be allowed to stand in the way for one moment in dealing with a great principle of this kind, if we desire to arrive at a sound and logical conclusion. I think it will be found that the owners of houses who have hitherto taken on themselves the responsibility of paying the rates, and of paying it even whether the house is occupied or not, with a deduction of 25 per cent, would be anxious to see their labourers placed on the Register; and if the labourer himself desired to have the vote, he would have nothing to do but to say that he would pay the rates himself, and make provision in future that his house should be excluded from the operation of the compounding clause. I may go farther than that. I think the enactment of some such provision as this would be likely to make many landlords, who are compounding for their cottagers' rates at the present moment, desirous to see the names of their labourers upon the Register, so as to afford them an opportunity of exercising the vote. Let me take an ordinary case which constantly occurs all over England. Take the case of a man owning 4,000 acres of land, let to some 20 tenants or thereabouts, with 100 cottages on the estate. The landlord pays the rates for the whole of those cottages; the labourer pays nothing at all, except a small sum per week for the use of the cottage. He is side by side with a man in a small town or village, where you will find houses run up, I will not say by a speculator, but by a certain class of men who let their houses at very high rents and make the tenants pay the rates. The consequence is that these tenants have votes, while the other class have not. But would they not, if they wished to have the vote, pay the small amount, for it would be a very small amount they would be required to contribute? And would it not be only right and fair that they should pay the small sum that would confer on them not only the right, but the privilege, of a vote? The artizans and labourers are better off now than they have been for many years. We know that is so, because the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) distinctly told us so the other night. Of all classes in the country, the labourers and artizans are now better off than they have ever been for a very long time. They have weathered the storm we have heard of in regard to agricultural distress far better than either the landlords or the tenants. And they are really in a better position than they have been in for a considerable number of years. Let any man go back to the year 1857, and see what the wages of the labourer were then. Let him see how the price of wheat per bushel regulated the wages. Let anyone ask himself at this moment, when he looks at the price of wheat and the price of every article the labourer has to procure for his ordinary subsistence, if he is not far better off now than he has been during the last 20, 30, or 35 years, and much better able to pay a trifling sum in the shape of rates which would place him on the Register and entitle him to vote. This is a question which, in my humble judgment, deserves the serious consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and of the Committee. There is another argument which is very often used. Hon. Members say that they desire to place the agricultural labourers in a position of greater freedom and independence. Can you place him in a position of greater freedom and independence than by requiring him to pay his rates and properly placing his name upon the Register? But there is even something beyond that. You are trying to make these men more economical, and calling on them to purchase their own cottages, so that they may render themselves more independent. A man who has made himself independent, who has been economical, who has obtained a 40*s*. freehold, and who has never received outdoor relief, is, in many instances, compelled to pay rates. Why should men of less merit be absolved from doing so, and yet be entitled to exercise the franchise? Why should not all men be required to pay a small amount of rates, in order that they might be placed upon the Register? There is another question which I have no doubt we shall hear a great deal about; that is, the question—"Are you going to disfranchise any of those who are now on the Register, but who do not pay their rates?" My answer to that will be very simple and plain. I say that, with regard to all these men, so long as they remain in the same house, and so long as their agreements with their landlords hold good, they ought not to be disturbed; but in any fresh letting, when the new tenant comes in, he ought to be made to pay the rates if he is to possess the right of voting. That is a principle which I think might fairly be enforced without the slightest injustice to any single person. And now I come naturally to the lodger difficulty. The lodger belongs to an entirely different class of men. It is a £10 holding that he possesses. His lodging must be worth £10 a-year; and, therefore, being a £10 holding, of a character altogether different from those which I have been calling attention to, I would not propose to interfere with the lodger. No doubt, the whole of these considerations lead up to another important question—namely, the question of local self-government. If we are to have a Local Self-Government Bill, I should like to know how these labourers are intended to be dealt with? Are they to have a vote? We ought to know that, because it is a very material question. Are they to have a vote under the Local Self-Government Bill in reference to the expenditure of money for the county? Because if the vote is to follow in that Bill in the same way, and the labourer is to contribute nothing towards the local expenditure, a very important principle will be established. Naturally, everyone would say—"If he is to have the vote, then he ought to pay his rates; because nobody not paying rates ought for a moment to have a voice in county management and county expenditure." I have no desire to weary the House with any long statement; but I come now to the most important part of the question—namely, the application of the Bill to Ireland. In Ireland I find there are 661,992 houses under a £4 rating value. Below a £4 rating value the landlords pay all the rates; and that is the reason why the £4 rating has been made use of in Ireland. Below that point no man pays his rates; and I wish to show the bearing of that fact upon this great question, because that is the test in Ireland—namely, that a man not paying rates in that country is not a fit and proper person to put upon the Register, and ought not to be entitled to have the vote. Her Majesty's Government now propose to give that vote to no less than 661,992 persons in Ireland, none of whom pay any rates. The only way in which you ought to deal with a question of that kind is to provide that if they wish to be placed upon the Register they should pay one-half of the rates levied upon their holding or their house. I venture to contend that that principle is a sound and a just one; and that it is all-important, in dealing with a great question of this kind, that we should, at any rate, not lose sight of the great fact that the Act of 1867 provided that it should be the payment of rates which should entitle a man to have a vote, yet that the other Act, passed afterwards by a Liberal Government in 1869, did enable persons to vote, although they did not personally pay rates. I do not think that that was intended at the time. I do not think the House foresaw at the time how far the principle would go; and it is because I believe that the principle is unjust, and one that it would not be wise to perpetuate, that I venture to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end, add "Provided, That the man possessed of such qualification for such county or borough respectively shall have himself personally paid the rates in respect of such qualifying premises."—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not able to agree with any of the special arguments which have been placed before the Committee by the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) in reference to his Amendment. For instance, he has said that such is the flourishing condition of the labourer in this country, he having escaped the distress which has come upon other classes, especially in connection with agriculture, that it is quite fit that he should be taxed, in order to obtain his vote. Now, with that argument I cannot agree; and I think that many hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House will hesitate before they agree with such a statement as that. Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman says that, if the voter is now a compound householder, or that, being an agricultural labourer, if he lives in a cottage for which his landlord pays the rates, let him make a new arrangement and pay his own rates. Now, to impose the necessity upon the agricultural labourer of making such an arrangement with his landlord in order to become a voter would be to impose upon him a most serious and grievous practical burden. It may seem to us a very slight matter; but, independent of the question of option in deducting from the rent the amount of the rate, the mere fact of having to make an arrangement of that kind, the altering of his little weekly payment for the cottage in which he resides, where it is a weekly payment, would, in many cases, be an intolerable burden. As to the compound householder in towns, the hon. and gallant Gentleman seems to think that it is in their option to pay their own rates. The matter is not in their own option. I know that it is regulated—I do not know whether universally, but to a great extent—by the parish authorities; and how are the parish authorities to be made subject to receive individual applications from labourers in long rows of houses, exactly similar in their character, stating that they wish to be entered in the rate-book? Are they to send round collectors to gather the few pence that might be forthcoming from these householders? These are all arguments of detail. There is one argument, however, which is not one of detail, which really appears to me to dispense with all other arguments. It is that the proposal would operate as a vast disfranchisement. The hon. and gallant Gentleman is, undoubtedly, a brave man, and it required a brave man to propose such an Amendment in such a Bill; for this is a Bill to admit a large number of our countrymen to the exercise of the vote; and, in this Bill, the hon. and gallant Gentleman proposes to insert words that would go, in fact, into every borough in the country, except a few where every man pays his own rates, and I think they are comparatively few —that would go into every borough in the country and disfranchise a large proportion of the existing electors. The question was fought out in 1867 and 1869; and, unless I am very much mistaken, in the Bill of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), whom I do not now see in the House—so clear was the matter held to be then, in 1869, after all the discussion that had taken place, that the Act of that year got rid finally of this restriction as to the personal payment of rates, and that Act was not the subject of any serious conflict. It is quite impossible to accept this Amendment, and I think I may say with confidence that there are many Members on that side of the House who will decline to support such a scheme of disfranchisement as I have described. This is a Bill to extend the household franchise to the counties, and the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman would incur the danger of disfranchising a large number of electors in the boroughs to whom the franchise has already been given. Such a provision Her Majesty's Government cannot for one moment adopt, and I do not think that it will receive much support from either side of the House.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he was by no means certain that the consequences which the Prime Minister predicted would result from the adoption of the Amendment. He, for one, entertained a strong prejudice in favour of the English householder paying his own rates, and he did not think any Englishman ought to be ashamed of his prejudices. Certainly, he was not ashamed to declare himself an advocate of the old maxim—that taxation and the enjoyment of electoral power ought to go together. Why should they be ashamed of that principle, or confer upon persons who contributed nothing towards the taxation of the country themselves the right of voting away other people's money? That was the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; and when the right hon. Gentleman was about to create a large number of voters, in very poor circumstances, his appeal to the House was—"Will you reject these men because they are poor?" Now, his (Mr. Newdegate's) view was, that if he was to give a man full command over his pocket, it was desirable that he should know whether the man to whom control was about to be given was poor or not. Hon. Members had wandered so in the United States, that they had forgotten the action of the State Government upon the electorate, and upon the election of the chief magistrates. There were a great many things which could be done in the United States, which could not be done with safety in this country; because, every four years, the American people lost their chief magistrates, and the veto there was a positive power in the chief magistrates. The people of the United States had not adopted their democratic forms without their necessary safeguards; but here the veto was no longer with the Crown; it was supposed to be with the Prime Minister. All these considerations made him cautious; he was so dreadfully old-fashioned, that he was not ashamed of his country. As an English Representative, he should abide by the old traditions, and vote in the interest of this great country generally with his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot).

LORD ELCHO said, the purpose of the Bill was to enfranchise the agricultural labourers; but his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had moved an Amendment which would exclude them from the franchise. He proposed that they should pay their rates personally. It was all very well for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to ask the landowners to vote with him; but they could not compel the farm labourers to pay their rates. They had their house as part of their wages; they changed their dwellings very often; and there were many other reasons which stood in the way of the application to them of the principle of his hon. and gallant Friend's Amendment. He (Lord Elcho) regretted his absence from the House when the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), on Friday last, alluded to a step he (Lord Elcho) had taken at a public meeting in Edinburgh, when the noble Lord was speaking on the question of Reform; but he would take that opportunity of saying that, on the occasion referred to, he had listened for a long time to the noble Lord's speech, which, like all his speeches, was of a remarkable character, and was struck by the fact that he talked of Reform in a manner which might have been suitable to the pliocene period of Toryism, but which was very unsuitable to the cause they were advocating. Therefore, he (Lord Elcho) felt bound to dissociate himself from the extravagant course adopted by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock. For the reasons stated, he could not support the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend.

MR. GORST said, the noble Lord (Lord Elcho) had just made a speech which, in his (Mr. Gorst's) opinion, was entirely out of Order; inasmuch as he had digressed into subjects quite foreign to the question before the Committee. He (Mr. Gorst) thought that scant justice had been done by the Prime Minister, and by the Committee generally, to the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), which embodied the principle of the Representation of the People Act of 1867. That principle, so far from being scoffed at, was, at the time, accepted by Parliament as a most important qualification for the franchise. It was actually embodied in an Act of Parliament; and he did not think there was anything unreasonable in his hon. and gallant Friend asking that there should be inserted in the present Bill the same restriction as enacted in 1867. But many things had happened since that time, which had rendered the application of the principle historically impossible. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had introduced into Parliament, in 1869, a Bill for the purpose of re-establishing the compound householder; and for making the payment of rates, by the person compounding for them, equivalent to personal payment of rates by tenants. That Bill was passed through Parliament, and had a considerable number of adherents; the late Lord Beaconsfield having allowed it to pass without any strenuous opposition. It seemed to be tacitly admitted by the Conservative Party, and by Lord Beaconsfield himself, that, on the whole, personal payment of rates was too inconvenient in local affairs to be any longer imposed. Therefore, although he thought, in principle, the Amendment was justified from an Imperial point of view, yet, if it were adopted, the same thing would happen as in 1869—that was to say, the rural parishes would be complaining to the House of the difficulty and inconvenience experienced in collecting their rates, and asking Parliament to do for their relief what was done then. He hoped, for these reasons, his hon. and gallant Friend would withdraw his Amendment; its principle being, as he (Mr. Gorst) had endeavoured to show, perfectly sound, but inconvenient of application.

MR. PELL said, he could not agree entirely with what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). For his part, he thought there was a great deal in the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). He (Mr. Pell) was sure the Committee would believe him when he said he would not, by any side wind, or in any indirect manner, attempt to undo what the Bill proposed to do, although he might not entirely agree with it. Whether he agreed with it entirely or not, he did not say. In his opinion the Amendment was of great importance, not only in reference to election matters, but also from other points of view. First of all, with regard to the question of Parliamentary elections, they had heard for some time from both sides of the House how desirable it would be if some self-acting scheme of registration could be enacted. Now, it might be a difficult thing; but, surely, as the basis of the whole plan must be on the rate book, a full and complete entry of the householders would be arrived at by requiring them to pay their own rates. But he thought that on both sides of the House, at all events on that side, it was asserted by many that the people were not sufficiently educated to be entrusted with the franchise, and he wished to point out that, from his point of view, there could be no better way of educating the people than by showing them, as soon as possible, the mistakes they made in local government; he thought that, for instance, the attention of the ratepayer being called to the increased taxation rendered necessary by local mismanagement and neglect of the sanitary laws, would constitute the best possible education which the lower classes could have. At the present moment, if the charge for the house was apparently high, the vulgar opinion was that the owners of the house were fixing a higher rent as a return for the capital invested in it; whereas, the rent, as a rule, was necessarily raised, as he could state from his personal knowledge, in consequence of the increase of local rates. It was, therefore, a strong argument in favour of personal payment of rates—that it would teach the poorer classes the consequence of local mismanagement. As to the inconvenience of personal payment, so far as the collection of rates was concerned, the person who collected them did not care twopence for it, as long as his services were paid for. It was simply a question of expense, not of inconvenience; and he ventured to to say that, with an efficient officer, and a resolute and consistent local authority to back him, there would be little difficulty in collecting the rates from the lowest class of occupiers. It should be no more difficult to collect the rates than it was to collect the rent; it altogether depended on the system of collection, and upon the character of the individual who made the demand. There was no more wasteful or extravagant way of collecting rates than by compounding with the owner of the property; the occupiers — that was to say, the labourers, artizans, and even people of a higher class—derived no benefit at all from the arrangement. How could it be expected that those persons could get any real teaching in sanitary laws, unless they learnt from their own experience the cost of violating them? It was well known that when a part of a village was attacked with fever, these poor people knew little or nothing else of its consequences or causes than as one of the manifestations of God's Providence; but obedience to sanitary laws would the sooner be learnt, when they found that their neglect led to pauperism, and resulted in, say, a charge of 6*d.* instead of 4*d.* in the pound for local rates. He said that, under those circumstances, they would receive a direct lesson of the value of attending to these matters, and that education would result from their being required personally to pay their rates. He believed that this system of compounding with the owners of property for the payment of rates was nothing else than the outcome of idleness and neglect on the part of the local authorities. There was, in his opinion, no reason in the world except their own disinclination which prevented them collecting the rates from every householder, however small, in their parishes. He ventured to say that, if the rates were so collected, he should get more support in his endeavours to bring about a better and more economical administration of local affairs — a question in which he was strongly interested. If, as he trusted would be the case, his hon. and gallant Friend divided the Committee on his Amendment, he should, for the reasons stated, cordially support him.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I am hardly prepared to agree with my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) in asking the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) to go to a Division. At the same time, I feel that the question raised by the Amendment of my hon. and gallant Friend is one which ought to be regarded on its merits. It is also a question upon which a great deal is to be said; and the argument in favour of the Amendment, which my hon. and gallant Friend put forward amongst others, was that it was the basis on which the Act of 1867 was originally framed. But it is impossible to forget the difficulties to which it led. The principle was assailed; and the compound householder came out of the controversy in a way that many persons in this House may recollect. We could never get rid of the compound householder, who was always cropping up in our discussions; and, in the end, it was found impossible to resist the objections brought forward against the Act of 1867. I am afraid, although I did then, and do still, agree in principle with my hon. and gallant Friend, that if we were to succeed in inducing the Government to introduce the Amendment, and were to try to work the Bill on the principle it contains, we should only reintroduce the same difficulties as those with which we had formerly to contend. My advice would be not to press the Amendment, although my hon. and gallant Friend has undoubtedly brought forward a subject which demands the attention of the Committee; and, were it not for the difficulties we have had with regard to it, I should be one to support him on a Division.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the speech of the Prime Minister had certainly done but scant justice to the Amendment he had proposed. It was certainly not his desire, as the right hon. Gentleman had intimated, to disfranchise whole masses of the people, although the right hon. Gentleman was ready to extend the franchise to 2,000,000 of citizens, without any inquiry as to whether they were fit to exercise it or not. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) recollected that the right hon. Gentleman, a few years ago, stated plainly that he was exceedingly sorry that the "Ten Minutes" Bill had not been carried through, and that he did not like the Act of 1867 when it was passed.

MR. GLADSTONE: Where was that stated? Will the hon. and gallant Member give me a reference?

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it was in his memory; but he was not quite sure that he could give the reference at that moment. The right hon. Gentleman made so many speeches, in so many places, that it was difficult to give an exact reference. He wished he had the speech with him. He also recollected that the right hon. Gentleman, at one time, made some strong remarks upon the Income Tax Question, when it was brought forward by his (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote). The right hon. Gentleman was then for getting the Income Tax from the humblest person from whom it could be collected; but now he was all the other way with regard to those persons who were capable of paying rates. At one time in the right hon. Gentleman's life he would have been one of the first to assent to the soundness of the principle of this Amendment, which laid down that, as a qualification for the vote, a man should be able to pay the small amount of local rates due for the house in which he dwelt. As he felt, after the appeals made to him, that he ought not to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment. ["No, no!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it your pleasure that the Amendment be withdrawn?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he begged to give Notice that, as the aim of the Bill was evidently manhood suffrage, he should take some opportunity of placing before the House, or the Committee, the necessity there was for those persons who were to exercise the franchise under the Bill paying some portion of general or local taxation.

MR. GORST: I rise to Order. I understood the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was withdrawn.

MR. GLADSTONE: I, for one, at least, objected strongly to its withdrawal. The question is one on a most important matter of principle, raised regularly in a number of speeches, and was argued at some length, and ought to be decided on.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he certainly did not regard what had taken place as deciding the question raised by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had based his objection to the Amendment, on the ground that it was a disfranchising clause; but the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) had put the matter on a right footing, when he showed that not a single man would be disfranchised, if the local authorities did their duty in collecting the rates from the occupiers, instead of compounding with the owners to avoid the expense of collection. He altogether protested against the statement of the Prime Minister, that the Amendment would disfranchise a large number of persons.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Amendment spoke for itself. It was a disfranchising clause. The clause was in operation under the Act of 1867, and it was found that not one-third of the number of persons qualified, who would otherwise have done so. It was, therefore, a disfranchising clause, and, on that ground, the Government opposed it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he must again say that it was not a disfranchising clause, and that this had been clearly shown by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). He should not have dissuaded his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) from withdrawing; but if the Amendment was to be negatived, he wished it to be understood on what ground it had been supported.

MR. ECROYD said, he was perfectly willing to assent to the Amendment being put; but, if it were to be thus dealt with, it would be necessary for several hon. Members on those Benches to state their views with regard to the principle which it embodied. He had a great objection to anything of a disfranchising nature being introduced into the Bill. He believed in the justice and necessity of enfranchising all householders; but he, nevertheless, felt the weight of the solid reasons advanced in favour of the Amendment by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), and the more, because he had experience of a locality where the working men paid their own rates, and certainly to the great advantage of the community, for the practice had given all the householders of the district an intelligent interest in the management of their local affairs. He could hardly conceive anything more important than this principle in its effect upon the political education of the people; and it was upon that ground that he sympathized with his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), whom he should support if he went to a Division. At the same time, he must protest against the suggestion that those who recorded their votes in favour of the Amendment, did so for the purpose of disfranchising any class of householders.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the Prime Minister was always charging the Opposition with uselessly expending the time of the House; but what had happened that afternoon? His hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), having brought forward a matter of considerable importance, found that the opinions on that side of the House were by no means unanimous with regard to it, and, with his usual judgment and tact, said he would not put the Committee to the trouble of a Division; but the right hon. Gentleman insisted upon the Committee expressing its opinion upon the question. He would, with great reluctance, differ from his hon. and gallant Friend; but, some years ago, when the subject was before Parliament, he had taken a line, differing somewhat sharply from some of his political Friends, and he felt it right to state the view he then took of the subject. When the Bill of 1867 proposed to make personal payment of rates the basis of the electoral franchise, he ventured to say that, in his judgment, he could not entertain so low an opinion of his fellow-countrymen as to believe that they would allow a set of paltry local Vestry Acts to stand between them and the rights conferred upon them by Parliament. Now, the personal payment of rates was made a great deal of at that time; but he (Mr. J. Lowther) regarded it as the most gigantic imposture that could be conceived. He never could see why the fact of a man paying a certain number of shillings and pence with his own hands, should give him a right to the suffrage; and he had ventured to say that no great length of time would elapse before that ghastly absurdity would disappear. His view, however, did not command much sympathy, and the personal payment of rates was regarded as the essential principle of the Bill of 1867. No doubt, it was so for a time; but long before the Bill passed into law, they had made the acquaintance of that interesting personage, the compound householder.

He saw in his place the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert), who took a great part in the controversy, and who would bear him (Mr. J. Lowther) out when he said that a great deal of time was expended on this matter. As the Committee had been just reminded, an early opportunity was taken to sweep away entirely this absurd restriction; but his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex, however, had again raised the question as to whether personal contribution to local taxation should not be made a condition incident to the franchise. He hoped the Committee would insert some provision in the Bill which would insure that property should have some approximate share in political power; but he did not think his hon. and gallant Friend could reasonably expect to go back to the exceedingly absurd proposal made in the Bill of 1867. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) had put the matter, however, in a new light. He gathered that the hon. Member proposed that all householders should be compelled to pay their own rates. That was a matter which, when it was brought before the Committee, he should be willing to consider; but he protested against being called upon to say "Aye" or "No" to that proposal without further explanation.

MR. WARTON said, that the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was under the impression that his Amendment was being withdrawn when the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) rose and asked whether it was withdrawn or not. The Prime Minister then got up and said it was not withdrawn, because he had challenged it. The time of the Committee had been taken up, but no decision of the point had been given.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR EDWARD WATKIN rose to move the following Amendment which stood in his name:—In page 1, at end, add—

"A 'household qualification' and a 'dwellinghouse qualification' shall mean, respectively, a tenement containing not less than two habitable apartments,"

when——

MR. WARTON rose to Order. Could the Committee be asked to define the term "dwellinghouse qualification," which was not in the Bill, but which appeared in the Amendment of the hon. Member?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he would point out that the question of definition clearly arose under Clause 7, which was headed—"Definition of household and lodger qualifications, &c." It had nothing to do with the present clause.

MR. GORST said, it was understood that an Amendment was out of Order, when it would not make sense with the part of the Bill at which it was proposed to be inserted. If the Amendment were added at the end of Clause 2, the Committee would be said to have adopted this qualification, and that it had a certain meaning. But the term did not occur in Clause 2, and it would not make sense with it; whereas both the words were in Clause 7.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he could not admit that, because a word did not occur in a clause, it could not be used in an Amendment proposed to the clause.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, he was certainly of opinion that the Amendment he was about to propose was perfectly in Order, and that it could not be put at any other part of the Bill. His object was to define the meaning of the terms "household qualification" and "dwellinghouse qualification" as respectively a tenement containing not less than two habitable apartments. The first point he had to urge in support of the Amendment was, that the man who, from poverty, or intemperance, or low habits, was content to live with wife and children of both sexes, some adolescent, in one apartment, was not, in the sense in which the Prime Minister used the words, a "capable citizen." His second proposition was, that he was one of the "residuum" as described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), and likely to add to the impurity, and not to the purity, of the electoral roll. The dwellings conferring the franchise ought to be such as were fit for Christian people to live in. If they dignified a hovel by the name of dwelling-house, and gave the vote to persons living in such squalid habitations, they would discourage the excellent movement now going on for improving the dwellings of the working classes. There was, however, a class of men of respectable character, very poor, but very honest, who lived a sort of hermit life in a single room, and it might be urged that his Amendment would disqualify them; but, if that objection were raised to it, their case might very well be met by the addition of a few words to the Amendment, which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General could easily suggest. This was not the first time this question had been raised. On the Reform Bill of 1867 he ventured to bring forward a proposal similar to the present; and although it was looked upon by the then Prime Minister with favour, as a means of dealing with the residuum, it could not be carried. The present Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) endeavoured to get out of the difficulty by fixing the qualification of rent at £5; and Mr. Poulett Scrope—then Member for Stroud—in like manner, proposed to deal with it by exempting houses below a certain value altogether from being rated to the poor rate; and his hon. Friend (Mr. Duncan M'Laren), then senior Member for Edinburgh, also proposed to exclude houses rated under £4, in the case of the Scotch Reform Bill. The speech which the Prime Minister delivered at a meeting held only a few days previously, was quoted in the discussion, and his words were—

> "I do not deny that I do feel that considerable difficulty exists with respect to that lowest margin of householders who tremble between pauperism and independence. In the present state of education in this country, and in the circumstances in which we are placed, I do not say that the evil to be apprehended is one of commanding magnitude, but then I do regard it as a real evil."—(3 *Hansard*, [187] 695.]

He (Sir Edward Watkin) contended that if it was an evil then, it was an evil now, and that, as such, it ought to be dealt with. He might be accused of being anxious to disfranchise people by the Amendment—incapable citizens, no doubt, to some extent; but he asserted that the members of a small, but a distinct class, in which fathers, mothers, and children of both sexes lived in the same room, were not "capable citizens." On the occasion he referred to, he had the support, as he had mentioned, of that veteran Reformer, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, who said—

> "He had some time ago, with a view to the Scotch Reform Bill, given Notice of an Amendment of this kind; but united to houses rented below £4. It might be supposed that hon. Gentlemen had never heard of houses that were below £4 rental; but he could tell hon. Members on the other side, that it appeared from a Return obtained by an hon. Gentleman in 1862, once Lord Advocate of their Party, that in Glasgow there were 34,907 houses at and under £4 rental. The Return was not complete for Edinburgh, and only included part of it, but in the one half of Edinburgh there were 6,100 such houses; in Aberdeen, 896; in Dunfermline, 1,612; in Perth, 852; in part of Paisley, 5,870; in Falkirk, 920. In all these cases female householders were included. The Return contained a valuable summary at the end, applicable to both counties and boroughs in Scotland, which showed that there were altogether 431,793 houses rented at and under £4 assessed to the poor. Of these, 189,555 were exempted from the poor rates on the ground of inability to pay. That was nearly half of the whole number. Many of the occupants in the large towns were a wretched class, living in one apartment, often dark, ill-ventilated, damp—altogether, in many cases, unfit for human habitation—yet these houses were rated to the poor, and the greater number of them were paying poor rates. Under the Bill, the occupants of each of these houses that paid the poor rates would be entitled to a vote. The argument founded on the payment of poor rates had considerable weight from the comparatively large amount of the rates laid on in England. In Scotland the amount was not nearly so large. There was scarcely a poor rate that in Scotland exceeded 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, and the landlord paid one-half of all poor rates. If votes were given to the occupiers of all such houses, the door would be open to bribery and corruption by political agents paying for poor persons the trifling amount of poor rates laid upon them in order to secure their votes; and this might be done to an amount which no man could foresee."—[*Ibid.* 703-4.]

It might be said there were two ways of dealing with the residuum—one was to exclude or excise it; the other, to overpower it. His objection to the Bill was that it did not proceed upon any consideration of personal rights; it proceeded on the principle of selection. It proceeded by saying that the House should take a certain proportion of the population and enfranchise them, and leave everybody else unenfranchised. As regarded half the population—the best half—it came to this, that while William Sykes, living with his wife and children, and his bull-dog, in a single room, furnished probably with the produce of many burglaries, would have a vote, as a capable citizen, the son of a middle-class man, or a young man of a respectable character, because he lived in his father's house, and was not employed by his father, should not have a vote; and Florence Nightingale and Mary Somerville would not have votes simply because they were women. What were they going to do with the residuum? They must excise them or overcome them; but this Bill would not overcome them. It would give a certain number of votes admitted to be bad. It would admit in towns, and in parts of counties which really were towns, a certain number of votes of a class which everyone must admit to be bad. Both Parties in the State were trying to grapple with the question of improving the dwellings of the poor; but, by this Bill, they would sanctify the squalor of the poor and the vicious, and would encourage and dignify the residences in which fathers and mothers, and children of different ages, and of both sexes, lived in one room; and in that way a great blow would be struck at the progress of sanitary reform, and a very bad class of voters would be admitted, when they need not be admitted. He thought, therefore, that the Amendment he proposed was, at all events, worthy of consideration; and he hoped the Prime Minister would state whether he claimed this class of voters as capable citizens or not? The Prime Minister must either do so, or show a better way of avoiding them. He must either accept them, while excluding capable men and capable women, or admit all capable men and women — the man because he was a man, and the woman because she was a woman.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end, add—"A 'household qualification' and a 'dwellinghouse qualification' shall mean, respectively, a tenement containing not less than two habitable apartments."—(*Sir Edward Watkin.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE: I feel quite strongly upon and sympathize with the objection taken by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) as to the place where the Amendment should come in; but I do not suppose there is absolutely any rule of order as to Amendments, or against any amount of confusion which may consequently be introduced into the Bill. As to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), he says that satisfaction may be given to his wishes in one of two ways. He says he will be satisfied if we either adopt the Amendment, and restrict the franchise as it is conferred by the Bill; or, if we largely extend the franchise by going the whole length to manhood suffrage, and woman suffrage also. I am afraid I am not able to meet the wishes of the hon. Baronet in the second course. Let us see, then, what will ensue if we adopt the Amendment. I doubt whether the hon. Baronet has acquainted himself with the extent to which this means disfranchisement. In Ireland this means an enormous proposal of disfranchisement. I will not say what proportion of existing voters might not be cut off from the very narrow franchise now in Ireland; but if we come to this side of the water, throughout the whole of this country, the Amendment would very largely restrict the new suffrage to be conferred in counties, and abolish a large amount of the suffrage already enjoyed in towns. It proceeds on the principle that a person living in one room cannot be a capable citizen.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN: Living with his family.

MR. GLADSTONE: I find nothing about a family in the Amendment; unless the Motion is to be interpreted by the speech, or, at any rate, by what comes from the speech; but, unfortunately, that would not hold good. I dispute altogether the hon. Baronet's doctrine that people cannot be capable citizens because they live in single rooms. There is a case of a Member of this House, who, in virtue of a tenancy of one room, is enfranchised for Westminster, and I am afraid that by this Amendment he would be removed from the Register. I do not admit that because a person lives in one room he is to be considered disqualified. The hon. Baronet has referred to a speech by the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), and to a speech of my own, delivered, I believe, in 1867; but it is to be borne in mind that these speeches were delivered when we were comparing a uniform system, to be applied equally throughout the whole country, by fixing a figure for the franchise, which would make it operate alike in the boroughs, with a system which would have been absolutely arbitrary and capricious, and would have made an enormous enfranchisement in some boroughs where rates were paid directly, and in others no enfranchisement at all. Since then we have learnt a great deal. After that time we began by adopting the principle of rating. We then proceeded to abolish all limitations upon household franchise, and we have now had an experience of it for the last 17 years. Is there any reason why we should be dissatisfied with the results? Let us see how this plan will act. I will not speak of Ireland, but I will speak of Scotland. At the time when I knew Scotland, some time ago, there were—and I believe even now, in some parts, there are—a large number of one-room tenements in the country, and multitudes of them in the towns, and the people living in them were perfectly qualified for the franchise. What would be the case in Glasgow? I am sure my hon. Friend is not aware of the operation his Motion would have. In Glasgow, there are 110,000 families, according to the last Census of the population, and out of those 110,000 no less than 39,000 are families living in one room. Are we really going to apply disfranchisement to them? I think my hon. Friend would shrink from such a result of his Amendment. There are many cases in which it is the most legitimate thing in the world for a man to live in one room. Take the case of a single man. What could be more proper than that he should have a vote? But my hon. Friend says that is to be only where there is a family. Take, again, the case of married people before they have children, or who have one child; why should not they remain in one room, if, unhappily, they cannot afford more? Rent is now a great burden upon the artizan. That is the point at which he is weak, and any increase of rent presses heavily upon him, and restricts many of the immense advantages he has derived in many other respects from legislation. Out of the 39,000 families living in one room in Glasgow, no less than 7,000 are, I believe, single individuals. In Glasgow, there are more than one-third of the whole population whom my hon. Friend proposes to sweep away; in Aberdeen, there are about one-fourth. About Aberdeen, I will only say that you will find it very difficult to find any person there who is incapable of exercising the franchise. In Edinburgh, there are 14,000 of these people out of about 52,000—that is, more than one-fourth, and less than one-third. I am persuaded that my hon. Friend will not persevere with his Amendment, which I do believe would lead to results which he has not taken into consideration.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had hoped that if the Prime Minister could not accept the Amendment, he would have stated that the Government would take the object of the Amendment into their consideration. The Committee were now considering a Bill which proposed to confer the franchise on householders, and they were told that the franchise was to be uniform; but there was no definition of what constituted a householder or a dwelling-house in any Act of Parliament. What was the result? The result was that they were introducing a much lower franchise in Ireland than in England or Scotland. The Prime Minister, being in charge of the Bill, objected to any Amendment which would interfere with the structure of this Bill, and said that, no doubt, for the purpose of convenience, it might be better that this Amendment should be upon Clause 7; but if he would look at Clause 7, he would see that that was merely a definition of what constituted a qualification under existing Acts of Parliament. He (Lord George Hamilton) believed, however, that he was correct in saying that there was no existing Act of Parliament which defined either a householder or a dwelling-house qualification. As to the question of enfranchisement, the Prime Minister had stated that this would have a very disfranchising effect; but if they gave a vote to every man who occupied a house, ought they not to define what constituted a house? The Prime Minister had pointed out that in Glasgow 39,000 out of 110,000 families occupied one room only each, and therefore he argued that those 39,000 families would be disfranchised; but although there were these 110,000 families, there were only 66,000 voters. There was thus a difference of something like 50,000 voters in the calculation. No doubt, the actual words of the Amendment would disfranchise these people; but should not the Government undertake to consider whether they would not attempt to define what constituted a house? It did seem to him, at that time, when special attention was being given to the houses of the poor, there could be no better inducement to working men to keep their houses in good order than the promise of the franchise when their houses were fit to be called houses. Those who occupied these tenements had been freed from the direct payment of rates; therefore, they were only indirectly rated, and there was nothing to show what constituted a house. He thought it was well worthy of the attention of the Government whether they could not give some definition of a house such as would exclude a class of buildings which he was certain every Member of the House would condemn as unfit for occupation.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was surprised that the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) could give even a qualified support to this Amendment, which would disfranchise a vast number of people who received the franchise under a Bill passed by the late Government. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) objected altogether to the statement of the noble Lord that this was the time to consider what constituted a house. Following the precedent of other Acts, an attempt to define a house would not come in now; but, even if that were not so, the definition would not, in any sense, come within this Amendment, and he could not but think that the noble Lord was going outside the terms of the Amendment in raising the point at all now. The Amendment would disfranchise the existing voters who lived in one room, and would prevent the enfranchisement of any man living in one room. He had lately had his attention called very much to the condition of one-room families, and he ventured to say that the vast majority of them were very capable citizens indeed. The great majority living in one room in large towns were either single men, or, more probably, young couples, either without children, or having only a small number of them of tender years. There was no reason why a newly-married man and his wife should not live in one room; the vast majority of them did so, and they would be disfranchised by this Amendment. These people had been spoken of as £4 a-year people; but the vast proportion of the people living in one room were people who paid as much as £10 a-year. There were some dwellings erected by a Company, of which his hon. Friend the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Brand) was a leading member. The people living in them paid 4*s.* a-week rent. They were very respectable people and extremely capable citizens; and he would venture to say that the people who would live in the dwellings which the hon. Baronet intended to erect for the poorer class, were to a very large extent capable of exercising the franchise.

MR. GREGORY said, he wished to second the appeal of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) to the Government to consider the propriety of inserting some definition of a house. The right hon. Baronet who had just spoken (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was, no doubt, acquainted with many instances of the confusion to which the present law had given rise. He (Mr. Gregory), himself, had drawn up an Amendment to Clause 7, and he would ask the Government to consider that between now and the time when that clause came to be considered. If they did not consider it worthy their attention, perhaps they would propose something of their own which would be better for the purpose. In that way, they would confer a great benefit on the public, who were now in a state of great doubt and confusion as to what constituted a house.

MR. LEWIS said, he felt indebted to the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Edward Watkin) for bring forward this question, which he thought had been too lightly, and in a very one-sided way, treated by the Government. It seemed to him, that although there were bachelors living in splendid apartments, although consisting of only one room, and occasional instances such as that cited by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) of model lodging houses where one room was let for 4*s.* a-week, these were only exceptions to what would be the general rule when they thought of a house as containing only one living apartment. The right hon. Baronet compared things that were different. What the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) was striking at, was not one room in a large house, but the one-roomed house—the house consisting of one room. That was a very different thing from a house occupied in separate rooms by individuals—a bachelor, or a man and his wife. There were cases of families living in some hut, which by some sort of complacency was called a house, and there were in the United Kingdom thousands of cases of so-called houses in which the inhabitants consisted of human beings, and two or four-footed animals—in many cases there being a pig, and dogs and fowls. It was useless for the Government to evade the question raised by the Amendment as they had done. The words of the Amendment were not, perhaps, the happiest under the circumstances; but he thought the hon. Baronet was entitled to credit for having opened up a subject which would, no doubt, be heard of again. He (Mr. Lewis), at all events, submitted that this was a matter in regard to which some attempt should be made to provide an intelligent and legal definition of a house.

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had said that this was not the right time to consider what was the nature of a house, and that Clause 7 would be the right place; but he (Mr. Grey) would point out that if there had been in Clause 7 a definition of what constituted a house, this discussion would not have proceeded so far as it had. It was exactly because they were ignorant of what constituted a householder, that this Amendment had been proposed and this discussion had taken place. He thought it was a matter for great regret that that clause, which was the *crux* of the whole Bill, should proceed not by way of definition, but by way of reference. He had taken considerable pains to find out what constituted a claim to be a householder, and he had made some remarks upon the point upon the second reading of the Bill; but he must point out how difficult it was to discover who was entitled to vote as a householder, and would ask his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board whether it was absolutely certain that it was necessary to occupy even a single room for the purpose of getting a vote? The hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) wished to prevent any man from voting as a householder whose house did not comprise at least two rooms. The arguments against this proposal were, he thought, conclusive. He regretted that the hon. Baronet had not inserted "one" instead of "two" in the Amendment, for, so far as he could understand the law, it was not even necessary for a householder to occupy the whole of a single room. If a room was divided into two separate parts by a curtain, or even by a chalk line drawn along the floor, and those two parts were let to two individuals, each of whom occupied his separate part, then each of those occupants would be entitled, so far as the nature of the premises were concerned, to vote as a householder, and two votes would issue out of a single apartment. He should like to ask his right hon. Friend whether he was right or not in that construction of the law?

Mr. GORST said, he felt sure that this Amendment would greatly restrict not only the future, but the present franchise. This was again the old story. The Amendment of the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) and his speech were made on the Bill of 1867, when household suffrage was established in boroughs; and the effect of the Amendment and the speech at that time was that the Attorney General of the then Conservative Government undertook to endeavour, before the Bill left the House, to frame a definition of a house. That definition appeared in the Act of 1867, and was as follows:—

> "A dwellinghouse shall include any part of a house occupied as a separate dwelling, and separately rated for the relief of the poor."

Since then that definition had undergone a good deal of amendment, because, he believed, he was right in saying that all that was necessary to constitute a tenement or dwelling-house was that the place should be separately occupied. The hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) and the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) looked askance at this franchise which had been established in England and Scotland, and desired to restrict it by preventing persons exercising it unless they occupied rooms of certain cubic contents. He (Mr. Gorst) felt that the Amendment of which the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had given notice was an attempt on the hon. Gentleman's part to put into an Act of Parliament the result of the decisions which had been given in the Registration Courts, and, in fact, to declare what the present law was. He did not understand the hon. Member to be engaged in this disfranchising campaign. It might, or might not, be desirable to put into the Bill a definition of "dwellinghouse" such as that proposed by the hon. Member for East Sussex; but if they did put a definition at all in the Bill, it ought to be one which would express the real state of the law as now established by the decisions in the Registration Courts.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that though he did not take quite the view of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he was afraid he saw some difficulty in supporting this Amendment in the precise terms in which the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) had placed it before the Committee. He did not think, however, that the hon. Baronet's Amendment was open to the strictures which had been heaped upon it by the Government. The hon. Baronet was told he had not brought his Amendment forward in the proper place. He (Mr. J. Lowther) never knew what was a proper place for an Amendment of which the Government did not happen to approve. If the hon. Baronet had waited until they had reached some other clause, he would, in all probability, have been told that he had lost his chance. His (Mr. J. Lowther's) experience of the working of Bills in Committee had convinced him that, if any Member desired to obtain an alteration of the original drafting, he could not make his proposal too early in the proceedings. If a Member waited until the end of the Bill, he would probably find that the Committee had ceased to take any interest in the subject, and that he could not obtain the ear of the Committee. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) raised an entirely different question from that which he (Mr. J. Lowther) understood was in the mind of the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Watkin) when he drew the Amendment. As he (Mr. J. Lowther) understood, his hon. Friend (Mr. Lewis) proposed merely to apply the decision to what were generally known as separate houses; whereas the strict words of the hon. Baronet's Amendment would include a building which was divided into numerous apartments of the kind described by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). It appeared to him (Mr. J. Lowther) that, under the plan of his hon. Friend (Mr. Lewis), a Revising Barrister, especially in one part of the Kingdom, which the hon. Gentleman indicated, would have to discharge functions somewhat analogous to those which were usually assigned to an Inspector of Nuisances—he would have to decide whether a house was fit for human habitation, and whether its occupation should confer the right to the franchise. It was perfectly clear that, by the Bill as drawn by Her Majesty's Government, a large number of dwellings, which were undoubtedly unfit for any human being to inhabit, would confer upon the occupier the right to the franchise. Now, if the owners of these dwellings attempted to remedy the present state of affairs, they would probably cease to exist for many days in this earthly sphere. That was all the more reason why the Committee should make an attempt to discourage the habitation of dwellings of this description. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister talked of capable citizens. He (Mr. J. Lowther) preferred the term "loyal subjects," because he preferred a Monarchy to a Republic. The Amendment had succeeded, at any rate, in drawing attention to a most important subject; and, perhaps, the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe might be of opinion that his object would be served if he obtained, before the discussion closed, an assurance from the Government that they would consider some means of dealing with this branch of the question. He (Mr. J. Lowther) so far agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that he thought it would hardly be practicable, at the present time, to say that persons occupying very humble dwellings should not have votes at all; but he must take the opportunity of again reminding the Committee that there were means of preventing the lower classes from having a monopoly of the franchise. They saw from the Returns which had been laid before Parliament, that they were about to hand over, in one portion of the United Kingdom, the largest share of electoral power entirely to persons whose dwellings were clearly unfit for human habitation. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said just now that his attention had been called to dwellings not far from where they were now assembled, which came within that category. Did the right hon. Baronet realize that the Government were proposing to hand the larger share of electoral power in one part of the United Kingdom entirely to persons who occupied dwellings of that kind? The other plan, which he (Mr. J. Lowther) ventured once again to call attention to, was that persons who were possessed of a larger share in the rateable value of the locality, and who had a greater stake in the country than others, should have a multiplicity of votes, in order to militate against the influence of that enormous prepondrance of persons who inhabited places unfit for human habitation. He hoped they would have some plan submitted to them which would prevent persons of the lower class swamping every other class in the body politic. The Government seemed to have arrived at the conclusion that, as long as a person had a roof over his head, he had as much right to have the same voice in the national affairs as a person who contributed largely to the local and Imperial taxation. How was it they stopped there? Why did the Prime Minister say that a person who, in conjunction, perhaps, with a dozen others, occupied one room, was a capable citizen; while the person who did not occupy a room at all was an incapable one? The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe had done service in introducing this Amendment, and it was to be hoped that, before the discussion closed, he would succeed in eliciting some further explanation from the Government.

Mr. WARTON said, he objected to the Amendment, because they were asked to define "dwellinghouse qualification," which words did not appear in the Bill. He considered, however, that the Committee was indebted to the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Edward Watkin) for introducing the question. He complained of the easy method the Government adopted of dealing with Amendments. They raised the cry, "Disfranchisement, disfranchisement!" to nearly every proposition that was made. It was very easy to call names; but the cry of "Disfranchisement" was not a sufficient answer to every Amendment. In the first place, he asked Liberal Members whether they would lay down the proposition, that there was not, at the present moment, on the electoral roll a single person who ought not to be enfranchised? Would they undertake to say that so perfect was our electoral system that there was not a single person on the Register who ought not to be there? Because, if there was, the cry of "Disfranchisement" would be absurd. He did not scruple to say boldly and distinctly that there were many persons on the Register now who ought not to be there. This was an age of political hypocrisy, and there were a great many men on both sides of the House who had not the courage to say what they really felt and believed. Hon. Members knew that, in their own constituencies, there were a great number of men who had votes, but who were not fit to exercise the franchise. Liberal Members especially were apt to bow down before the idol of vulgar opinion, and act in spite of their consciences. He hoped that, in this age of cant, there would be some few found who had the courage to speak their minds. Unfortunately, there were men like the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), who were afraid to speak their minds on this subject. In his (Mr. Warton's) opinion, the Government ought to jump at this Amendment with pleasure, as giving some difinition of what they meant by a house, and by what they meant by household qualification. It was true that the 7th clause was a hash-up of several definitions; but it was equally true that there was not a right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench who would get up and say what a house was, or what was meant by household qualification. He regarded the Amendment as an honest attempt to solve a very great difficulty—a difficulty from which the Government shrank, because they were incapable of finding a solution, and because, if they could, they had not the courage.

Mr. WHITLEY said, that, whether that was the proper time or not to introduce it, there was considerable force in the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin). Up to the present there had been no definition of a house, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had begged the question. The right hon. Gentleman said the object of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe was to disfranchise a number of voters who now possessed the franchise. He (Mr. Whitley) did not understand that to be the object of the hon. Baronet. The object of the Amendment was, as far as he could judge, to place some interpretation upon the word "house," and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had at all recognized the difficulty which many hon. Members felt. They were about to extend the franchise in Ireland to men paying only £1 rent. Now, they wanted to know whether, in extending the franchise to such a class of men, they might not be extending it to perhaps 10 people in the one dwelling? He asked the Committee to consider whether the people who inhabited the hovels of Ireland were really capable citizens? If they had no definition whatever of "house," one of the huts in Ireland might give the franchise to five or six people. So far as the Committee was given to understand, every one of the persons inhabiting a £1 house in Ireland would be entitled to a vote. It was quite beside the question for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to talk about a great number of capable citizens living in single rooms. They all knew that, in large towns, there were many capable citizens living in one room; but that did not affect the Amendment, which merely sought to define what a dwelling-house was. In common with many Members of the Committee, he desired there should be some definition of a house, because he was very anxious to know whether it would be possible for a house in Ireland, rented at £1, to give more than one vote? This was a serious question, and he hoped the President of the Local Government Board, or some other Member of the Government, would answer the appeal made to them by the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey).

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not answer the appeal of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), because he considered he would be entirely out of Order in doing so.

MR. ALBERT GREY said, that if the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not answer his appeal, it would be necessary for him to move his Amendment when this was disposed of. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) wished to confine the right to vote to those who occupied two or more rooms; and what he (Mr. Grey) desired to know was, whether, under the Bill, it was necessary for a householder to occupy the whole of one room before he could claim the right to vote; whether it was possible to divide a room into two halves, and let the halves to separate tenants, both of whom would have a vote? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would explain to the Committee what was the exact state of the law on the subject; whether it was absolutely necessary that a man should occupy the whole of a single room before he could vote?

MR. TOMLINSON said, hon. Members would do well to consider how the Amendment would operate in their own constituencies. He thought it was quite possible that there were, in every constituency, persons who possessed the franchise now, but who in no sense could be considered capable of taking a rational view of the questions which were on the *tapis.* Personally, he did not think that any such definition as that proposed by the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) would have the effect of discriminating between those who were capable of exercising the franchise and those who were not, and for the very reason, that a certain number of rooms were let for business purposes, and could not be excluded. He could not help thinking that great difficulties and dangers would arise if the word "house" were not defined, because it might be possible for the heads of several families, occupying the same room, to find their way on the Register. He hoped he was right in understanding that the Government would turn their attention to the question of defining what a house was, when the Committee arrived at a later stage of the Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it was certain they would have to discuss the question as to the interpretation of the term "house" at a later period. It was quite true that, in large towns and cities, the same rooms were occupied by more than one family; but he was sure the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) could not mention any case where the head of those families had got on the Register. The Government answered Amendments upon their own merits, and what they objected to answer were other points raised upon Amendments.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) contended that where two families occupied the same room, they could not both get on the register. It would be a very unsatisfactory state of affairs that one of the families could get on, yet he (Mr. Tomlinson) did not see anything to prevent it.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, they never could prevent irregularities occurring in great cities.

Mr. WARTON said, the right hon. Baronet was running away from the subject. It was essentially necessary that the Committee should know what the Government meant by "house," and he hoped the right hon. Baronet would give them the information.

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, he had appealed in vain to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke). He would now appeal to the hon. and learned Attorney General. He did not wish to be unduly importunate. He had asked a simple question, and all he wanted was a simple answer. Perhaps the hon. and learned Attorney General would say whether a single room could give two votes?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that, in discussing what constituted a house, they were certainly travelling beyond the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin). He might, however, at once say that, by the Act of 1867, one room could not confer two votes.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN said, he would not press his Amendment to a Division; but he should reserve to himself the liberty, when the 7th clause came to be discussed, of joining others in pressing on the Government the necessity of defining what a house was. It was not only desirable to define the term as a mere matter of dry law, but in the interest of sanitation. He was sorry Her Majesty's Government seemed to consider that the matter was of so very little importance, and that men might be capable citizens under every possible circumstances. That was not his opinion. He was afraid, also, that unless some such Proviso as he and the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) proposed were adopted, the Bill would lead to the manufacture of residential fagot votes. With the permission of the Committee he would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Tenure of house by office or service not to invalidate vote).

Mr. GRANTHAM said, that, in the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), he would move the Amendment which stood in his name. It was a rather technical Amendment, yet there was much to be said in its favour. Those who drafted the Bill were evidently under some misapprehension as to the language used in the Act of 1867, and therefore this clause would want considerable alteration, if not re-drafting. The Act of 1867, first of all, recited that every man should, on and after a certain time, be entitled to be registered as a voter. It then went on to define the necessary qualifications, the first of which was, that a man should be of full age, and not subject to any legal incapacity. That seemed to be omitted in this clause. Surely it was not intended that a lad, or anyone under age, who was placed as caretaker of any house should be entitled to vote? He suggested, therefore, that some words should be inserted in the clause to meet that objection. Then, again, the following language of the clause was not quite correct, and with the permission of the Committee he would read how the clause could be improved:—

> "Where a man of full age, and not subject to any legal incapacity, has himself inhabited for a period of twelve months by virtue of any office, service, or employment any dwellinghouse which is rated, or capable of being rated, and the dwellinghouse is not inhabited by any person, &c."

He thought that read accurately, and really carried out, better than the language adopted in the clause as it stood, the view of his hon. Friend (Mr. Gregory). It would be necessary, therefore, to move the Amendments as they stood on the Paper; and, in the first place, he moved to insert, after "man," "of full age, and not subject to any legal incapacity, has."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after "man," to insert "of full age, and not subject to any legal incapacity, has."—(*Mr. Grantham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he did not think the Amendment was necessary. He was aware the words "of full age and of no legal incapacity" were in the Act of 1867; but he, nevertheless, considered them entirely unnecessary. When they said a man, they meant a man; and a man was not a man in the eye of the law unless he was 21 years of age. Of course, wherever legal incapacity existed, it took away from a man the right to vote. As a matter of drafting, it had been thought proper to adopt general words, subject to no particular definition.

MR. GORST asked whether the clause, as it stood, would include those persons who were in the service of the Crown? because, if, in the opinion of the hon. and learned Attorney General, it was so drawn, he (Mr. Gorst) would be spared the necessity of moving an Amendment on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) would see, by Clause 9, that—

> "Where a man inhabits a dwelling house in respect of which no person is rated by reason of such dwelling house belonging to or being occupied on behalf of the Crown, or by reason of any other ground of exemption, such person shall not be disentitled to be registered as a voter."

MR. GRANTHAM said, he gathered that the hon. and learned Attorney General considered the insertion of the words "of full age and of no legal incapacity" unnecessary. The words appeared in the Act of 1867; and it was somewhat strange that they should be deliberately left out of this Bill, because their omission would certainly create difficulty.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) drew the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Grantham) to Clause 10, where it was provided—

> "Nothing in this Act shall confer on any man who is subject to any legal incapacity to be registered as a voter or to vote, any right to be registered as a voter or to vote."

MR. GRANTHAM said, that in the Act of 1867 there were the two expressions—"of full age" and "of no legal incapacity." If, however, the matter had been fully considered by the Government, he would not press the Amendment.

MR. WARTON said, he was sorry the word "has" appeared in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Surrey (Mr. Grantham); because, if the Amendment were negatived, the Committee would not have the opportunity of considering the desirability of inserting the word "has."

MR. ARTHUR COHEN said, the doubt which was suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Grantham) was removed by the 11th clause—

> "This Act, so far as may be consistently with the tenor thereof, shall be construed as one with the Representation of the People Acts as defined by this Act."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. GREGORY moved an Amendment to insert the word "has," which, he said, would raise the whole question of a man's right to vote.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after "man," to insert "has."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'has' be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could only repeat that the clause had been very carefully drafted, and that it had been thought better to adopt general words than to attempt to run the risk of defining the right to vote.

MR. GREGORY said, they were now creating a new franchise, and they ought to be precise and explicit. Unless they were so, they might very likely defeat the object which the Government had in view. His desire was rather to assist the Government, because he considered it the duty of the Committee to turn out as perfect a piece of legislation as they could. It was much better to do a thing directly, if they could, than by reference. He thought they could do it precisely and succinctly in the way he suggested, and therefore he ventured to press his Amendment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government carefully considered the matter both before and since they saw the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gregory) on the Paper. This was a purely technical matter, and the reason why some voters were to be called service voters, was that they had previously had no vote because they were not occupiers in the eye of the law—that was for the purposes of the poor rate, as they did not pay it. What they had done was to say that the person who formerly was not an inhabiting occupier should be regarded for all purposes as an inhabiting occupier of the dwelling-house as tenant. They, therefore, saved the necessity of giving a definition.

Mr. GREGORY said, if the Committee did not like to adopt the Amendment, there was an end of the matter. It was a question of some difficulty, and the hon. and learned Attorney General would probably soon have an opportunity of deciding upon it. It was not likely, at any rate, to be brought before himself, and therefore he left the matter in the hands of his hon. and learned Friend. He was not prepared to press the Amendment.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he was bound to observe that he was not convinced by the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General; his last argument particularly—that about the payment of rates—seemed to him to have no application to the question at all. Either the clause should be left out, or his hon. and learned Friend's Amendment should be inserted, because he (Mr. Tomlinson) thought that if a new clause required all this explanation to make it intelligible, words ought to be put in to make it plain.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he must press the hon. and learned Attorney General to give a definition of what was meant by a dwelling-house, as the term was used in the clause, and how many persons might be enfranchised under it? There was nothing to prevent an employer using the clause as it stood for the purpose of corrupting voters on a gigantic scale. Suppose he, himself, were to build a large number of houses, and give everyone in his service a separate room in them; there was nothing to prevent all those persons voting. The clause might very easily lead to an evil ten times greater than what was called fagot voting.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the question raised by the hon. Member was substantially the same as that raised by his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Gregory).

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked whether the hon. and learned Attorney General contemplated the system which obtained in Scotland, where many labourers were capable of voting who lived together under what was called the "Bothy" system.

Mr. TOMLINSON contended that they were entitled to an explanation of the meaning of the word as it existed in the mind of the Government. Was it intended to apply to distinct dwelling-houses?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he had already stated that those who framed the Act of 1867 left the word to be defined by the law. If the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Tomlinson) had an Amendment to propose, let it be brought forward on the Definition Clause, when every opportunity for discussion would be afforded; but he must object to anticipate it, because the Government were not then prepared to give any definition.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, that in the Act of 1867 there was a distinct definition; the words were—

> "The term dwellinghouse shall include any part of a house occupied separately as a dwelling."

Mr. GREGORY said, as it seemed to be a question of some hon. Member framing a definition, he would try his "'prentice hand" at it at the proper time.

Mr. WHITLEY said, the Government were introducing the service franchise, and the Committee were about to give the vote to anyone who might be put into a dwelling-house by the owner. He, therefore, asked whether it was the intention of the Government that the owner of a house might introduce a number of fagot votes under the cover of the clause? Certainly, that was a most important point to consider in connection with the Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, he would contend that this was not a point to be hurried over. If the Government, having brought in a perfectly new franchise, were to dictate to the Committee how long they were to take in considering that franchise, he must say there were hon. Members in that House who would not be so treated, and he was one of them. The hon. and learned Attorney General did not seem to have the least conception of the extent of the change they were asked to make, and could give the Committee no idea of the meaning of the terms employed by the Government in their own Bill. The Committee did not even know the meaning of service franchise; they did not know whether it was to be limited to one responsible servant, such as a gamekeeper or a steward, or one occupying a position of responsibility, or whether, as would probably be the case, labourers housed under the Scotch system would be able to vote under it. Had it escaped the attention of the Prime Minister that under this section it was possible for a farmer to arrange any large shed in such a way as would give the vote to each of a large number of persons whom he might allow to occupy it—that was to say, if it were divided into compartments like the stalls for oxen? That was what the Committee wanted to know; and it was that which the hon. and learned Attorney General said they were not to know or consider. If they were not to have an explanation from the hon. and learned Attorney General, he (Mr. Warton) trusted the Prime Minister would at least clear up their doubts.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, at line 35 of Clause 7 there were these words—

> "And for the purpose of the said section and enactments the expression 'dwelling-house' in Scotland means any house or part of a house occupied as a separate dwelling; and this definition of a dwelling-house shall be substituted for the definition contained in section fifty-nine of the Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868."

Here was a new definition. [The Attorney General (Sir Henry James): In Scotland.] He was aware of that; but he wanted to know whether it let in what was called the bothy system in Scotland? His hon. Friend had said truly that it was easy, under the Scotch system, to make the parts of a house a separate dwelling; cottages were very often separated in that way. He was personally acquainted with a case of the kind. There might be separate dwellings in one cottage. No one knew better than the hon. and learned Attorney General that, before a Court of Law, it would be very easy to argue on both sides of the question. He thought the Committee and the country ought to be informed what sort and number of people it was proposed to enfranchise under this clause. It was a serious thing that a tenement, artificially separated, should be made the means of multiplying votes, if that was intended. He did not say it was right or wrong; but it was entirely a new idea, and a very important one; it differed altogether from other parts of the Bill, and he thought it was only right to ask how it would work.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, it had been decided by legal authorities that the occupiers of a lodge-gate, although it was situated at a distance from the mansion, were not entitled to vote. He was personally acquainted with a case in which it was so decided. He would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General whether he intended that lodges so occupied should come within the purview of the Bill? The hon. and learned Gentleman did not seem to appreciate the point; but it was a very important one, and showed that the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Gregory) should be pressed on the Government for the purpose of getting from them a separate definition of dwelling-houses which was to carry with them the right to the service franchise. He did not want to occupy the time of the Committee in arguing the point at length; but he placed the matter before the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and the hon. and learned Attorney General; because it was very important, when it was considered with reference to the next clause which related to fagot votes. What they were he never knew; but, perhaps, when the clause was reached, the hon. and learned Gentleman would define them. However, if any restriction was to be put upon votes of the kind, it was necessary that the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex should be admitted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Government had made no distinction whatever in the definition of a dwelling-house from what it was before. That which existed in the Act of 1867 would exist now. Each question as it arose would have to be decided upon its merits—as to whether it was a dwelling-house or not. Whatever legal decision had been obtained in reference to the Act of 1867 would be retained. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Whitley) had suggested that there might be a system established of making many persons inhabit one house, for the purpose of their voting separately as individuals; but the 3rd clause of the Act of 1867 provided against that; and, under this Bill, there must be separate occupation of the dwelling-house. The question that would be considered was whether there was a separate holding; and if there were not, two persons in the same house could not vote. That existed before, and it would exist hereafter; it was efficient then, and it would continue to be efficient. It had been thought better not to make any alteration in the law in this respect; and the Government had followed the example of the framers of the Bill of 1867; and hon. Gentlemen opposite ought, therefore, to be the last persons to complain of the course they had adopted with regard to the definition of a dwelling-house. As to the point raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), sometimes lodge-keepers were the servants of the owners of the mansion, and sometimes they were simply allowed to live in the lodge and perform the service of opening the gate. A person occupying a lodge in such a manner that the master could not close the gate against him would be entitled to the vote, and it was intended that he should have it. So long as there was a separate house into which the master had not the right to go there would be a vote.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that that was an entirely new proposal. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that hon. Members on that side of the House ought not to complain, because the Government had followed the framers of the Act of 1867 in respect of their treatment of the definition of the term "dwelling-house;" but he (Lord John Manners) reminded the hon. and learned Gentleman that that Act did not give the suffrage to householders in counties in England and Scotland. Was it intended that all those who lived under the bothy system should exercise the vote; that only one of them should exercise it, or that none of them should have the vote? As he read the clause, only one person was to exercise the franchise; and he should be glad if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General could tell the Committee whether that view was correct.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he understood the noble Lord to refer to several persons in service occupying the same tenement. [Lord John Manners assented.] Then, none of them would have the vote. The words of the Act were—

> "Provided that no man shall be entitled under this section to vote by reason of his being a joint occupier of a dwelling-house."

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, no doubt the hon. and learned Attorney General thought he had effectually disposed of the question; but the Committee had not been informed as to those who were entitled to be considered occupiers in the first instance. They were told that where a man himself inhabited a dwelling-house he was to have the vote. Did that include a caretaker? [The Attorney General (Sir Henry James): No.] Well, then, if any owner had a certain number of servants in occupation of his premises, who was to decide which of them was to be entitled to vote?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, there must be the coincidence necessary to make a man an occupier. Whether he was a caretaker or not, he must occupy the house; he must be the *dominus* of that house, and able to keep others out of it; he must be in the separate position of occupier, which was a term known to the law.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to say—although, of course, he did not mean it—that one of the conditions incident to the vote was that the occupier should be able to hold the premises against the owners. His (Mr. J. Lowther's) point was, that the proprietor might name any one of his dependents to occupy the position of caretaker who would have the vote. If he had made such a proposal, he would have been told that he had concocted a scheme of fagot voting; that he was perpetuating feudalism, and a great deal more. He understood, then, that any person might nominate anyone he chose to be his dependent, and to occupy a position conferring upon him the franchise, and that this was to be revocable at will. Now, that was evidently a matter which, to use a popular expression, ought not to be "rushed" through the Committee. The hon. and learned Attorney General seemed to think him very dense for not having detected a meaning which had not been given; he hoped, however, he had profited by the instruction he had received at the hands of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and that he now clearly understood him.

MR. GREGORY said, a difficulty presented itself to his mind in connection with this matter, which did not seem to have occurred to the hon. and learned Attorney General. The hon. and learned Gentleman relied very much on a definition of the Act of 1867; but he (Mr. Gregory) could not help thinking that the clause, as it stood, would override the definition in that Act. They were now establishing a new franchise, and were introducing a new class of persons, who, in his opinion, would be totally exempt from the qualifying provision of the Act of 1867. He did not mean to say that it was necessarily so; but the matter was one which demanded full consideration.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Clause 2 incorporates all those provisions. Even in that case, he thought they required some further definition, seeing that they were dealing with a very difficult matter.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, that the discussion seemed to have wandered over the whole clause, instead of being confined to the Amendment before the Committee. He was at a loss to understand the relevancy of the discussion raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) to that Amendment. But, with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's point, he thought he could hardly have applied his powerful mind to the understanding of this clause, because he would, in that case, have seen that, in order to constitute the franchise intended, two things were necessary—one, that the house should be inhabited by a person in virtue of some office; and the other, that it should not be inhabited by the person under whom that office was held. The right hon. Gentleman put a case, saying—"You may have a number of servants in your house." [Mr. J. LOWTHER: Not necessary in your own dwelling-house.] Well, then, he understood the right hon. Gentleman, if a person inhabited a house, and that house was not inhabited by the person under whom he held office, he was entitled to the franchise; but if he put a servant in his house to take care of it in his absence, with the right on coming back to inhabit the house, then he ventured to say it would not come within the purview of the clause. He could not help thinking that the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had not carefully considered the effect of the clause, which was not to give the franchise, in so many words, to persons named, but to give it by reference to other Acts. All the clause said was, that a person inhabiting a house under the circumstances mentioned therein was to be an inhabiting occupier within the meaning of those Acts; and then, if one read the clause as including the person occupying, its meaning at once appeared. It was unnecessary to attempt to introduce all the qualifications of the franchise into this Bill.

MR. GRANTHAM asked if, in the case of a house divided into two dwellings by the owner, both or either of the separate occupiers of it would be entitled to the vote? If both were entitled to vote, the system might go on indefinitely. Under the clause as it stood, for the purpose of creating votes, they might have 20 or 30 persons put into houses by the owner, and occupying each one room, who, as far as he could see, could not be prevented from having the vote. The hon. and learned Attorney General persisted in relying on the joint occupation of the dwelling, and said that the provision of the 3rd section was sufficient to meet the case; but, in the case he and his hon. Friends put forward, there was no joint occupation at all, each person having a separate dwelling in the room allotted to him. The result of that would be practically manhood suffrage. The stipulation that in the case of the lodger franchise the rent should be £10 a-year was, of course, intended to limit it to capable citizens; but, in the clause under consideration, there was nothing limiting the character of the persons who were to have the vote. An owner, under the circumstances indicated, might put into a house as many persons of 21 years of age as it would contain in separate apartments, whose wages might be 10*s.* a-week, or who, perhaps, had no wages at all, and all of them would be entitled to the vote.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he would suggest that the discussion of the point should be reserved until the 7th clause was reached; otherwise their proceedings would get hopelessly confused.

MR. GORST said, he agreed with the hon. Member who had just spoken (Sir George Campbell) that it would be better to dispose of the subject before the Committee. He believed that few hon. Members were in the House at that moment who were present when the discussion began. The question was whether or not the hon. Member for East Sussex should be allowed to withdraw his Amendment; it had nothing whatever to do with dwelling-houses, or the franchise; and the inconvenience of the present position was that those Members who had just come down to the House, and did not understand how matters stood, asked the same questions which had been put over and over again. The hon. and learned Attorney General had said several times in the last hour that he had already replied to questions that were again asked.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that the Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill, spoke with great doubt of the propriety of the term "service franchise;" and, from what had since taken place in discussion, he believed the right hon. Gentleman would have had additional evidence that it was not a very happy designation of his proposal. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he was willing to accept any term that commended itself to the House. They had learned from the discussion that the real object of the Prime Minister, in making this proposal of service franchise, was the extension of the occupation franchise; and it was with that view that he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) desired to suggest that this franchise, instead of being called "service franchise," should be called "limited occupation franchise." That, he believed, would meet the case, and the only alteration it would make necessary would be in the marginal note—not in the clause itself. As he thought his proposal would obviate misconception, he begged to move the omission of the word "service."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 19, leave out the word "service."—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'service' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), he had no objection to say that the proposal should receive consideration. In using the term "service franchise," he had no intention of using it in the sense of a legal definition. He did not think that any confusion was likely to arise in the administration of the Act from his use of the popular phrase "service franchise;" but, as he had said, he would consider the matter before the Report.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he must confess that, having seen several Reform Bills introduced, service franchise was of the very essence of what former Parliaments considered to be corruption. In the Midland Counties there were large mills and factories, where the workmen formed Liberal Clubs, subjecting the *employés* to very stringent rules as to politics; and these furnished him with a modern instance of the corruption that was likely to arise under the clause.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE presumed that under this clause, if a Minister did not inhabit a public office assigned to him, the office keeper would have a vote; on the other hand, it would be that if the Minister occupied the house as a dwelling, the office keeper would lose his vote. He would also like to know, in the event of the latter view being correct, how soon the office keeper could regain the vote if the Minister ceased to reside?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that if the Minister did not reside at his office the caretaker would have a vote; and if he did reside there would be no vote. As to the question of time, the case would be the same as that of an ordinary occupier, and 12 months' residence would be necessary.

Mr ARTHUR ARNOLD pointed out that there must be some titles under which persons voting by virtue of this new franchise were designated. However, after the opinion expressed by the Prime Minister, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the word "service" was one that the Government would consider between that and Report.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that in his opinion "service franchise" was a good term to apply to this particular description of voting, inasmuch as it exactly expressed what was intended in the case of a gamekeeper or bank manager, for instance, who were to be enfranchised by virtue of their position, and not on account of the rent they paid.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he believed the hon. Member who had just spoken (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was not in the House when the hon. and learned Attorney General replied to his inquiry as to the position of lodge keepers in relation to this franchise. The hon. and learned Gentleman stated that if an owner had a right to go into the lodge, notwithstanding that the lodge was occupied by the lodge keeper, the latter would not have the vote.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he had an Amendment to move in line 20 of the clause. He was not by any means clear, notwithstanding the long discussion that had taken place, whether the intention of the qualifying words—

"Not inhabited by any person under whom such man serves in such office, service, or employment,"

was to restrict the vote to one person, or whether their insertion was intended to prevent the exercise of any undue influence on the part of the employer upon the person to whom the vote was given. But, as the clause stood, it would appear that the large number of 20,000 female farmers who occupied farm-houses in England would not be enfranchised; and not only that, but no one residing in them would have the privilege of voting. ["Quite right!"] Some hon. Gentleman said that was quite right; but if it were right that the female farmers occupying should not be allowed to vote, was it also just that the house itself, under a system of household suffrage, should be disqualified? He suggested to the Committee that the word "male" should be inserted before the word "person," in line 20, so that if the farm-house were disfranchised by the fact of its being occupied by a female farmer, it might be enfranchised in respect of one person in the service of the occupier.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, after the word "any," insert the word "male."—(*Lord John Manners.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'male' be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought this a very unsatisfactory moment for raising this question. The female franchise might be right or wrong; but surely it would be a most extraordinary method of recognizing the political rights of women to say that any woman residing in her own house should in this way have the franchise. It was evident that that would be a most unsatisfactory course to take at that moment.

MR. TOMLINSON said, it might be desirable, or not, that a lady residing in her own house should be able to nominate someone else to vote in her place; but how that could be called woman suffrage he could not understand.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he protested against the interpretation which the Prime Minister placed upon this proposal. Instead of being a proposal to insert female suffrage, it proceeded on the assumption that the female suffrage was not to be granted. He took the Bill as he found it, and the avowed intentions of the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. and learned Attorney General; and, it being the intention of the Government that female suffrage should not be granted, there would be injustice done unless some such plan as this was adopted.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that it would be better that the question of female suffrage, of which Notice had been given, should be discussed at large, rather than that any assumption should be made now as to the judgment of the Committee upon it. He was quite ready to enter into the question when the proper time came; but this was not the proper time.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he could not see that this Amendment raised the question of woman suffrage. It said, if any person occupied or inhabited a house by virtue of a certain office—say a housekeeper or other servant—that person should have a vote in respect of that office, provided that the owner under whom he served did not himself inhabit the house. If the owner did inhabit the house, he did not lose his vote, because he would, as owner, have a vote; but if that person happened to be a female, she would not at present have a vote; and if, at the same time, the servant or person who had the service franchise was to lose that, the house would be altogether disfranchised. What the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) asked was, that they should not disfranchise the house entirely in such a case; but if they did not give the vote to the female who occupied it, then it should be given to the person who owned it.

MR. GLADSTONE said, this was introducing an entirely new thing into this debate. Now, it appeared, they were to enfranchise a house. He had great sympathy with a disfranchised house, but none with an enfranchised house. If they gave the franchise, the house would look after itself; but he protested against the assumption which lay at the bottom of this conversation—that it was the house, and not the person, who was to be enfranchised.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that if the right hon. Gentleman would look at the heading of Clause 2, he would see "Extension of the household and lodger franchise." It did not say man and woman, or lodger franchise; and what he (Lord John Manners) held was, that there was no reason why 20,000 farm-houses should be disfranchised because they happened to be occupied by women. All through these debates the right hon. Gentleman had been most eloquent in his denunciation of almost every Amendment proposed, because he had said it was a disfranchising Amendment. Now, he (Lord John Manners) tendered the right hon. Gentleman an enfranchising Amendment purely and exclusively; and he pointed to one particular class of people who, to the number of 20,000, would be disfranchised as to their houses. He would not go into the case of other houses which would be disfranchised, unless this Amendment was accepted; but with respect to that particular class of people, as to whose capacity as capable and fit citizens there could be no question, he tendered this Amendment as a proof and recognition of the right hon. Gentleman's extreme anxiety to extend the franchise as far as possible. If the right hon. Gentleman rejected the Amendment *pro tanto*, he would be sustaining a disfranchising enactment in its place.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) asked why, if the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) wished to enfranchise a house or a woman who occupied it, should he not enfranchise the house of an infant?

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he wished to propose an Amendment to make it clear what they meant by a service franchise. In the existing franchises there were an occupation franchise and a lodger franchise; and now the Government proposed to create a new franchise to be called a service franchise. He moved this Amendment partly to ask the Government to assent to his words; and, if they could not do that, to ask them to state more clearly the object of the service franchise. At present there was no doubt lodgers in a rated house were entitled to the franchise; but now they were creating a franchise by which a man who lodged in a house which he got through his service was to be entitled to the franchise. In such a house there might be a number of other persons not in any way associated with that service; and, therefore, he proposed this Amendment in order that, whoever occupied a dwelling house by virtue of any office or service, other persons should not get the lodger franchise. As they were creating a new franchise it was advisable to define it, so that hereafter there might not arise those legal difficulties which unquestionably had arisen in defining the lodger franchise. The point he wished to raise was whether or not the lodger franchise should be given on a service franchise.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 21, after "employment," insert "or by any other than his own family."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE said, his meaning was quite distinct; but the noble Lord was quite justified in raising the point. The lodger franchise could not, in his opinion, be grafted on to the service franchise; but if the noble Lord could show that any results would ensue which the Government thought could not ensue, they would be glad to consider the matter.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he knew of a case where a curate lodged with the keeper. The keeper had a vote, and the curate would also have a vote.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE remarked, that the curate had separate rooms probably.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL admitted that to be the case; but said it was an instance of the lodger franchise being grafted on the service franchise.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that the Committee had discussed the service franchise; but there was another class of persons who would be enfranchised by this clause—namely, Wesleyan Methodist ministers. There were several hundreds of these, and they occupied dwelling houses by virtue of their office. The house was part of the stipend, for they lived for three years at one place and were then removed. He was afraid that unless this Amendment was introduced they would not be enfranchised, because there was this limitation in the clause—

> "And the dwelling house is not occupied by any person under whom such man serves in such office, service, or employment."

The Amendment would meet the case of the Dissenting ministers.

MR. GORST said, he thought that there would be this objection—that if a Dissenting minister already having a vote were to let part of his house to a lodger, the occupier would be deprived of his franchise.

MR. R. B. MARTIN said, that by the Amendment they were going to take away the franchise from persons occupying premises where the premises were habitually also occupied by a caretaker. He might have nothing to do with the overseer or the clerk; but, at the same time, he was the inhabitant of the house, and if the Amendment were adopted, all that large class of occupying clerks whom it was proposed to enfranchise would be struck off.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that suppose a lodge was given to a gardener, and the lodge contained a large number of rooms. He received that house because of his service; but if the lodge belonged to a clergyman, and he stipulated that a room worth more than £10 should be given to his curate, would not the curate have his claim as a lodger? The curate paid nothing, because the clergyman stipulated with the gardener for a room to be given to the curate, worth £10. Surely, then, the curate would have his right as a lodger?

MR. GRANTHAM thought the hon. and learned Attorney General could scarcely have understood the point raised by the noble Lord. He stated that the lodger franchise could not be added to the service franchise; and where there was a service franchise there could not be a lodger franchise. From the language of the Act of 1867, coupled with the language of this Bill, it appeared that there was nothing to prevent every single person who had the service franchise also having the lodger franchise.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) replied that, if the occupier let the lodging as a separate occupation, the lodger's right would be the same as if he lodged with a freeholder.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the question raised was not whether the lodger should be enfranchised, but whether the voter should be disfranchised because he took a lodger. That was the case of a head gardener who took someone to lodge with him. There was no reason why the original lodger should be disfranchised, and he hoped the Amendment would be withdrawn.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether, under this clause, both the service franchise man and the lodger would have the franchise?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the lodger would have a vote as an ordinary lodger, in respect to the rooms he occupied as a lodger. The occupation of the remainder of the house would give the service vote.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he did not think the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had been answered. The clause seemed to imply that the man who was to have the franchise was the man who served someone; and if the words "under whom such man may serve" were inserted, it seemed to him that the point of the hon. Member would be answered.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he would withdraw his Amendment on the understanding that if any of the difficulties that occurred to him forced themselves upon him more between now and the Report, the Government would consider any Amendment he might bring forward.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he proposed to move, on behalf of his noble Friend (Earl Percy), at the end of the clause—

"Any man serving in Her Majesty's sea or land forces, and occupying separate quarters in any building belonging to or being occupied on behalf of the Crown, shall be deemed to be an inhabitant occupier under this section.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) stated that there was no disqualification upon a man serving in the sea or land forces, and the point as to the occupation of quarters in Crown buildings would be provided for.

Mr. GORST asked whether the clause would cover such persons as Dockyard officers?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) replied that there would be no disqualification upon such persons.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General) one more question. The hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that while the occupier of a dwelling-house would have a vote in respect of his occupation, a lodger would equally have a vote; but the clause merely said that where a man himself occupied a house by virtue of service he should have a vote. This stipulation of rent paid by service only applied to the occupier, and not to the lodger who paid his lodging also by service. Unless some alteration was made, the lodger paying by service would not have the same privilege as the man who occupied the house.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he had had several communications from people in the country in support of this contention, and, no doubt, the Prime Minister had also had many, especially in the case of curates and ushers in schools, who were supplied with lodgings which were comprehended in their salaries. If these people could not be included in the franchise, it would be very hard upon them, for they were people who ought to be considered as specially entitled to vote, and they were not covered by any clause at present in the Bill. If some provision could be made for giving them a vote it would be an advantage.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD, who had given Notice that he would, at the end of the clause, propose to add these words—

"And, notwithstanding any statute to the contrary, no disability shall hereafter attach, with respect to voting, to any member of the Constabulary Forces of the United Kingdom,"

said, that, in conformity with the ruling of the Chairman, he should bring this proposal up subsequently in the form of a separate clause; but he should like to know at what stage of the Bill he could move the insertion of such a clause?

Mr. GLADSTONE: At the end of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. GORST asked whether the hon. and learned Attorney General would reply to the questions which had been put by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) and the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he had been anxious to get a definition of lodgers; but he did not think any real difficulty would arise. A person need not pay rent, if it could be shown that the rooms he occupied were above the yearly value of £10. If the lodger were in the house in a capacity which provided him with his rooms in return for his service, he would be entitled to vote. But he (the Attorney General) could not say how it would apply in the case of a person serving so as to entitle him to a lodging; but having a superior in the house who was not the owner, and who occupied a position above him. However, he would consider the matter before the Report, and see whether any difficulty would arise.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, he wished to know how the Bill would operate in such cases as that of the gatekeeper of the Constitution Hill Arch, where there were a principal park keeper and half-a-dozen other occupants above the annual value of £10? How many of them would be entitled to vote?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Only one—the principal keeper.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 4 (Restriction on fagot votes).

Mr. ELTON moved an Amendment to insert, after the word "voters," in line 1, page 2, the words, "and persons at the time of the passing of this Act entitled to be registered as voters," He said the object of the Amendment was simply to meet a case which had come within the range of his own experience of a person who was a rent-charger for a large amount, but who was in such a position that he could not get on to the Register in time for the current revision. He suggested whether such a person ought not to be taken into account and given the benefit of the Bill.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 1, after "voters," insert "and persons at the time of the passing of this Act entitled to be registered as voters."—(*Mr. Elton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he must ask for some explanation of the grounds on which the clause was proposed. The first paragraph of the sub-section (1.) appeared to him to be a most objectionable one. They had been informed, since the Bill was introduced, that persons who lived in mud cabins, and others who clearly paid a merely nominal consideration for their dwellings or holdings, were to have votes.

MR. GLADSTONE: I might suggest that the subject of the clause should not be discussed just now—it would arise after the Amendments are disposed of. I remember once being extremely anxious, when in charge of a Bill, to state the general subject of a clause and its bearing and effect, and to commence with its discussion; but I was put down by a Predecessor of yours, Sir, in the Chair, and ruled out of Order.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) thought that perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) would postpone any observations he might have to make until he (the Attorney General) had answered his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Elton). It was desired, in passing this Bill, to provide certain safeguards, and one of those safeguards was that where there was a sub-division only one person should be entitled to vote. But while imposing these safeguards, the Government had thought it right, following precedent, to preserve the right to vote claimed by all persons upon the Register. Now, his hon. and learned Friend wished them to go further, and not only to preserve the vested rights of those who were already on the Register, but to perpetuate the system of these rent-charge voters and sub-divided votes by saving the rights, not only of those who were on the Register, but of those who were at present entitled to go on the Register. He would put a case, which was not a suppositious case, but one well known to his hon. and learned Friend. In 40 years time a man of 61 might come forward and say—"Forty years ago I had a rent-charge sub-divided into 41 portions, in the Western Division of the county of Somerset; and having that I have come to claim that I may be put upon the Register, so that I may record my vote."

MR. ELTON: The voters in question would be on the Register long before the 40 years elapsed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Yes; but a forty-second share might not be. The man might say—"I neglected to register 40 years ago, when I should have been entitled to be put on; and although my neighbours are not now entitled to vote for sub-divided rent-charges, I claim my right now." Was it reasonable that such a case as that should be met? He really thought his hon. and learned Friend was asking too much from the generosity of the Committee.

MR. ELTON said, he merely put it forward as a suggestion. He was quite willing to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The next Amendment on the Paper, which stood in the name of Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON, proposed to insert, after the words "with reference to elections," in page 2, line 3, the following sub-section:—

"A man shall be entitled to vote in any county or borough election, where the place of polling is more than three miles from his residence, by voting paper, in the same way as votes may be recorded in an election for a University."

THE CHAIRMAN: This Amendment, which stands in the name of the hon. Member for North Shropshire, would not be in Order.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: On the point of Order, Sir, I must call your attention to the fact that this Amendment is to enable non-resident voters to vote, and that the clause itself is intended to restrict and to alter——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have stated that, in my opinion, the Amendment of the hon. Member has no reference to the clause.

Mr. M'LAREN, in rising to move the insertion of the following sub-section, after line 4, in page 2:—

> "(1.) A man shall not be entitled to be registered as a voter in more than one county or borough, and if, but for this sub-section, he would be entitled to be registered as a voter for more than one county or borough, he may elect for which county or borough he shall be registered as a voter,"

said, he should take the speech of the hon. and learned Attorney General as in favour of this Amendment. It was, no doubt, the intention of the Government to make a compromise on the question of fagot voters; but the compromise which they had adopted would not satisfy the Radical Party in this country.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Sir, I rise to Order. If my Amendment is out of Order, this Amendment, proposed by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren), which is the converse of it, must be out of Order too. I should like to have your ruling on the point.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stafford is perfectly in Order.

Mr. M'LAREN, continuing, said, that if the Bill passed in its present form, there could be no possible objection to a man having a vote in every county in England. Where the principle held good of giving a man voting power according to his wealth, as was done in many countries, there might be some reason for such a state of things; but, in this country, why should a man have votes in 20 counties, when he was only permitted to use one in each? A vote used to be a thing of considerable value, when there were contests in counties; and in Scotland one or two votes had been known to turn an election; but under this Bill, which would increase the electorate so tremendously, a vote would be of very small value; and when travelling was so expensive, a man who had a vote in more than one county would have not a privilege, but a burden. Under these circumstances, he had put his Amendment on the Paper. He did not know whether the Government would accept it; but it was, at all events, an Amendment in the direction of Liberalism, and, whatever might be its fate now, he could only say that those Liberals with whom he had been accustomed to work outside that House would never rest until legislation in that direction was accomplished.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 2, after line 4, to insert the following sub-section:—"(1.) A man shall not be entitled to be registered as a voter in more than one county or borough, and if, but for this sub-section, he would be entitled to be registered as a voter for more than one county or borough, he may elect for which county or borough he shall be registered as a voter."—*(Mr. M'Laren.)*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the course which we take with regard to this Amendment has no exclusive reference to the merits of the Amendment itself. We announced, at the time of the introduction of this Bill, that in making so grave a proposal as the enfranchisement of a number of our fellow-citizens estimated at 2,000,000, we deemed it a capital part of our duty so to adjust all the conditions of our proposition as to give it the best possible chance of passing into law. Now, among those conditions, we had to consider, first and foremost, the crowded state of the Business of the House, and the enormous facilities which that state of Business gives for opposition. We then, of course, had to consider that we should have to contend with the susceptibilities, on the one hand, of those who are jealous of all the privileges which property enjoys in this country, and who are anxious to extend them, and, on the other hand, with the desires of those who, like my hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) are anxious to push popular privileges and equality to the furthest point that can be reached. We came to the conclusion that under this state of facts, if we were in earnest in our desire to pass the Bill, we had but one course to take, to set ourselves steadily against all changes in the Bill in whatever direction they might be aimed to alter the basis of the measure. We do not pretend, Sir, to offer a perfect system of franchise—we find that to be entirely out of the reach of possibility. We might have laid an elaborate Bill upon the Table, dealing with each and all of these subjects in a multitude of divisions, and we might have been able to boast of a very scientific measure; but if we had done so we should have been betraying the interests intrusted to our charge. A simple, and even a rough method of dealing with the subject was a matter of absolute necessity under the conditions of the case if we were to have a practical end and aim in view. I am quite sure my hon. Friend will understand the spirit in which I make these observations. I do not wish in the least degree to limit the field of discussion for such propositions, and I do not find it necessary to intimate any opinion upon them myself. But my belief is that the security of property and the privileges of classes in this country do not really rest upon certain artificial advantages which they possess under the present structure of our laws, but upon the general good-will of the community. I have no bigoted or extreme sentiments on a proposition like this; but I put it to my hon. Friend with all respect that we, who are very anxious to pass this Bill, cannot afford to discuss these propositions. Perfection is not within our reach; if we go to work in that spirit we shall infallibly fail in it altogether. We have in view a great practical object—the meeting of the desires and necessities and providing for the interests of vast numbers of men who desire the franchise and who are qualified to enjoy it. We must go straight to our point, and decline to deviate either to the right or to the left for the purpose of introducing theoretical perfection. We do not want to prejudice discussion in any way whatever; but we earnestly beg the Committee, and especially those Members who, like my hon. Friend, are anxious for the Bill to pass, to waive their efforts for the present, and to reserve them for another opportunity, resting upon this—that all these are questions which anybody can raise when they like—I cannot undertake to shut the door against them for ever—and relying on it that if they are just and needful the enlargement of the franchise which we are now making will not tend to delay their adoption.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, there was one anomaly involved in the Amendment, and that was that, if the Amendment were passed, the only persons in the country who would be left in possession of dual votes would be the graduates of Universities, who were not mentioned in the Amendment at all. They would, of course, have a vote for their Universities, and they might also possess the franchise for some county or borough. He only mentioned this to show how crudely the Amendment had been drawn. He would not enter into any argument on the subject; but he trusted that the Amendment would not conciliate any support on either side of the House.

MR. DILLWYN said, he should have been anxious to see the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stafford adopted if it were not that he was still more anxious to see the Bill passed. What had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister carried great weight among hon. Members who sat below the Gangway; and he (Mr. Dillwyn) would suggest to his hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) that he should withdraw the Amendment.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he thought that if the people against whom the Amendment was aimed were not to be allowed to vote, they should be honestly disfranchised, and not be disfranchised dishonestly by a side-wind. The Bill should not be arranged so as to make it impossible for them to vote. If they ought to vote, they ought to enjoy every facility they had at present. But the fact was that the whole of the freeholders of England were to be swamped, and to lose their legitimate influence in Parliamentary elections, through the bringing into the electorate of enormous numbers of persons who had no interests whatever in common with the freeholders. That was the position to which this Bill would reduce the constituencies. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) said—"Get rid of all the freeholders who are non-resident altogether;" and that, no doubt, was a fair and honest view to take, and one which ought to be either combated or accepted. But the Prime Minister and the Government would not do either—he simply put all sorts of limitations and restrictions in the way of those who held this most ancient and honourable freehold franchise, which was by far the most independent of any. This, surely, was not a time to lessen the influence of the owners of property in the electorate. The works of such men as Mr. Henry George had already sown much seed, which would soon grow up; and he (Mr. Leighton) would have thought that this was a time when the influence of those who held this old freehold franchise should not be destroyed, but should be very much strengthened in the electorate. The answer which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to the Amendment was most unsatisfactory, especially as the right hon. Gentleman had told them that there would be plenty of opportunity in future years for re-opening this question. He (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had thought that this was to be a final settlement of the question for ever so long—indeed, the right hon. Gentleman had put himself forward as a sort of finality Minister—but now the right Gentleman said—"Oh, dear no; I do not approve of the Bill at all; it is anything but perfect; and I hope you will take the opportunity, as soon as it is passed, of trying to amend it." That was hardly a satisfactory position to be taken by the Prime Minister of England when bringing forward a Bill which was to enlarge the electorate of the whole country.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he cordially agreed with the intention of the Amendment. Nobody was more firmly persuaded than he was that our electoral system would not be thoroughly established until the principle of "one man, one vote," had been accepted. But, at the same time, he fully recognized what an enormous advantage this Bill would give as it stood. Therefore, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) would act upon the request of the Prime Minister, and leave the Bill as it was without any further alteration, and that the same principle would be acted upon with regard to all other Amendments. Those hon. Members who, like himself, hoped for still further improvements in the electoral system of the country would do well to wait for that further opportunity which the Prime Minister had spoken of, and which he (Mr. Morley) felt quite sure would come some day or other.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he wished, before the Amendment was withdrawn, to call attention to the marginal note attached to the clause, which was "restriction in fagot votes." He had a special purpose in this. In the first place, he wanted to know what was meant by "a fagot vote." The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) had moved an Amendment, providing that one man should only have one vote. The Prime Minister, on the introduction, or on the second reading of the Bill, gave them some of his own personal experiences of what the right hon. Gentleman was pleased to call "fagot votes" in Mid Lothian, and told them of a very ugly building which qualified 45 persons. Now, he (Lord George Hamilton) had seen a still uglier building—he had a photograph of it in a drawer at home—and that building qualified no less than 205 persons. The history of that building was somewhat peculiar, and made it quite an interesting matter to know why it was that the hon. Member for Stafford, who came from Mid Lothian, should propose this principle of "one man, one vote." When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was standing for Mid Lothian, a number of charges were brought against the Conservatives of creating fagot votes, and a rumour was circulated that a most distinguished Member of the Liberal Party had erected a huge tenement just outside the burgh of Edinburgh to qualify 205 voters who would support the right hon. Gentleman. He (Lord George Hamilton) went to visit that building, because he could not believe that the story was true, and he went late at night. He saw double gangs of men at work—working by night as well as by day to complete the building within the statutory period. It was obvious to everyone that the tenement, when put up, would be perfectly uninhabitable; but it was put up in order that 205 persons might have a claim at the next revision, and might attempt to come upon the register. The learned Gentleman who supported these claims was the brother of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren)—a Gentleman who, for services to the Liberal Party, of which this particular instance was an important item, had since been appointed a Judge. He (Lord George Hamilton) was not speaking from hearsay, for the whole of these transactions were before a Court of Law. It was one of the most extraordinary and one of the most fraudulent transactions that ever came out, because the men who qualified were men who had

had money advanced to them for the purpose of procuring the qualification, which money they were never asked to repay. The result was not encouraging; for everyone connected with the tenement had lost money or been ruined; and, now that the whole transaction was over, down came the brother of the Gentleman who originated this gigantic fagot-voting machine and proposed that hereafter the principle of the franchise should be that one man should only have one vote. He (Lord George Hamilton) must say that the whole thing appeared to him to be a piece of humbug. It was all very well for the Prime Minister, after that, to stand up in this House and talk of what he termed "the wholesale creation of fagot votes in Mid Lothian." What he (Lord George Hamilton) had stated was an incontrovertible fact, and anyone who disputed it need only consult the records of the Law Courts of Scotland, where it was all set forth.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he would endeavour to answer the question which the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) had put. The noble Lord had asked what constituted a fagot vote, and he gave the history of a building erected for living purposes. The persons living in that building would not constitute fagot voters; but they would each be entitled to vote. If, as the noble Lord said, the building was erected as a habitation for working men, who could only reside in one place, those men would be perfectly legitimate and proper voters, and not what were called fagot voters. But he would tell the noble Lord what would be a fagot vote. If a rich landowner put up a large building of which there were only nominal occupiers—if the persons in question, relatives or dependents, were never to live on the property, but to reside in other places, they would be fagot voters, because their votes would be colourably created for the purpose of opposing the candidature of some particular man or men. If a man were to put up a large building, with the *bonâ fide* object of providing habitation for working men, he would be doing that which was perfectly legal. He (the Attorney General) had no desire to enter into personal matters; but if the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) desired particular instances, he could give them.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Perhaps it would not be well to say more about fagot votes; but everyone must remember that the first great advocate for the creation of fagot votes was the late Mr. Cobden. In a celebrated speech of his he said—"The more men you can put on the Register the better." That was his object when he had one particular point to carry. No one could possibly have supposed for a moment that the petty dwellings which were put up in certain places were really not meant for fagot votes. I rise, however, to address myself to a different matter. I listened with surprise and a great deal of alarm to what fell from the Prime Minister. What said the Prime Minister on this particular Amendment; what had fallen from him on several occasions in the course of the present discussion? His first object was to pass this Bill as it is. Well, I know there are a great many hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who may have the same object; but, at the same time, due consideration ought to be paid to special points which are raised, especially such a one as this, which is of vital importance, and everybody knows it is—no one knows it better than the hon. Gentleman who has introduced it (Mr. M'Laren); because it is a question whether the old freeholders throughout the country are to be enfranchised or not. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) knows perfectly well that his object is to obtain a residential franchise, and nothing else. That is the point put before the Prime Minister, and that is the point which the hon. and learned Attorney General raised before the country two years ago. The hon. and learned Attorney General said he could not defend the dual vote anywhere. Although men might have property in several counties, he could not defend their having more than one vote in one place. That I took, being at that time in the country, the opportunity of saying was the disfranchisement of property. The hon. and learned Attorney General went further. He said—"We must apply this case to the Universities; and if the question was raised about the Universities, he did not see how he could defend the present system; he did not see how he could defend it any more than he could defend the right of freeholders." That I took, at the time, the opportunity of saying was the disfranchisement of learning, as well as the disfranchisement of property. No one can doubt that, at that time, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General was put forward as a pilot balloon to see how far the country would accept this question of Reform; and it was quite evident from the speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War that when he came to discuss the question in Lancashire he found that public opinion was so strong he dared not adopt the proposition of the hon. and learned Attorney General, and he put forward as his own opinion—which everyone knows perfectly well was his own opinion—that this question of disfranchising the county 40*s.* freeholder was one which the country would not accept; and ever since that speech of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) the question had disappeared. The point that I have to complain of is this—and the House has a right to complain of it—that when this very vital principle is raised by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren), the Prime Minister will not venture to express an opinion upon it. All the right hon. Gentleman says is—"This must be put off until a future period; pass this Bill, and then we will see whether we can pass that other principle or not." What the Government want to do is this—they want to pass this Bill. We had it from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, who some time ago said that the wisest course would be, in a matter of Reform, to pass the Franchise Bill, then to dissolve, and then have redistribution. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, but that is true; that was the expressed opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham. That I believe to be the view of the Government. That I believe to be the desire of the Government, and I believe that the Government, if they possibly can manage it, mean to pass this Bill; then to dissolve; then, if they are returned to power again, to bring in a Redistribution Bill. ["Question!"] The question I am raising is one of vital importance. The Prime Minister will not give his opinion upon any one of these points raised; and the natural result is that we look with suspicion upon this Bill; we look with suspicion upon the views of the Government with regard to this Bill.

Sir R. Assheton Cross

Mr. GLADSTONE: I cannot admire either the courtesy or the logic of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross). What is the specimen of the courtesy that he has given us? We have uniformly declared in this House, at every stage of this Bill, that our desire is to pass the Franchise Bill; that having passed the Franchise Bill we wish to deal with the subjects of redistribution and of registration, and having, in that way, completed, not according to a theoretical but a practical fashion, our plan of Parliamentary Reform, then to dissolve Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman, with the courtesy all his own, tells us he does not believe a word of what we say, and that he is convinced that our intention is directly the opposite of our words. Well, Sir, I say that is a kind of discourtesy, and a degree of discourtesy, very unusual in this House; very unusual in those who have held high Office under the Crown; a mode of proceeding I have never adopted towards him, or towards any of those who sit near him. I have always received with amplest credit the account that they gave of their own intentions. I leave the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman in the matter to be considered by himself, so far as he may deem it a worthy subject of reflection. Now, as to the right hon. Gentleman's logic, that is a hard case. One would suppose, to have listened to the tone of the right hon. Gentleman, that he was in some sharp conflict with the Government. Instead of that, what are we about? We are about opposing, and getting rid of a Motion of which he entirely disapproves, and which he declares, if I understand him rightly, would be vital to the established state of things in this country; and yet, when we are engaged in that, instead of encouraging our humble efforts, and patting us on the back, and dealing mildly with our defects, the right hon. Gentleman rises to his highest state, and fiercely denounces us as if we were in the sharpest conflict upon the most vital question. What is the complaint? The right hon. Gentleman's complaint is that I have declined to give an opinion upon the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. M'Laren). Yes, Sir; I have declined to give an opinion upon it, and I intend to go on declining to give an opinion upon Amendments which we do not wish to see made to the Bill. And what is the right hon. Gentleman's view? I suppose, in recommending to me a particular course, he intends, at any rate, not to suppose I am goose enough to adopt a course that I know to be fatal to the Bill; and the course he recommends to me is that upon all Motions which hon. Gentlemen put down, raising every imaginable question with respect to the franchise, and with respect to the vote and other matters, I must give my opinion upon them, although I do not wish to have them introduced into the Bill, and entreat the Committee not to discuss them. That is the logic, and that is the consistency of the right hon. Gentleman, and that, I presume, is the mode in which he would conduct a Bill through this House. The right hon. Gentleman has taken the opportunity of this debate to cast a slur upon the memory of Mr. Cobden. Mr. Cobden did not seek to multiply sham votes or non-resident votes; but he sought to afford easy means of enfranchisement to men whom he thought were competent to exercise the franchise, and of those he said—"The more you put on the Register the better." But this is not a question of putting more men on the Register. The reference I made to what was going on in Mid Lothian was quite a different matter; the reference I made was the making as few as possible do the work of many by investing them with unreal non-residential, and perfectly shadowy proprietary interests in every county where their votes can be made effective for the purpose of turning the scale between the different Parties. The distinction is palpable between the case in Mid Lothian, to which the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) referred, and the case I referred to before. The case I referred to before was the case of the creation of these sham proprietary votes, the case to which the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) referred was the case of an attempt to create a great number of real and true residential qualifications which were to be offered for sale to persons able and disposed to buy them. The noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) referred to precautions as to which I cannot follow him; I presume they are such precautions as would happen in every place where builders became bankrupt, or where any element of fraud was introduced into such transactions. Now, the proposal of my hon. Friend (Mr. M'Laren) bore no approach to this matter, because all the hon. Gentleman desires is the enfranchisement of the people upon the principle of their being supplied with property qualifications to exercise their vote in the county where they resided.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister is very sensitive as to anything that looks like a suspicion as to what the intentions of the Government may be with regard to future proceedings in the matter of the representation of the people. Now, what I wish to point out to the Committee, and to the right hon. Gentleman is this—that he himself, and his Government, have themselves to thank for the difficulties in which they are placed, and for the misrepresentations to which they have been exposed. What is our position? We are dealing with a subject of the utmost importance, involving very large interests, and involving a complete recast of the representative system of this country, and we are not informed of what the views of the Government are upon the whole subject; and whenever we come to any point which lies outside the four corners of the Bill, we are forbidden to discuss it, because we are told it belongs to another branch of the subject. We cannot help remembering that we have speeches made all over the country by Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman—important Members of the Government—calculated to cause a good deal of alarm; and if we are somewhat alarmed at the reticence which is observed upon matters of such importance, I must say it is really owing to the manner in which the Government have brought forward this measure.

MR. M'LAREN said, it was not his duty, and he was sure the Committee would not wish him, to follow the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) as to what constituted, or what did not constitute, a fagot vote. If he were entitled to do so, he would ask the noble Lord to explain how it was that many gentlemen, many noble Lords of the name of Hamilton, voted for a cabbage garden in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh? His (Mr. M'Laren's) Amendment that afternoon had, no doubt, been received with disfavour; but he was persuaded that the Prime Minister and many of his Colleagues would not seriously object if it were pressed to a Division. He might remark, after what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), that if he thought the withdrawal of this Amendment would advance this Bill, or insure its passing, he should be the first man to assent to the adoption of that course. He appealed to the Prime Minister and his Colleagues if, in their experience, it was not a fact that Bills which were adopted without any amendment, or attempt at amendment of any kind, did not very often meet with an untoward fate in "another place?" It seemed to him that, unless questions in which the Radical Party took an interest were pressed forward in the House, those questions never would come to an issue at all before Parliament and the country. In his opinion, a Bill had a very much better chance of passing if it was found that a large number of persons were anxious to make it stronger and more drastic; and, therefore, under the circumstances, he intended to press his Amendment to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 43; Noes 235: Majority 192.—(Div. List, No. 103.)

Mr. GLADSTONE: In accordance with the statement I made on Friday, and again to-day, I beg now to move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he wished to make an appeal to the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman would observe that the Bill had made very fair progress to-night. Nineteen Amendments had been disposed of, and two clauses would have been disposed of, but for the unfortunate contest which sprang up between the two Front Benches. But fair progress had been made, and he wished to ask the Prime Minister, in view of his statement to-day, that he intended to take this Bill again on the first Friday, at a Morning Sitting after the holidays, whether it would not be possible, without embarrassing the arrangements of the Government seriously, to take the Bill, not on the Friday, but on the Monday after the holidays? That would be very convenient to many hon. Members who were anxious to assist the Government in making progress.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would consider the question, and state the decision of the Government to-morrow.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL—[Bill 186.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: It is more than four weeks since, at the conclusion of my Financial Statement, I dealt briefly with the proposals of the Government in connection with the reduction of interest on the National Debt; and I think it would be well, so long a time having elapsed, if I were to repeat a part of the Statement I then made, and give some further details in explanation of the plan. I have had one advantage in so long a time having elapsed since the original suggestion of my plan; for I am aware of the criticisms which have been addressed to certain conditions of the measure, and I also have gained information as to the manner in which it has been received in the City, where, of course, public opinion is directed closely to questions of this kind. With these advantages I will now state as clearly as I can what are the outlines of my plan, and I will refer especially to one or two points of criticism which I can now deal with better than I could before. Now, what is the proposal? The amount of Three per Cent Stock at the present time is some £612,600,000, and we propose to commence the conversion of that Three per Cent Stock into Two and Three-quarter per Cent and Two and a-Half per Cent Stocks. At present we do not propose to apply towards that conversion any compulsory process whatever. I will explain later on what the compulsory powers are under the existing Statutes, and how possibly they will be at some future time applied; but at the present moment we only ask Parliament to authorize us to make offers to present holders of Stocks —which they may or may not accept at their own goodwill. As to the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, we propose to offer to the present holders of Three per Cent Stock £108 of that Stock. As to the Two and Three-quarter per Cent Stock we propose to offer them £102 of that Stock, so that all the holders of Three per Cent Stock will have the option as soon as practicable, after the Bill is passed, of receiving £102 of Two and Three-quarter per Cent Stock, or £108 of Two and a-Half Stock. I do not expect that so large an amount of the Two and Three-quarter per Cent Stock will be taken as of the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock. Some holders will doubtless prefer it. It will be agreeable to those who prefer a moderate reduction of interest with a moderate increase of principal to a larger increase of principal and a larger reduction of interest. But we believe that there will be a lesser application for the Two and Three-quarter per Cent than for the Two and a-Half per Cent, and that the main reduction will be made into the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, which, we hope, will be largely increased, and which, as I have said before, is already considered in the City the Stock of the future. The House will observe that in Clause 2 of the Bill we ask for power to carry out this operation, from time to time, within two years. Our object in doing that is that we do not expect that in the first instance anything like the whole of the present Three per Cent £600,000,000 will be converted into Two and a-Half or Three and Three-quarter per Cent Stock; but we ask Parliament to allow us to reserve to ourselves power to make after the first offer a second offer, when the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock will have obtained a certain magnitude, and when it will be possible to repeat the operation we propose now.

Mr. DIXON - HARTLAND: Does the scheme apply to all the three denominations of Three per Cent Stock?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I am going to explain that. We propose to make an offer to the holders of the three classes of Stock—Consols, New, and Reduced Three per Cents. The £600,000,000 includes all these three Stocks. If we should make a second offer, of course it will not be expected to be so good as the one we propose to make now. The effect of the first offer will, in my opinion, be to appreciate the Two and-Half per Cent Stock; and if we find that later on it is desirable to make a second optional offer to the remaining shareholders of Three per Cent Stock, they must not expect that that offer will be either at the rate of £108, or £102. [An hon. Member: Why not?] Because we expect the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock to be appreciated by the first operation. Then I ask the House and the public to take note that in addition to the conversion of £100 Three per Cent into £108 Two-and-a-Half per Cent—and I will deal especially with that offer—those who take advantage of the offer will have one advantage, which has already been recognized as a great boon by the present holders of Two-and-a-Half per Cents — namely, that payments of dividends will be quarterly instead of half-yearly. For instance, those whose dividends are now payable in July and January will have quarterly dividends payable in April and October, as well as the two other quarter days; and in that way they will have the advantage of half their dividends being anticipated by three months. The Reduced and New Three per Cents will obtain the same advantage. As to these, we propose that the dividend payable in October next shall be a whole half-year's dividend, and that in January next they shall take half the dividend falling due in the following April; and I will explain later on how that would operate with reference to the charges for dividends falling due in the first financial year. But, postponing that for a moment, I come to the general effect of the proposed conversion on the interest on the Debt. I said before that the exchange into Two-and-Three-quarters per Cent Stock will not be quite as advantageous to the public. But I also said that, from the information we had received, I did not expect that so many would exchange into Two-and-Three-quarters Stock as to Two-and-a-Half Stock; and, assuming for the moment that the whole conversion would ultimately be made into this Stock at no better terms than 108 for 100 Three per Cents, the gross saving of interest on the £600,000,000 will be £1,800,000 a-year. But I stated last month that we proposed to establish a Sinking Fund to pay off the nominal addition to the capital of the Debt; and, assuming that it is invested in Two and a-Half per Cents at par for 50 years, the Sinking Fund necessarily required will be £490,000 a-year, so that the net reduction of the annual interest on the Debt, setting aside this sum to pay off the additional nominal capital, will be £1,310,000 a-year, when the whole of the £600,000,000 had been converted. If Two and a-Half per Cents are purchased at under par for this Fund, the term will be proportionately less than 50 years. In my opinion, it is right to set aside that Sinking Fund of £490,000 a-year, and not let the taxpayer have the benefit of the entire £1,800,000 a-year; but I am bound to say that in both the conversions of modern times in which a larger amount of Stock of a lower denomination was given for a smaller amount of Stock of a higher denomination, a Sinking Fund was not insisted upon. In 1822 the Five per Cents were reduced to Four per Cents by giving to the owners of the Five per Cents £105 of the new Four per Cent Stock, but no Sinking Fund was established for the increased capital; and in the same way, when my right hon. Friend the present Prime Minister in 1853 proposed the conversion of certain Three per Cents into Two and a-Half per Cent Stock at £110 instead of the £108, which I now propose, he did not, at first, accompany that with any proposal for a Sinking Fund, although ultimately Five per Cent was so applied. But in my humble judgment it would be wise and prudent for Parliament, when increasing the nominal amount of Debt, to set aside at the same time a Sinking Fund; and, although the taxpayer gains less now, the operation is equitable for posterity. But let me point out that so great has been the recent reduction in the amount of the Funded Debt, that even if the whole of the £600,000,000 of Three per Cent Stock were converted into £648,000,000 of Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, the Debt will stand considerably below the amount last year. The amount which was written off the Funded Debt last year under the plan of Terminable Annuities which the House adopted was £72,000,000, so that this increase of £48,000,000 would still leave the nominal Funded Debt £24,000,000 less than it was in 1883. At this point, perhaps, it would be convenient that I should explain how we propose to deal with the quarterly payment arrangement, which in the first year would, to a certain extent, add to the amount required for paying the interest of the Debt. So far as Consols are concerned it will make no difference. Consols are payable in July and January, and the financial year ends on the last day of March. If you anticipate half the July dividend by a quarter's payment, it will be made on the 5th of April, and therefore in the same year as the July payment, and if you similarly anticipate half the January dividend, it will be made in October, also in the same financial year; so that by converting into quarterly interest Stocks, the interest of which is payable in January and July, you do not affect in any way the charge on the financial year. That, however, is not the case with respect to Stocks, the interest of which is payable in April and October, and five quarterly payments will be made in the first year. Now, the total amount of Reduced and New Three per Cents is about £267,000,000. What we propose in the 4th clause is, that if in any year there should be five quarterly payments of dividend, one of them should be converted into a 20 years' annuity, always, however, liable to be redeemed. Thus there will be no appreciable increase in the total charge for the year in consequence of the five quarterly payments occurring within it. Let me say a word or two as to the general policy of this measure. I think the House, as responsible for the interests of the taxpayer, will admit that as a matter of general policy it is advisable to take advantage of the reduction from time to time in the general rate of interest to reduce also the rate of interest on the public funds. That has always been the policy of Parliament. Whenever the funds have permanently risen above par, it has always been the policy of Parliament to endeavour to reduce the rates of interest. I may go back as far as 1749, when the Four per Cents were at a considerable premium, and when Mr. Pelham carried through Parliament his well-known measure for reducing the interest on the then Four per Cents, first to Three and a-Half per Cent, and afterwards to Three per Cent. In 1822 the Five per Cents were at a considerable premium, and the interest was reduced to Four per Cent. In 1830 these Four per Cents were at a premium, and were converted into Three and a-Half per Cents; and finally, in 1844, the Three and a-Half per Cents, which were also at a considerable premium, were reduced first to Three and a-Quarter per Cent, and then to Three per Cent—the three last operations—those of 1822, 1830, and 1844—making together the great operation under which what are now called New Three per Cents were created. I have seen remarks about the hardship to persons of small means—widows, and annuitants, and others, who believed that the Stocks they held would be perpetual, and who it was supposed were hardly used by the necessity of the interest on these Stocks being reduced, or the capital being paid in full. That sort of complaint is not new. It was vigorously, and I am glad to say unsuccessfully, urged more than 100 years ago. There is a very amusing description of the objections which were taken in the last century to the proposal to reduce the Four per Cents in Francis's well-known book, *Chronicles of the Stock Exchange.* The author of that work says—

> "Reasons which time has since repudiated, fallacies which almost repudiated themselves, evils which had no existence save in the brain of the prophet, were freely circulated. It was said that the landed gentry and the noble families of England would be ruined, and their children would become beggars; that the interest of younger sons' portions would not enable them to associate with the cooks and coachmen of their elder brothers; and that merchants, shopkeepers, and tradesmen would be ruined. The farmers would lose their farms; families would be undone; and such a deluge of distress be brought upon all ranks that the consequences would be fatal to the 'free and happy Constitution,' which has been so often ruined in the brains and in the prophecies of partizans."

Well, that was the style of argument with which Mr. Pelham and Sir John Barnard had to deal in the last century, and, fortunately, it did not prevail then, any more than I am confident that it will now. The real fact is that it is in the interest of the nation, with a view to the reduction of taxation, to maintain a steady reduction both of the principal and interest of Debt if the state of the Money Market justifies such operations being carried out. But, Sir, an attempt has been made to injure the proposal which I am now making by reducing Fundholders to refuse our offer on the ground that compulsion cannot take place. That is a very serious statement, and one which I feel it my duty to deal with very plainly. I freely admit that it was stated by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) in 1853 that the mass of Three per Cent Stock was so enormous as to exclude the possibility of any immediate extensive compulsory operation, and that any attempt to give notice to the entire holders of Three per Cents would have been then hazardous, if not impossible. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) referred, in the debate in 1853, to the aggregate amount of the Three per Cent Stocks—not Consols only, but the whole—and he recoiled from any attempt upon the mass of those Stocks, as I should do now, if the circumstances were the same as then. But the circumstances of that day were very different from the circumstances of the present day. At that period Consols were only at par, or about par, for a very short time. There existed no Two and a-Half per Cent Stocks; and when you looked outside the Government Stocks to the first-class Stocks of the country, you would have found that they stood at a very different price to what they stand at the present time. Railway Debentures at that time produced about 4 per cent. I think our modern Railway Debenture Stock did not exist; but ordinary Railway Debentures could be bought to produce 4 per cent. [An hon. MEMBER: More!] Well, I am on the safe side. Indian Railway Stocks, at fixed interest, hardly existed, and Municipal Stocks were at that time unknown. But at the present time matters are in a very different position. For four years Consols have been above par. My right hon. Friend's (Mr. Gladstone's) prophecy about the effect of the creation of the Two and a-Half per Cents upon the Minister who might have to propose some such plan as I am now proposing is so remarkable that I will venture to read it to the House. My right hon. Friend, speaking on the 5th of April, 1853, said—

> "Give us the Two and a-Half per Cent Public Stock, and then I say we shall have made solid ground where now is only morass; then we may tread where we could not before; and then we shall have a fixed point down to which we can work; and we shall have something by which to direct our operations in future with certainty, where now all is comparatively speculation and suspense."—(3 *Hansard*, [125] 833.)

I mentioned just now the rate at which Railway Companies borrowed at that time—namely, at 4 per cent, or something over. But the London and North-Western Company's Four per Cent Debenture Stock stands to-day at 121; the Great Western and North-Eastern Debenture Stocks stand, I think, at about the same price — that is to say, our Railway Companies at this moment are borrowing at 3¼ per cent. The Metropolitan Board of Works' Three per Cent Stock has been issued lately at par; and in the same way the great cities of the country, which some time ago could not have borrowed at less than 5 per cent, have now borrowed at 4 per cent and 3½ per cent, and I should not wonder if their fortunes followed those of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, to which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) with a prophetic eye referred, is now at 93, which is the equivalent of Three per Cent Stock, were that Stock irredeemable, at something over 111. Therefore the circumstances are entirely different from what they were then; and an operation, which my right hon. Friend looked forward to as impossible, on a great scale, without the existence of a Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, now comes within practical performance, and I hope the House will allow me to carry out the experiment. Still, as I said before, there remains the question—Does the power of compulsorily paying off these Stocks at par in manageable quantities really exist? It has been said that that power is an illusory one, and does not exist. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) has been so kind as to help me in this matter by writing letters to the newspapers, in which he has put forward the line which he intends to take. There is no question that in the Act of 1870, which consolidates all the existing Acts relating to the Public Debt, the words are very plain that Consols and Reduced Three per Cents can be paid off in parcels of not less than £500,000 at a time, with due notice, and under Acts to be passed by Parliament. As to that there can be no question. I know it has been said that this provision is only to be found in a note; but, as a matter of fact, it is the substance of the Schedule to the Act. But I will go a little further back, and I will explain to the House the origin of that condition of redemption and how it applies. I will not weary the House by references to the earliest Stocks created in the times of William III. and Queen Anne and George I. The great Acts consolidating the Public Debt commenced to have a clear shape about the year 1716, when Parliament was employed in bringing together the different funds which in a very confused manner had been raised to provide for the wars of William the Third's and Anne's time. The object was to bring them into a focus, as it were, so that they could be more satisfactorily dealt with, than if each one had to be dealt with separately. The custom during the Reigns of William III. and Queen Anne was this — a certain amount of money was borrowed, and a tax was imposed out of which the interest on the sum borrowed was to be paid, and the principal was to be paid off by degrees; but it almost invariably happened that the tax imposed for a short period was not sufficient first of all to pay the interest, and then to pay off the principal. By degrees, then, these small funds charged on particular taxes were brought together, and the taxes themselves were also brought into one account. In the year 1749 the first of two great operations was successfully carried out—namely, the bringing together of all the then existing Four per Cent loans, the interest of which was reduced, first to 3½ per cent, and then to 3 per cent. That operation was followed, in the year 1751, by the great Act passed by Mr. Pelham, which is the foundation of our Consols and Three per Cent Stock, and which is the law applicable at the present time to their interest and their redemption. The Act is 25 *Geo.* II., c. 27, passed at the end of 1751, or the beginning of 1752; and it is, I may say, the starting point of our modern finance in reference to the Public Debt. By the 1st clause of the Act, Consolidated Three per Cents, now called Consols, were formed by the consolidation of five or six different Three per Cent Funds. By the 11th section Reduced Three per Cents were formed in their present shape by the consolidation of a number of former Four and Three and a-Half per Cents. The 24th section of the Act, as I have said, provided for the manner of redemption of these two great Stocks; and I will read at length, if the House will forgive me, that section. It says—

> "At any time upon one year's notice, to be printed in *The London Gazette* and affixed upon the Royal Exchange in London, and upon repayment by Parliament, according to such notice of the said several and respective sums, or any part thereof, for which the said several and respective annuities, or any of them, shall be payable by payments not less than £500,000 at one time in such manner as shall be directed by any future Act or Acts of Parliament in that behalf; and also upon full payment of all arrearages of the same annuities; then, and not till then, so much of the said several and respective annuities as shall be attending on the said principal sums so paid off shall cease, determine, and be understood to be redeemed; and any vote or resolution of the House of Commons signified by the Speaker in writing to be inserted in the said *London Gazette* and affixed on the Royal Exchange in London, as aforesaid, shall be deemed and adjudged to be sufficient notice within the words and meaning of this Act."

Now, Sir, let me repeat that this clause of redemption is part of the very Act which created Consols and Reduced Three per Cents. There is in it nothing new, nothing obscure. Consols and Reduced Three per Cents owe their authority to the same Act which constitutes the method of paying them off, and on this subject there ought not to be a shadow of a doubt. Now, ever since 1716, the year which I explained to the House was the year when consolidation commenced, the practice was introduced of providing for repayment in sums of £500,000 a-year. This practice was applied to all loans that had been made. Some of those loans were loans from Companies, some were called general Stock, just as Consols were called afterwards. What is more, I have taken great pains to inquire whether that law of paying off in sums of £500,000 or £1,000,000 was ever put into operation, and I think I have found that it was put into operation in nine different years—in 1728, 1730, 1731, 1732, 1733, 1736, and 1749, and other years which I need not enumerate to the House. Now, this has been the law of Parliament ever since that time—ever since the time of the formation of Consols and Reduced Three per Cents. I need not refer to New Three per Cents, because they are of very modern construction, being derived from the Navy and Irish Five per Cent Stocks which were reduced in 1822. But as to the £428,000,000 of Consols and Reduced Three per Cents, there is no question whatever that they can be paid off at the rate of not less than £500,000 at a year's notice, unless the holders accept commutation, and they are absolutely subject to that condition by the same law which constitutes the Stock. I therefore say that it is cruel to the actual holders of Stock to delude them by the notion that they are not liable to be paid off when by law they are liable, and by such representations to induce them not to accept a good offer on the strength of the idea that Parliament has not the power to pay them off if it thinks fit. It is not for me at present to disclose the method of applying this compulsory power, although I shall, of course, be prepared to do so at the proper time. As I have said before, I have no desire to apply it. But the operation is a perfectly simple one which I contemplate, and which I shall not hesitate to propose to Parliament. By giving successive notices to the holders of manageable amounts, although a simultaneous extensive process would be perilous, the whole might be commuted within a reasonable time. What I now desire to point out to the House is that when Three per Cent Irredeemable Stock would be worth £111, it would be dereliction of duty on the part of a Minister not to propose to Parliament to deal with Redeemable Stock, and it is because we feel this very strongly that we ask the House to pass this Bill. I am sorry to have been obliged to detain the House at this late hour; but I believe I have placed before them a feasible and practicable plan for commencing the reduction of the interest upon the Debt, leaving intact the working of the Acts of 1876 and 1883, under which the Debt is paid off from year to year. We have been pressed to make large remissions of local burdens at the cost of the taxpayer, besides reductions of taxes and other increases of charge. This is, I think, then the time, considering the value of money, to propose a simple method for the reduction of the Debt expenditure. I hope that the arguments which were brought to bear against Mr. Pelham and Sir John Barnard on the reduction of the Debt carried out in the last century—130 years ago—will not have greater weight with the present House of Commons than they had with the

House in 1750. Sir, apologizing again for the length at which I have detained the House, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, he assured the House that it was with extreme pain that he found himself obliged to move the rejection of the Bill, which his right hon. Friend had asked the House to read a second time. He would give, as briefly as possible, the reasons which had been convincing to himself in this matter, and which, he trusted, would enable hon. Members to follow his advice. He would, in the first place, go back to the Financial Statement of the right hon. Gentleman, in which, after introducing what he rightly described as a very important measure, he said—

> "There are three classes of Three per Cents all liable to be redeemed, but under different conditions. (1.) Consols and Reduced under the Act of 1870 at one year's notice may be paid off in quarterly parcels of not less than £500,000."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I did not say quarterly.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD: Then he presumed the report was not quite accurate. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "Omitting the new Three per Cents which may be paid off without notice, but the whole at one time, the other Three per Cents—£400,000,000 in amount—can be paid off, however unwilling the holders, by giving a year's notice to the holders of manageable amounts, unless they accept the offer of a Stock of lower denomination. It must be remembered that the compulsory process lies behind these offers. and that it could without any practical difficulty be applied to Consols and the Reduced. . . . . But, I repeat, we are not desirous of applying compulsion, if the same end can be obtained by voluntary agreement."

Now he (Mr. Hubbard) said that with regard to Consols and Reduced the present possession of this compulsory power was an absolute illusion, and he would prove it. The right hon. Gentleman had cited the different Acts on which it was imagined that this supposed compulsion rested, and in the first instance he quoted the Act of 1870, and he read accurately from that Act the clause which stood there, and which had been translated from the Act of 1752; but here he must remark that the words which the Chancellor of the Exchequer read from the Schedule were entirely different from those which he read when he made his Financial Statement. However, he passed from the Act of 1870 to what had been properly described by the right hon. Gentleman as the birth Act of the Consolidated Fund—namely, the Act of 1752. That Act contained in its 24th clause the precise words which had been read by the right hon. Gentleman, and which were embodied in the Schedule appended to the Act of 1870. With the permission of the House, he would now read that Schedule, as he understood it, and in reference to the Stock to which it applied. The Act of 1752 began by reciting half-a-dozen minor Stocks, and said that they should constitute one Joint Stock of £8,200,000. It then went on to cite some other minor Stocks which were to form a Joint Stock of £17,570,000; and it was to those two combinations, each constituting "one Joint Stock of Annuities," that the 24th clause of the Act of 1752 applied. The Redemption Clause in the Act of 1870 ran thus—

> "At any time, at one year's notice in *The London Gazette* affixed on the Royal Exchange."

That was the first step; one year's notice was to be given with reference to one or the other or both of the Joint Stocks mentioned in the Act itself. The next condition was—

> "And on repayment by Parliament according to such notice of the several sums or any part thereof, for which such several Annuities or either of them are or is payable, of Stock not less than five hundred thousand pounds at one time and in the manner directed by any Act to be passed . . . . and also on payment of annuities."

That seemed to mean that notice must be given before either of those Stocks were dealt with, which then stood at £8,000,000 and £17,570,000. These had grown very largely; but the law applicable to them now was the same as it was formerly. The Act of 3 *Geo.* I. was much more explicit, and he would summarize to the House the meaning of it, being, of course, open to correction in respect of any false gloss which he might place upon it. It said, in reference to the Stocks under consideration—

> "Be it enacted, that if at any time or times notice be given . . . by authority of Parlia-

> ment for the redemption of the said Annuities by the Bank, and if payment after such notice be made by Parliament to the persons entitled to the said Annuities according to their interests in the said Annuities of any sum or sums not being less than five hundred thousand pounds to all the proprietors at a time in part of the respective principal sums for which the said Annuities be payable then so much of the said Annuities shall cease."

The notice was not to be given to any in particular, but to all the proprietors interested in the Stock dealt with by the Act. The interpretation which he could not help putting on the Redemption Clauses of the Acts of 1716, 1752, and 1870, was that notice must be given in respect of all Stock under notice of redemption. The Prime Minister, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1853, had taken this view. Having spoken of the large amount of Debt and the power of redemption, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "A circumstance, which may not be so generally within the notice of the Committee, but which is yet more fatal in its bearing on the position of the public debtor and the public creditor in this—that of those great Three per Cent Stocks, which I have stated in round numbers as amounting to £500,000,000, the whole are secured by a provision requiring a Parliamentary notice of 12 months' duration before any measure of reduction or commutation can be applied."—(3 *Hansard*, [125] 811-12.)

If that was not evidence of the truth of his proposition, he did not know what could be. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to say—

> "Therefore, I lay it down in the first instance that a large operation of a compulsory character is totally out of the question . . . . I come, then, to my plan, which consists of three portions. The first of these is certainly a minor portion of the scheme; and I will enter upon it first, in order to dispose of it and put it out of view. It is the liquidation of certain minor Stocks which appear in the Schedule of the National Debt. . . . (The whole amount of those Stocks is about £9,500,000 sterling.) It is proposed, with respect to them, that we should make what is called a compulsory operation—that is to say, that we shall offer certain alternatives to the holder of the Stock, and, at the same time, inform him that if he should not accept one or the other, he would, at the expiration of a proper period, be paid off. . . . I now come to the second and third. The second of these portions relates to the issue of Exchequer Bonds; and the third relates to a voluntary commutation dependent entirely on the option of the holders of the great Three per Cent Stocks."—(*Ibid.* 812-14-16.)

He did not think that anyone could doubt the meaning of these words with reference to the Three per Cent Consols and the Three per Cent Reduced, which together made a total of nearly £500,000,000. But there was stronger evidence even than that of the Prime Minister. Parliament supported the financial experiment of the right hon. Gentleman by passing a Bill for the redemption of Stock and for the creation of new Annuities in 1853. The very distinct title of that Act confined the main purpose of the measure, at all events, to those Stocks which were capable of being compulsorily redeemed. The first 12 clauses referred to the South Sea Stocks doomed to redemption. Clauses 13 to 16 dealt with Consols and Reduced. He asked the attention of the House to the way in which Parliament, in 1853, dealt with the Stocks which his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer now vainly thought he had under his thumb. The marginal note of the 13th section of the Act of that year said—

> "The proprietors of Consols or Reduced Three per Cent Stock may commute on the same terms as proprietors in the aforesaid Stocks."

Of course, they might do so. He was Governor of the Bank of England in 1853, and many persons asked him for his opinion to guide them in this matter; and to these he replied—"There are three classes of persons who will assent—Trustees, patriots, and idiots." Under the Prime Minister's scheme, out of the whole National Debt of £800,000,000, only £3,000,000 New Two and a-Half per Cent Stock was created in 1863, and of that £1,500,000 only came from Consols and Reduced; the rest came from Commutable Stock compulsorily disposed of. He did not suppose that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider himself to be more persuasive than his Predecessor; and if the Prime Minister did not succeed with an offer in 1853 of £110 Two and a-Half per Cent Stock in exchange for £100 of Three per Cent Consols, was his right hon. Friend likely to succeed now with an offer of £108? He thought not; particularly when it was found there was no compulsion at the back of his scheme. His right hon. Friend said he wanted the country to be with him; the way to secure that was to make a fair offer and tell the people the truth; if he possessed a coercive power, let him tell them where it was. He had shown, first, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had no power of compulsion in this matter; and, secondly, that the Prime Minister having failed to find acceptance for his offer in 1853, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a worse offer, would fail also. Now he came to the Bill itself; it was about the worst he had ever seen; its title was enough to shock one. It began thus—

> "A Bill for giving facilities for the conversion of Three per Cent Stock into Stock of a lower denomination."

Where would they find a Finance Minister who could congratulate himself upon such a step as this—a financial proposition not for the purpose of a loan, or for meeting a loan which was to be paid off, but converting Stocks with a given interest into Stocks with a lower interest by adding to their nominal amount? What did the Prime Minister say of such a scheme in 1853? The right hon. Gentleman said, when proposing the concurrent creation of a Two and a-Half per Cent Stock and of a Three and a-Half per Cent Stock—

> "The objection urged against this portion of the proposal is, that, in order to reduce the annual charge, we are going to increase the capital of the Debt. Now, let us carefully weigh this objection, for, in my opinion, it is an objection to which considerable force attaches. . . . It is proposed to secure for ever, and absolutely to posterity, a reduction of ½ per cent upon the annual charge. . . . But I wish the Committee to understand—and I urge this as a plea on behalf of my proposition—that I freely assent to the general doctrine that it is not desirable to increase the nominal capital of the Debt. . . . The great object which Her Majesty's Government had in view was to establish, if it be possible, an irredeemable public debt, which will bear a respectable price in the market, and bearing an interest of not more 2½ per cent. It is for that purpose we propose to include these among the various forms of the conversionable Three per Cent Stock." —(*Ibid.* 830-32.)

A motive was alleged in excuse for the combined conversions. The Two and a-Half per Cent Stock was to be an irredeemable Stock; to be representative of the credit of the country; it added nominally to the Debt; but it was to be irredeemable. The proposals of 1853 never aimed at what the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proposed. In the first place, the Bill required the Accountant of the Bank to create new Stock to such an amount as the National Debt Commissioners might deem sufficient for the purpose of exchange. As a matter of regularity, he had never before heard of Stock being created except for a specific purpose—either to replace Stock, or for some other purpose of State policy. But now he came to the point which was of more importance than phraseology. That was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid great stress on the gain to the country by this operation. He was quite aware that it was the duty of the Finance Minister, whenever he could fairly do so, to reduce the interest on the National Debt; but he must take care that he was not working on two different tacks, and that one did not prevent the other. Last year the Finance Minister was full of enthusiasm upon a plan for redeeming the Debt itself; and in that he followed—and he could not have done better than follow—the lines of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). There was a definite step proposed, and he followed it with great alacrity; but now he proposed to cut the ground from under his own feet. If the operation was to be carried out as the right hon. Gentleman proposed, what would be the result? This proposal contemplated a conversion of Consols into Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, to be redeemed at par at the end of 20 years. He would tell the House how the operation would work. They took £5,000,000 Consols and turned it into £5,400,000 of the Two and a-Half per Cent at £108. The interest on the Consols would be £115,000; and the interest on the Two and a-Half per Cents £135,000; therefore, there would be an annual saving of £15,000, and £15,000 improving for 20 years at 2½ per cent interest would amount to £407,000. But what about the Stock not redeemed, and which at a month's notice had to be redeemed at par. Having realized a gain of £407,000 for interest, they had now to pay for extra capital, £400,000, so that they had just made £7,000 profit by an operation ranging over 20 years and occupying £5,000,000. There was one part of the scheme upon which the Chancellor of the Exchequer plumed himself, and that was the quarterly dividends provided in his Bill. In 1870 the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Lowe) intimated to the Bank of England his desire to pay quarterly dividends; but the Bank sent in a remonstrance so strong that Mr. Lowe dropped his idea. They pointed out to him that the scheme was perfectly useless; that nobody could want it, because if anyone wished for a quarterly dividend he had only to vary his investment, and take the half dividends due in January and the half due in April. The effect of this proposal would be to double the labour of the Bank and increase the burden on the State, for they could not put a double duty on the Bank without some extra cost. Therefore, he thought that proposal ill-judged. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer maintained, with reference to the obvious disadvantage of increasing the nominal Debt, this idea—that they counteracted that by a system of Terminable Annuities. These Annuities were described as correcting the evil of an increased capital Debt; but they could not alter the nature of things. They were only a mode of paying a Debt in which the capital and interest were combined. That made no difference to the profit or loss of the operation; and the conclusion was therefore this—that if they had to redeem Three per Cent Stock or Consols, for every £1 of Annuities they had to pay £33; and if they had to redeem New Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, for every £1 of Annuities they had to pay £43 4*s*. That was the real and formidable result which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would derive from this operation. He was going to make the future reduction of the National Debt more burdensome; therefore, he could not think that that was an operation which deserved the approval and support of that House. He was, he knew, open to the remark that if, after all, the difference was so slight between what the Chancellor of the Exchequer won or lost, the difference to the community would be equally unimportant; and, therefore, he might be asked why he was so eager and anxious to protect the interests of the fundholders, and to guard them against accepting the offers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? The difference was this—the holder whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer punished now was the present holder; but the holder whom he would benefit was of a different generation altogether; in fact, it was a case of robbing the present generation for the sake of future generations. His clients were the present generation, and it was on behalf of the present generation of widows and orphans that he protested against an operation which despoiled them of a portion of their income, and years hence forced the Chancellor of the Exchequer to repay it all to other creditors of the State. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had remarked on the reception of this scheme in the City. He wished the right hon. Gentleman would tell the House who in the City had approved of it. He should like to hear their names. He could only say he knew some people in the City; he knew his 24 brother Directors of the Bank of England, and he could say with confidence that there was not one of them who did not consider this scheme as detestably bad. If the right hon. Gentleman had any countervailing authorities he should like to know where they were to be found. His brother Directors were absolutely adverse to this scheme; and, for his part, he was incredulous to a degree of there having been such a reception as to give it any standing or authority in that House.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) asked whether these gentlemen had authorized the right hon. Gentleman to state that they considered the Bill detestably bad?

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, they had not done so; but when the right hon. Gentleman quoted the approval of the City he brought his knowledge of the City to bear on the matter. He had no authority to speak for anyone but himself. If, then, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not found this support, how was it that he could submit this proposal to the House with such confidence? Some supporters of the scheme could always be found, and he noticed this eulogistic commendation with regard to the National Debt scheme in an important newspaper—

> "Few Budgets of recent years are likely to exceed in permanent interest for economists the statement of Mr. Childers last week. Each of its two main proposals is certain to be considered memorable. The definite proposal for the conversion of the Debt into Stock bearing a lower interest than 3 per cent marks an era in the economic and financial developments of the country which is full of fascination for the economists."

Full of fascination for the economist! Was that an authority upon which the House was to base its approval of the measure? Was it to be memorable that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had propounded this measure? The right hon. Gentleman had been memorable in reconstructing the Navy, and memorable while reorganizing the Army—he must be also memorable for his administration of the national finances. All he would say, further, was that he solemnly and earnestly protested against the further progress of this measure. He earnestly trusted that his right hon. Friend would forgive him if, in speaking on a matter upon which he felt strongly, he had said anything that might seem offensive. He would conclude by offering, on behalf of his constituents in the City, this entreaty—"Leave us alone." He begged to move the rejection of the Bill.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. J. G. Hubbard.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. W. Lowther.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I must say I am extremely sorry that the discussion of the principle of the Bill cannot be carried on somewhat longer. It would have been very much better if, before the Recess, we could have adopted the principle of the Bill, so that after the Recess we might have gone further into it in Committee without delay. But if it is the wish of the House not to proceed further now, of course it would be folly on my part to resist the Motion. But I ought to say that it is proposed to take the adjourned debate on Thursday week.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer consented to the adjournment of the debate, because it was really impossible at that hour (1 o'clock) to enter upon such a discussion as the Bill required. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that although his scheme was stated four weeks ago, and that although the Bill was brought in on the 2nd of May, it was not until the 17th of May that it reached their hands. There had been some loss of time, for which, of course, the House was not responsible. He did not hold the Government responsible for not bringing on the Bill as the first Order, yet it was a matter of such importance that it might well have deserved to have had that place. He remembered that in 1853 the scheme of the Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had priority given to it over everything else; and he (Sir Stafford Northcote) thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have given the House the same advantage on the present occasion. He did not think the House would be prepared to take the Bill on Thursday week. It was generally understood that Supply would be taken on the day they re-assembled after the Whitsun Holidays; indeed, on reflection, he found it had been absolutely agreed that Supply should be taken on Thursday week. There was just one other point he wished to mention now, and it was that the House could hardly be expected to proceed with the Bill unless it received some information as to the nature of the compulsory process of conversion. It was the duty of the Government to give the House that information at the earliest moment.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give them some assurance that the Bill would not be proceeded with on Thursday week. He hoped so, because there was a distinct engagement with the House to take Supply on that occasion. Some hon. Members—he for one—had made arrangements which would prevent their being in their places on Thursday week. They, of course, had relied on the engagement made by the Prime Minister. Nothing could be more destructive of the due despatch of Public Business than that a distinct engagement with the House should be broken.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would consult the Prime Minister upon the subject. He was not aware that an engagement of the kind mentioned had been made. [Mr. WARTON: Twice over.] He repeated, he was not aware of the engagement. His extreme anxiety that the Bill should be proceeded with as soon as possible was shared by a great many persons out of the House; but if there had been an engagement that Supply would be taken on the day the House re-assembled, he should not think of putting the Bill down for that day. He would confer with his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, and state at the meeting of the House to-morrow on what day the Bill would be taken.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

—o—

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I do not propose at this very late, or rather early hour (1.15), to detain the House more than a few minutes in asking leave to bring in this Bill. I shall assume that all who are interested in the Scottish Universities, and the legislation proposed for their improvement, are familiar with the Bill of last year; and therefore I shall only in a very few sentences point out the leading particulars in which the Bill I now ask leave to bring in differs from the Bill which was placed before the House last year. In the first place, it was felt in many quarters that the Bill of last year might possibly give too large powers to the Commissioners in dealing with the constitution of the Universities. I think that was a somewhat visionary fear, because it was not intended to confer upon those Commissioners the power of revolutionizing the constitution of the Universities, as some persons apprehended. As that was not intended, we have in the Bill of this year made such references to the Act of 1858, and such other provisions, as will make it clear that the powers of the Commissioners in dealing with the constitution of the Universities are powers to be exercised by way of amendment, and not in the manner in which it was feared in some quarters the powers conferred last year might be put in force. With regard to this point, I will only add that we have introduced into the measure of this year express provisions for the amendment of the constitution of the University Court in the manner recommended by the Commissioners. I do not enter into that, because those who are familiar with the Report of that Commission are no doubt aware of the way in which it recommended that the constitution of the Court ought to be amended, and that matter is dealt with by this Bill. But the point in which, perhaps, of all others the greatest interest is taken in Scotland with regard to this Bill is the matter of finance. It will be in the recollection of those who are familiar with the Bill of last year that the substantial provision which it contained on this subject was that a sum of £40,000 should be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund towards the purposes of the Universities, that sum having been calculated on the footing that it would give a clear addition of £10,000, or something more, to be allocated by the Commissioners among the four Universities of Scotland. Statistics were obtained and actuarial calculations made, from which it appeared that there was reason to fear that the sum which appeared in the Bill of last year would not leave £10,000, but something less, probably between £7,000 and £8,000 of addition, and it was very strongly maintained that that would not be sufficient to carry out the leading purposes of the Bill. But there was another criticism which was made upon the pecuniary provision of last year which had undoubtedly also very great validity, and it was this—that in ascertaining the aggregate sum which would have remained to the Universities sufficient regard had not been had to the possible increase of pensions which might arise from the disability of Professors; and it was pointed out that when that sum came to be allocated amongst the Universities, the Commissioners would not have had it in their power to appropriate any part of it to any permanent purpose, because of the liability to have the amount invaded by the demand for additional pensions. In the present Bill, all these points have been met in a way which I hope will prove generally satisfactory. Instead of the sum of £40,000 which entered into the Bill of last year, there is a sum of £43,000 proposed to be paid from the Consolidated Fund, which sum, even upon the most unfavourable calculation, we hope will leave £10,000 at least as an increased allowance to the

Universities. But, over and above all that, there is a provision for the case of pensions substantially to this effect—that the Commissioners shall, in case of each University, specify the amount of the pensions payable to retired Principals and Professors; and if, at any future time, the amount of pensions payable by a University to retired Principals and Professors, having vested interests, shall exceed the specified amount, such excess shall be paid by the Treasury out of public money, so that there will not now be any fear of the amount appropriated by the Commissioners to each University being encroached upon. I believe, without going into further details, that these two improvements in the present Bill will be generally welcomed, and will be regarded as a reasonable settlement of this question. There are just two other points in regard to which I desire to say a word by way of explanation, although there are various new matters which are dealt with by the Bill. In the Bill of last year there was a provision which, to state it shortly, amounted to this—that the Commissioners should have to exercise, amongst other powers, the power of providing that it should not be necessary for a Principal or Professor of the Theological Faculties to take what is commonly called a test. That provision was made the subject of a great deal of criticism from many and various quarters. Whilst there were some persons who were against any interference with the test, there were many others who, while they thought that there should not be a test confining the election of Professors to persons belonging to one religious communion, considered, on the other hand, that it would be unsafe to set the question entirely adrift, and to leave the Theological Chairs without any safeguard whatever with respect to the opinions of those who might be called upon to fill them. It was pointed out that that matter had not been gone into by the Royal Commission, and that it was not a very fitting subject to be discussed in Parliament, if there was any probability of a modification as distinguished from a total abolition of the test being proposed; and, accordingly, in lieu of the provision of the Bill of last year, there has been introduced into the Bill this year a clause to the following effect:—

> "That the Commissioners shall have power to call before them and examine the Principals and Professors of the various Theological Halls within and without the Universities, and such other witnesses as they think proper, with a view to ascertain whether any and what changes as to the subscription of tests by Principals, Professors, and other University officers, are necessary and expedient, and shall make a special Report to Her Majesty upon this subject."

By this provision we hope that this somewhat difficult question, upon which such infinite variety of opinion prevails, will be matured in a way that will lead to satisfactory legislation. Then there is another point as to which I should desire to say a word. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members from Scotland that in the Bill of last year there were certain provisons with respect to the University of St. Andrew's—in particular two, that the Commissioners should have power to determine that any one or more Faculties of that University should cease to exist; and, further, that they should have power to inquire and consider whether, in consequence of the want of sufficient endowments, it was any longer possible for the University to continue to perform its functions with advantage. Both of those provisions have been omitted from the present Bill. It was explained to those who were interested in St. Andrew's, on more occasions than one, why they came to be introduced, and it did appear that there had been some misapprehension as to the representations made on the part of that very ancient and famous University. Accordingly, these provisions are omitted from the Bill, and the only special provisions which the present Bill will contain, with respect to St. Andrew's, are two, which contemplate its continued and increasing usefulness, but have no regard to the possibility of its ceasing to exist. The first is that the Commissioners, besides the general powers conferred upon them with respect to other Universities, shall possess the power to make Ordinances for uniting the University and the Colleges into one corporate body under the name of the University of St. Andrews, under such conditions as may seem just, having due regard to vested interests; and the second is that the Commissioners shall have power to make arrangements for affiliating or uniting with the University other Colleges duly incorporated in other towns. Now, I believe these provisions will be not only satisfactory to the academic authorities of St. Andrew's, but also to the people of Scotland generally. There are various other provisions of a minor kind in the Bill; but I do not propose to go into them. I may, however, mention among them the proposed constitution of the University Committee of the Privy Council. Having made these observations to explain the main changes in the present Bill as compared with the Bill of last year, I would ask permission of the House to bring in the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better administration and endowment of the Universities of Scotland."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether the clauses as to the Botanic Gardens and University Buildings had undergone any change?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the clauses to which the hon. Gentleman referred had been the subject of great consideration, and they remained substantially as they were.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, that the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate with regard to the way in which it was proposed to deal with the declaration and test imposed on Professors had greatly disappointed him, and would be considered very unsatisfactory by many in Scotland. In the Bill of last year the Government had, by providing for the abolition of the declaration and test, made a distinct advance in the recognition of the principles of religious equality; and the announcement now made could not fail to be regarded as a decidedly retrograde step. The Government had apparently become afraid that they had last year conceded too much, and now sought to withdraw from the position they had taken up. He did not wish to oppose the Bill at this stage; but on the second reading the proposal he had referred to must be fully discussed, and he trusted the Lord Advocate would not take the second reading without giving time to all in Scotland interested in the measure to consider the provisions and to make their opinion on them known.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE, Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 230.]

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881,' and to provide facilities for the sale and purchase of land in Ireland."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 7) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," relating to the Tipperary Union, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND and Mr. TREVELYAN.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 4) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under "The Electric Lighting Act, 1882," relating to the Fulham District, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN and Mr. JOHN HOLMS.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 232.]

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to the Sewage Works of the Burgh of Kirkintilloch, *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 229.]

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Colonel COLTHURST, Bill to amend "The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883," *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel COLTHURST, Mr. FINDLATER, Mr. PARNELL, Mr. DEASY, Mr. SHEIL, and Mr. SHAW.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 231.]

STRENSALL COMMON BILL.

Select Committee *nominated*:—Sir ARTHUR HAYTER, Mr. HICKS, and Mr. CHEETHAM:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £6,519,368 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 27th May, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (113).

Committee—Report—Commons Regulation Provisional Order * (100).

Third Reading — Settled Land * (52), and *passed*.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess."

NAVY — ASSISTANT PAYMASTERS — ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS SYMONDS'S LETTER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that the period served by assistant paymasters of the Royal Navy prior to promotion to the rank of paymaster, which has increased from ten years in 1870 to fifteen and a-half years in 1884, and which appears likely to be further prolonged, is the result of the entry in past years of too large a number of these officers; whether, under the present rules for counting service, these officers are not only suffering by being kept an inordinate time in the junior rank, but that also the later and greater portion of such service is absolutely valueless for increase of full pay or retirement until eleven years have been served as paymasters; and whether he will cause the present rules to be inquired into with a view to ascertain if the alleged grievance, which affects engineers as well as assistant paymasters, can be remedied; also whether he will cause to be printed and laid on the Table Copies of the following Correspondence:—A letter from Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thos. M. Symonds, G.C.B., to the First Lord of the Admiralty, dated 29th April, 1884; a letter from the Secretary to the Admiralty in acknowledgment of the above, dated 2nd May; a letter from Sir Thos. Symonds to the Secretary to the Admiralty, dated 5th May, and a letter from the Secretary to the Admiralty acknowledging the above, dated 9th May? The noble Viscount said, he had moved for the letters referred to in his Question because they had been noticed in "another place;" and he hoped the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty would regard them, to a certain extent, as public property. Sir Thomas Symonds had distinguished himself in every department of the Naval Service, and any expression of opinion on his part deserved very serious consideration, although he might not always write in a manner which was agreeable to those in authority. He asked the noble Earl to lay the Correspondence on the Table in the interests of the Service and for the information of the general public.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The promotion of assistant paymasters is at the present time slower than I could wish on account of the number of entries having been too great many years ago. The Secretary to the Admiralty has stated, in "another place," that an inquiry will be made into what is termed the "eleven years' rule," with a view to its modification, if this can be done without any serious expenditure of public money. There is no objection to the production of Correspondence between Sir Thomas Symonds and the Admiralty. Sir Thomas Symonds is a very distinguished naval officer, and also a very keen critic of the Admiralty, not so much of the present Board as of their Predecessors, who, in his opinion, did not lay down a sufficient number of ships of war. Sir Thomas Symonds has lately made a comparison between the

French and English Naval Estimates, a work which was naturally not so congenial to him as commanding a fleet. He has since admitted that his comparison was erroneous; but there is an amicable difference of opinion between Sir Thomas Symonds and my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty as to the amount of the error. My hon. Friend put it at £1,300,000. Sir Thomas Symonds challenged him to substantiate this, and he did so. Sir Thomas Symonds has since written to *The Times* contending that the error is not £1,300,000, but £1,150,000. I hardly think it is worth while to push the matter further now that it has come so nearly to an agreement.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he wished to move for the Correspondence mentioned in the Question.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that he would produce the Correspondence if it were moved for.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—ROTHWELL SCHOOL BOARD.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in asking the Lord President for the reasons and justification for the order issued by the Education Office to the parish of Rothwell, Northamptonshire, to form a school board, notwithstanding a vote of a majority of fifty-five of the ratepayers against a school board, and the remonstrances to the Vice President of a deputation representing four-fifths of the rateable value; and in asking if this parish of Rothwell is the same parish as that in which the exhibition of a picture of Lord Beaconsfield in a national school had given rise to some complaints; and in moving for Correspondence, said, that this appeared to be a case of great injustice to the ratepayers of this parish, and the conduct of the Privy Council contrary to all precedent. He would read a letter to their Lordships to show how the matter stood. It was from the secretary of a large iron Mining Company in the parish to Mr. Mundella—

"I beg to inform you that your action in ordering a school board for the parish of Rothwell, Northamptonshire, in spite of the popular vote having been given decisively against it at a poll, has caused the utmost surprise and indignation in the parish. The majority of the householders consider that it is entirely against the spirit and intention of the Act to force a board unnecessarily upon them against their will, and that the offer of the managers of the National School to provide the extra accommodation required ought to have been accepted by the Education Department. We also think it hard that permanent and needless expense should be forced upon the parish when trade and agriculture have been so depressed for several years. They think it unusual and unfair for a Minister of the Crown to act suddenly upon the statements of a deputation representing only a small proportion of the rateable value of the parish, without making any inquiry on the spot. It all clearly shows that a Radical will not hesitate to abuse his power and override the will of the people when their vote happens to clash with some crotchet of his or the wishes of his Party. You stated to a deputation that waited upon you representing a large proportion of the rateable value that 'no other course was open to the Department.' I beg wholly to deny the truth of this assertion, as it was certainly within your power to accept the offer of the National School managers to provide the extra accommodation required owing to the closing of the British School."

He would like the reasons for issuing the order for this school board, and why the parish should be put to this large and unnecessary expense; and, whether the order had been given to please the Members for Northampton?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he had to apologize for the unavoidable absence of the Lord President, in whose absence he was afraid he could not answer the noble Lord. He would, however, endeavour to convey the noble Lord's arguments to his noble Friend; and no doubt he would, on the earliest occasion, reply to them.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: Will the noble Earl agree to the Motion for the Correspondence?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he could not do that.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—ELIGIBILITY OF MILITIA OFFICERS TO STAFF APPOINTMENTS.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether, under the Queen's Regulations, an officer holding Her Majesty's commission in the Militia is ineligible to hold a Staff appointment, either at home or abroad?

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, that officers in the Militia were not at present allowed to serve upon the Staffs of Governors of Colonies; but he might state that the question was now occupying the attention of his noble Friend the Secretary of State for War.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE —NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government can give any information relative to negotiations which it is understood are proceeding between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government as to Egyptian affairs; and whether it is the case that any arrangement has been made or promise given to withdraw Her Majesty's troops at a given time? said: My Lords, I am anxious, as many of your Lordships are, before we separate for the holidays, to ascertain somewhat more than we know upon a subject which embraces so much public attention just now. I am the more induced to take the step by the reports in circulation during the last few days—reports so serious that I sincerely trust Her Majesty's Government may be able to give an explicit negative to them. Without going too much into details, it is sufficient to premise that it is said—in fact, it is admitted—that Her Majesty's Government are engaged in negotiations with the Government of France; that such negotiations are going on no one doubts or denies. It is said that a proposal which has been made by Her Majesty's Government for the holding of a Conference upon a purely financial basis has been met by contentions on the part of the French Government for some form or other introducing the principle of International Control in the affairs of Egypt. It is said that both Governments have arrived or are arriving at this compromise—that an international audit, as it is termed, with regard to the Law of Liquidation shall be accepted; and I must argue on that hypothesis. This has been stated very distinctly, and if the Government can deny it no one will be better pleased than I; but I must point out to the House that an audit, a financial audit, differs, as far as I can see, in no respect from a financial control, and a financial control opens the door to the whole administrative control. He who holds the purse-strings controls the policy of the country, and it is absolutely impossible either to discuss finance or the control of finance without touching every one of these questions in which British predominance in Egypt is involved. A distinction between a financial audit and a financial control seems, therefore, to me to be flimsy and practically nominal, and I can conceive that no one will be misled by it. It may be said that the audit may be purely an arithmetical one; but I cannot suppose that the French Government will agree with a purely arithmetical audit, or will accept it. Whether the officials who sit round the Table are called Auditors or Controllers of Egyptian Finance, seems to me a matter of extremely little importance; but every person who is familiar with this subject entertains but one opinion—they all regret the introduction of the International Control in Egypt, whether by this name or under any pretence whatever. It means, of course, the subordinating all those questions which we consider British interests, such as the Canal, the high road to India—it means subordinating them all to a certain number of persons appointed by the Great Powers of Europe; and, for my own part, I can conceive of nothing so dangerous to the whole interests of Europe as bringing together representatives from the different Powers to discuss control of Egyptian affairs. If you really wish to introduce complications among all the Powers of Europe you cannot do so more effectually. If this be true, what am I to say with regard to the language of the Prime Minister? Mr. Gladstone, a few days ago, assured the country that he had no idea whatever of reviving the Dual Control; and if, while those words were being said, he was entering into negotiations for what has been called the Multiple Control, I ask whether there could be the slightest logical distinction drawn between the two, and whether the Multiple Control is not the larger which contains the smaller? Mr. Gladstone said, two or three days ago, that the first object to obtain was what he called a perfectly mutual co-operation with France; and he added when once this was achieved he should be perfectly willing to lay all the proceedings before Parliament. I assume, therefore, because those proceedings have not been laid before Parliament, that perfect mutual co-operation has not yet been accomplished. I am inclined to hope that it has not been accomplished, because there is no mystery as to the objects of France, and the objects of France are not likely to satisfy us. There is another matter quite as serious, if not more serious. It is stated that an Agreement at this moment is being discussed for the definite withdrawal of the English troops from Egypt at a given period. Some statements fix that period at five years, and others at two years. I must take the liberty of saying that no proposals whatever, no promise, and no undertaking to withdraw troops from Egypt at a given period seems to me to be anything but full of objections. I do not care whether the periods be two, three, or five years. Who can foresee what the position of this country or Europe may be five years hence? God forbid that it should happen, but you may have a mutiny in India. Are you, then, to sacrifice your position? You may be at war—Are you to vacate your position in Egypt? You may be on the edge of war, your political relations may be strained, and are you at such a moment to bind yourselves with regard to the future withdrawal of troops from Egypt? It is a proposal so mad that I cannot conceive Her Majesty's Government agreeing to it. Again, if you name a period within which you will withdraw your troops you inevitably destroy the sense of security in Egypt and the sense of confidence in you which alone can give good government in the country. Those who have only a short tenure of office cannot secure that confidence. An old man may inspire some respect because no one knows at what time he may die, but a man under sentence of death can inspire no reverence at all; therefore, such an arrangement as this which has been proposed by Her Majesty's Government seems to me to be fraught with all possible mischief. What is to be the position in this case of the British Army? If it is to be an Army of Occupation for two or three years, is it to be subject to the International Board of Control? Those who hold the purse strings hold the key of the position, and I cannot help asking, if this is to be so, is it for this we have borne the burden and heat of the day in Egypt? Was it for this we bombarded Alexandria, that we incurred blood-guiltiness in Egypt, that we allowed the massacre to take place at Sinkat, and shed the blood of 7,000 Arabs? The position would be as painful as it would be ridiculous. For two years we have been in Egypt, and during the whole of that time confusion has become worse confounded. Everybody tells some story of the discontent among the population, of the difficulty of collecting the taxes of the country, and dreads the still greater dangers in the distance. But it is an endless picture. The Government has been warned over and over again, alike by friends and foes. I know of no similar case. We are on the edge of a very great disaster, and I, therefore, once more appeal to Her Majesty's Government, and I urge upon them not to ratify this ill-omened Agreement, at all events until Parliament has had an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, without noticing the language in which the noble Earl has addressed your Lordships, I will, in answering the noble Earl, recapitulate very shortly what the House is already aware of—namely, that it was found absolutely necessary that an arrangement in regard to the finances of Egypt should take place; that in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government it was needful to make alterations in the Law of Liquidation; and that with that object we addressed a Circular to the Powers proposing a Conference to deal with that subject. Your Lordships are aware of the terms of the Circular which we addressed to the Powers on that subject and to which we still adhere. Your Lordships are aware also that four of the Powers have agreed to the Conference; and France agreed to it in principle, but desired to have an exchange of views on the position of Egypt, which we very readily agreed to make. Since that time communications have gone on between the French Government and Her Majesty's Government, and they are still going on in a very friendly way. It will be impossible for me at this moment to say what will be the final result. As soon as we come to that result we shall communicate with the other Powers, and as soon as that is done we shall communicate the Anglo-French Agreement to both Houses of Parliament; and I may add that we shall do so previous to the meeting of the Conference

Earl CAIRNS: My Lords, the position of Her Majesty's Government is somewhat singular. The noble Earl says that Her Majesty's Government thought it was necessary to make an alteration in the Law of Liquidation in Egypt, and that for that purpose it was desirable, and perhaps necessary, to obtain the assent of the Powers. A proposal was made for a Conference for that purpose. Parliament was taken into the confidence of the Government on that subject, and the Government said to Parliament and the public—"We have invited the Powers to come to the Conference, and in order that you may know what is going to happen we will lay all the Papers connected with the Conference on the Table." Those Papers were laid on the Table; and when a suggestion was made here and "elsewhere" that the Conference might lead to the discussion of other matters we were told by Her Majesty's Government to look at the language which they had used, which was clear and precise, and was limited to the one question of finance connected with the Law of Liquidation; and we were further told that if any Power went beyond that it would be tantamount to a new Conference, and that as Parliament had been consulted with regard to the first Conference, so if there were anything in the shape of a new Conference, of course Parliament would hear of it before any step was taken. Three or four days ago for the first time Parliament and the public heard to their extreme surprise that we were in a fools's paradise on the subject of the Conference, and that a negotiation was going on with one of the Powers which negotiation might come to a conclusion—and, we hear now, will come to a conclusion—before the Conference will be entered upon. And we are told now that if a conclusion is come to between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France the result of that conclusion will be submitted to the other Powers and then Parliament will be informed. Informed of what? That the matter has been already concluded. Some Treaties require ratification, and a certain time is given to Parliament occasionally to become acquainted with the contents, and to express its opinion before the ratification of the Treaty. We are told now, however, that what is going on between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France will not necessarily result in a Treaty, but that something will be concluded by means of despatches and by correspondence, so that it will be too late for Parliament to express any opinion when Parliament is informed that the whole matter has been settled between England and France. We are about to adjourn for nearly three weeks, and when we meet again, perhaps, Parliament will be informed that the whole matter is over, that it is concluded, and that it is too late to take any steps or to express any opinion. The Government will, of course, offer their responsibility to Parliament, but what does Parliament care about that? Parliament wants to know what is to be done in regard to Egypt. My noble Friend asks this question of the noble Earl—"Is it the case, or is it not, that there is no question about removing Her Majesty's troops from Egypt in a limited time?" If there is no such communication going on the noble Earl has only to say so; and if he does not say so we are entitled to assume that it is going on, and that that is the question which is now being negotiated between the Government of Her Majesty and the Government of France. I protest against the House being thus set at defiance by the Government in a matter of this kind.

Earl STANHOPE said, he was surprised that no Member of the Government had risen to answer the noble and learned Earl. He felt clearly that it was the duty of the Government to say plainly "Aye" or "No" to the Question whether they had made a secret Treaty with France, or had agreed in any way to a fixed period for the withdrawal of the troops from Egypt? He protested in the strongest way possible against the Government concluding such matters without consulting Parliament. When they met after the Recess, they might find that the matter had been settled beyond a chance of revocation. He, therefore, begged to give Notice that if, as he anticipated, no answer were given, he should repeat a similar Question on the 17th June, when their Lordships reassembled.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, Her Majesty's Government are accustomed to carry on their Business in the other House of Parliament by the practice of imposing absolute silence on their own supporters. That is a very convenient way of shortening the proceedings, and of avoiding the necessity of answering disagreeable Questions. It has been so successful in the other House that the example is contagious, and they propose now to dispose of all disagreeable Questions in this House at a moment of grave crisis, when engagements of a most serious character are about to be concluded, by maintaining an absolute silence in the face of speeches like that of my noble Friend behind me. I cannot force them to speak ; I have no means of putting them upon the rack ; but, at all events, I cannot pass by such an occasion, which may be critical and historical in the destinies of this country, without entering my earnest protest against the course which Her Majesty's Government are pursuing. I do not wish to offer any limitation to the power of the Crown to deal with foreign affairs; but I think there is one practical limit to it which is imposed alike by common sense, and by a feeling for the patriotic instincts of the people. Any engagement which tends to diminish the power of this country, which tends to impose upon it the necessity of humiliating surrender, which forces us to retreat from territories we now occupy, and to sacrifice grave British interests, for which we have made no common efforts—any such engagement ought not to be finally concluded until this and the other House of Parliament have had some opportunity of expressing their opinion. My Lords, I repeat that from the silence of Her Majesty's Government we must conclude that the rumours which have been rife during the last two or three days have only too much foundation in fact, and that the Government are contemplating an escape from all the difficulties which surround them by yielding up Egypt to the anarchy and confusion of a Multiple Control, and that they do intend to neutralize all the efforts and all the sacrifices we have made by determining a fixed period for the withdrawal of our troops from that country, and that by the same step they are making it impossible that any of those who have yet a remaining belief in our power, or a lingering desire to cultivate our good will, should give effect to those sympathies; and that they are making it an absolute necessity for every weak Power, for all the tribes throughout Egypt and the Soudan, for all those who have linked with the name of England and the hope of English interference any prospect of advancement or civilization in that country, to provide for the coming evil, to make peace with the coming man, and to abandon the hope of British interference and sympathy. This is a very grave decision of Her Majesty's Government. It is a decision which will leave a stain on the character and the position of England for many a long year to come. It is a decision that will be felt at every turn of our policy and in every representation we have to make, and in every engagement that we have to undertake it will smite us with weakness equal to a great defeat. It will be a withdrawal of strength equal to many armed battalions. And yet this resolution, so deadly in its effect, is apparently to be taken without giving either to this House or to the Representatives of the people in the other House any opportunity of expressing an opinion on a course of action so vital to the destinies of England. We on our side have nothing left to us but to protest; but I, at all events, hope that this long period of Recess will not be agreed to, and that we shall meet at an early day in order that we may, if time and opportunity shall be allowed to us, and if matters should assume the aspect to which our worst apprehensions point, at least resort to the last power of the Constitution, and present an Address to the Queen, praying Her Majesty that she will not consent to such an arrangement.

EARL GRANVILLE : My Lords, with regard to the minor question, your Lordships would imagine, from the speech of the noble Marquess opposite, that I have surreptitiously proposed a long holiday without consultation with him, whereas it was with his entire approval that I made the Motion to which he now objects.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : That is quite true.

EARL GRANVILLE : If, however, the noble Lord wishes that the Holidays shall be shortened, I am perfectly prepared to fix an earlier day for our reassembling in accordance with his desire.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : I should prefer that the House should reassemble on Monday week.

EARL GRANVILLE: Well, let it be on Monday week. I have listened with some astonishment at the courage of the noble Marquess in defining the amount of openness necessary on the part of the Government in giving information to Parliament before entering into important negotiations with foreign countries. Your Lordships all know something of what the noble Marquess did in that matter, and it is just possible that I may know still more. The noble and learned Earl and the noble Marquess have accused us of wishing to shirk Parliamentary discussion; but the very object that we have had in promising to lay before the House what has passed between the Powers before going into the Conference is to give Parliament the fullest opportunity of discussing the whole question.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether a proper pedestal would be ready to receive the Duke of Wellington's statue on its arrival at Aldershot, and what sum of money had been subscribed for the purpose? said, the question as to the removal of the statue had never been decided by the House of Commons, who had merely voted the sum of £6,000 for the execution of a new statue by Mr. Boehm, and had refused to reduce that sum by £2,000.

EARL GRANVILLE: Although I cannot agree with the noble Duke upon this subject, I am bound to say that he made the other evening a most admirable speech in reference to it, presenting very clearly all the arguments that could be urged in support of his view of the question. I am bound to say, however, that the noble Duke's objection to the removal of the statue is now too late, the site having been already determined upon and the pedestal being in course of preparation. Care will be taken that, in the event of the pedestal not being ready by the time the statue reaches Aldershot, the latter will be carefully housed until the pedestal is prepared for its reception. I am not able to state exactly the amount that has been subscribed, but I believe that it will be sufficient to meet all demands.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, I do not wonder that the noble Duke has put another Question on this subject. The House will be glad to see that he is faithful to the opinions he has previously declared, and which have made so much impression on your Lordships. I rose to make in a few words, however useless it may be, a last remonstrance with Her Majesty's Government. If they remove the statue altogether, they will do so in defiance of one House, and without the sanction of the other. The vote which took place here on the 24th of March may be ambiguous, but there is no ambiguity in that of last Tuesday's. It has but one interpretation. No vote of the House of Commons authorizes the removal. The noble Duke, however, has explained that part of the subject. Money has been granted for a purpose to which the removal is not in any way essential. What I wish more specially to touch on—as it in some degree escapes us—is that the Government, instead of acting on a decision of their own, have gone through a series of concessions, and may go through one more concession with advantage. In deference to others, who agitated about blocks, they encroached on the Green Park and Constitution Hill. In deference to others, they disjoined the statue from the Arch, when their own scheme—as they have since avowed it—was to move them both together. In deference to others, they contemplated a site opposite the Horse Guards. In deference to others, they were ready with their melting-pot. In deference to others, they lighted upon Aldershot. It would be quite in accordance with this principle to retain the statue where it is—at least, in London—in deference to a larger, a more enlightened and authoritative body than any which has formerly controlled them. It is true they have a decapitated figure in their hands which well betrays the halting counsels they have followed. It is a compromise. But it will be easier to bring the head back to the trunk, than move the trunk by waggons to the country. This compromise has naturally led to some resentment in the capital. Men, without being pedants, are driven back to the Peloponnesian War and the well known mutilation of the Hermæ for a parallel. There is a possible defence. The Government have frequently been told, on grounds which I think irresistible, that what they need themselves is the removal of their head without the serious disturbance of their body. They have resolved that such a process, at least, deserves experiment on a bronze figure.

LORD DENMAN asked the Government whether they could inform the House "what is the present domicile of the head of the colossal statue of the late Duke of Wellington?" describing the decapitated condition in which the statue had been left, and protesting against its removal.

LORD THURLOW: I can assure the noble Lord that the head is carefully preserved within the enclosure which at present surrounds the statue.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he would endeavour to arrange that pending the negotiations with Germany on the subject of Angra Pequena no national flag should be hoisted or other act of sovereignty exercised or possession be taken by either Power in the bay aforesaid, or in the adjacent territory? said, he was the more strongly urged to put this Question because within the last few days a German newspaper had used very strong language on the subject, which showed what a hold the matter had taken on the public mind of Germany. He should be glad to know whether it was true, as stated in the newspapers to-day, that possession had been formally taken by the German Government, and that protection had been promised while the negotiations were pending to all German commercial residents? It did appear to him extraordinary that while negotiations were pending a document of so authoritative a nature as that bearing the signature of Prince Bismarck should have been issued.

EARL GRANVILLE: I fear I cannot give any explanation of what appears in the newspapers; but from the official accounts that we have received there is no reason to think that any national flag is going to be hoisted on the spot. Negotiations are still going on, and any delay that has arisen has been on our side, because my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary was in communication on the subject with the Cape Government when that Government was changed, in consequence of which change of Government I am afraid their reply cannot be received for another 10 days. It is not necessary, I think, that I should take any other steps until that communication has been received.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, (1) Whether Sir Evelyn Baring was still of opinion that the sending of Zebehr Pasha to the Soudan would be desirable; (2) whether there was any truth in the statement that appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on Saturday, that Turkish troops were about to be employed in the Soudan? said, the whole conduct of the Government in relation to General Gordon threw a light on some of the worst features of Party Government. On Friday night, when a noble Lord called attention to the necessity of taking some speedy steps for relieving General Gordon and rescuing the garrisons in the Soudan, the Foreign Minister, in reply, stated that General Gordon could not possibly claim any military help from us for the evacuation of the Soudan because he went there on the clear understanding that nothing of the kind was intended. From the tone taken by his noble Friend and Ministers on this question one would imagine that they had the public opinion of the world and of this country at their back. Anyone who read the newspapers knew that the world at large were looking with amazement at General Gordon's position in relation to Her Majesty's Government, and what all Englishmen thought he need not say. The other day a foreign Minister told him, that owing to this business England was spoken of very badly all over the Continent, and his retort was that she could not be spoken of worse than she was spoken of by Englishmen themselves. As regarded home opinions, his noble Friend knew that very lately Her Majesty's Government escaped censure, he might say, only by the skin of their teeth, and that it took all the power of the screw of which the Caucus was capable to procure them a majority of 28 out of a nominal majority of 130. Was not General Gordon justified in expecting support from Her Majesty's Government? What were the circumstances under which he went? He went a lone man, a forlorn hope, with his life in his hands, to bring order out of the chaos which the Government had created, and to rescue the garrisons. Although he was not to get military assistance, at least his requests and what he considered the best means of effecting the objects for which he went should have been attended to. But the fact was that those requests had been refused, and General Gordon had been controlled and thwarted in every way before he was finally abandoned, and before he gave utterance to that exceeding bitter cry about the dishonour which would attach to the British Government for the sacrifice of the garrisons. When he announced his intention of going to the Mahdi, that was forbidden by Her Majesty's Government. He ought not to have been prevented, for he was on the spot and ought to have known best what should be done. He proposed first, that Zebehr should not be allowed to remain at Cairo; but that was not assented to. His next request was, that Zebehr should be sent to him to the Soudan. That request was refused, though it was strongly backed by Sir Evelyn Baring. Why was it refused? Was it because the Government believed that Zebehr was powerless to do any good? No; the reason was, because Her Majesty's Government were afraid of two things—first, the Anti-Slavery Society; and, secondly, that the slavery question would be taken up against them by the Opposition. He was bound to say, in all candour, that there were great signs of such a proceeding on the part of the Opposition, and he, at the time, entered his protest against it in that House. But whatever the Anti-Slavery Society or the Opposition might say or do, it was the duty of the Government to stand by General Gordon. Nothing could have been stronger than the opinion which Sir Evelyn Baring held as to the advantage of sending Zebehr to the Soudan, as was shown by the latest records they had in the Blue Books. As late as the 14th of April, in a despatch to Earl Granville, Sir Evelyn Baring said—

> "If any better solution is found I should be the first to admit that I was in error in recommending that Zebehr should be sent to the Soudan."

But had a better solution been found? He was inclined to believe, from all he heard, that Sir Evelyn Baring still held the opinion that it was very desirable that Zebehr should have been sent to the Soudan, and that, if he had been sent, we should not now be in the miserable position in which we found ourselves. With regard to the sending of British troops to the Soudan, no one desired that such a step should be taken at this time of the year; but what was the cause of the difficulty? It might be summed up in the two words "too late." Those two little monosyllables signified a good deal. The Government had been too late in every proceeding excepting one—the bombardment of Alexandria; though, no doubt the Government had been anxious about the Suez Canal. As regarded his second Question, he would ask why had not the Government employed Turkish troops in the Soudan? Was it because the Prime Minister did not wish to crush the Mahdi? or "Could it be," as asked by a Scotch lady, who had offered to give £1,000 towards the relief of General Gordon, "that General Gordon was to be allowed to perish because of Mr. Gladstone's hatred to the Turks?" He (the Earl of Wemyss) trusted that the Government were going to send Turkish troops to the Soudan, as they would speedily relieve General Gordon and the garrison at Khartoum. They could be better employed in that country than English troops. No doubt, an English force would be perfectly ready to go if necessary; but if the Government sent out English soldiers bloodshed would be the result, and they did not desire to see sorrow again brought to English homes. If, in consequence of another expedition, sorrow was again introduced into British homes, it would unquestionably be due to the action and inaction of the Government. The policy of Her Majesty's Government had, so far as it had gone, brought chaos into the Soudan, and if they were to judge of what had taken place it was likely to end in the abandonment of English interests; the grand consummation of all the bloodshed which had taken place in Egypt appeared to be the substitution of a Multiple for a Dual Control, with all its manifold dangers.

EARL GRANVILLE: It is a little cruel of my noble Friend, with such a charming smile on his countenance, to say such severe and bitter things of Her Majesty's Government; but, at the same time, I admit that he is more entitled than almost any one in this House to ask why we did not meet General Gordon's wishes in regard to Zebehr. It is quite true that when the noble Earl the late Secretary of State for the Colonies was leading an anti-slavery crusade——

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I beg your pardon; I never led an anti-slavery crusade. I shall be glad if the noble Earl will specify any words of mine which lead him to believe that I led an anti-slavery crusade, or in which he can find one single allusion or one single sentence in regard to it. If he can, it has entirely escaped my recollection.

EARL GRANVILLE: I will have *The Times* searched, and will endeavour to find what the noble Earl has said. If, however, the noble Earl refers to the ordinary sources of information, I think he will find that he was trying to make Party profit out of the notion that the Government was encouraging slavery. But the only thing I really regret about the noble Earl's (the Earl of Wemyss's) proceedings, is that, having this strong feeling as to the sending of Zebehr, which, as he said, the Government were only deterred from doing from fear of the Anti-Slavery Society and the Opposition, he did not take the opportunity some weeks ago, when the question was of a more practical character, of testing the feeling of your Lordships in this House upon the subject. How many of your Lordships would have followed him into the Lobby in favour of Zebehr? The question was a very important one after the anti-slavery feeling which had been displayed against Her Majesty's Government; but there are other considerations with are more important. Here is a man whom Sir Evelyn Baring did not think safe to be with General Gordon, because his hatred of that brave General was his strongest feature, and it constituted a grave danger to the Soudan as well as to Egypt. Then my noble Friend asked me whether we had consulted Sir Evelyn Baring? The fact is, we have not consulted Sir Evelyn Baring, because the Government had no intention of sending Zebehr to the Soudan. We knew that Sir Evelyn Baring at the time had expressed his opinion in favour of sending Zebehr, and it was to us a matter of indifference whether he continued to hold that opinion or not. I should have been glad to have had an opportunity of speaking to him within the last few days; but my regret on that point is somewhat mitigated by a half-hour's conversation with the great arbiter in this House between the Liberal and the Conservative Parties. Having had that conversation, everything else is of a secondary character. All I can say about the Turks is, that there is a difference between being prepared to take measures for General Gordon's safety which we consider necessary, and being prepared to accede to his wish that Turks should go and make war in the interior of the Soudan, to conquer which has never been a portion of our policy. Therefore, my answers to the two Questions must be those which I have given to the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY asked whether it was the case that General Gordon did wish that Turkish troops should go into the interior of the Soudan? He could find nothing of the kind in the Blue Books.

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Earl has nearly the same access to information as I have. I think I have read a telegram from General Gordon in which he said he wished to have some Turks in order, to use his own idiomatic expression, to "smash up the Mahdi;" and, so far as I know, the Mahdi resides somewhere in the interior of Africa.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But the noble Earl has not answered my noble Friend's Question, whether there is any truth in the statement that Turkish troops are to be employed in the Soudan?

EARL GRANVILLE: If the noble Marquess will give me a copy of the paper, I shall be glad to see what is there stated; but I am not responsible for statements appearing in newspapers.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It is difficult to cross-examine the noble Earl, and, therefore, I wish to ask him are Turkish troops to be employed in the Soudan?

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Lord has coupled with his request the Question, whether Turks were going to be sent, in the absence of British troops, at this time of the year, to relieve General Gordon? and I have to inform him that that is not the case.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That is not the Question. It is this—Are Turkish troops about to be employed in the Soudan? That is the Question?

[No reply.]

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: The Question is this—Is it within the knowledge of the Government that Turkish troops are about to enter any portion of the Soudan?

[No reply.]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—GRANTS TO COLLEGES IN WALES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD NORTON asked the President of the Council, To how many Colleges in Wales it was proposed to make Treasury grants, and to what extent in each case; and whether there was any intention of giving similar public support to middle class education in England? He said, he understood from the Press that the Government had been induced to promise a grant for a College in South Wales; the North then claimed an equal favour; and, that claim having been acknowledged, Mid Wales put in a sort of a prior claim to both on the ground of having already shown what she could do for herself. One might allow Wales to become as spoilt a child as Ireland; but a principle was in danger of being conceded, and he was anxious to know whether a side admission was involved, of what the Technical School Commissioners proposed — namely, a general public undertaking of all kinds of education throughout the Kingdom for all ranks and classes of people and subjects of study?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) reminded the noble Lord that the subject was thoroughly inquired into two or three years ago by a representative Commission, which unanimously recommended that a grant should be made for the purpose of enabling the people of North and South Wales to establish Colleges. Grants of £4,000 a-year were, consequently, promised by the Government, and voted by the House of Commons, for Colleges at Bangor and Cardiff. The College at Aberystwith had been going on for some years; the question arose whether it was to be discontinued or not; and finally the Government consented to make it a small grant of £1,500 a-year. There would, therefore, be £9,500 a-year divided between three Colleges in Wales. The noble Lord need not be nervous as to any dangerous precedent being established for England; these grants constituted no precedent whatever for a country so rich and possessed of important endowments. The comparison to be made was not between Wales and England, but between Wales and Scotland, or, still more, between Wales and Ireland. Scotland had long enjoyed very considerable annual grants towards her Universities — something like £40,000 a-year; Ireland had for many years enjoyed grants for her Colleges; and of late years she had had further assistance for intermediate education from the Irish Church Fund.

PARLIAMENT—THE WHITSUN HOLIDAYS—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

EARL GRANVILLE: Before moving the adjournment of the House I wish to say a few words. I am quite prepared to move the adjournment to any day most convenient to the noble Marquess opposite; but, of course, I feel myself in a difficulty, having given Notice already of the 16th June as the day for reassembling, and on the faith of which noble Lords and some of the officers of the House have made their arrangements, I think it desirable that there should be no misunderstanding. If the noble Marquess thinks he has any Business to bring before the House by Monday week, I will substitute that date; but it is only fair to state that there is no sort of a chance or possibility of my being able to make a statement on Egyptian affairs on so early a date.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I should be sorry to do anything to interfere with the convenience of the House; but Notice has been given by the noble Earl behind me (Earl Stanhope) of his intention to ask, on Monday week, for information as to the progress of these negotiations and the intentions of the Government with respect to the limitation of the occupation of Cairo. Of course, the whole ground for limiting the vacation, and asking that we should be in the presence of the Government at an earlier period, arises from the apprehension that a conclusion will have been come to in these negotiations before we have time to express our Constitutional protest. If the noble Earl will assure us that no engagement shall be entered into limiting the occupation of Her Majesty's Army in Egypt before the House returns, that would be a satisfactory arrangement, and it would be useless to meet earlier than the day formerly named. But we feel that we are in the presence of a very grave contingency indeed; and unless we have some assurance that the Government will not come to any conclusion, it would hardly be decent that the House should separate for three weeks.

EARL GRANVILLE: I do not think there is the slightest chance of my giving any further answer on Monday week than I have given to-day. I certainly cannot give any extraordinary engagement as to communications with other Powers. I have stated what the intention of the Government is. I have no personal convenience of my own to consult; it is entirely a question for the noble Marquess; but if he does call upon us to meet, there ought to be some substantive Motion to deal with.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand the noble Lord to say that the issue of the communications will be laid before Parliament before any engagement is entered into?

EARL GRANVILLE: I did not say that. I have stated that we would give Parliament an opportunity of expressing an opinion before we go into the Conference.

EARL STANHOPE: The question of importance is whether the Government will submit the Anglo-French negotiations to the House and to the country before submitting them to the other Powers?

EARL GRANVILLE: As I understand the noble Marquess wishes the House to meet on Monday week, I will move that the House do adjourn to that day.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—VOTE OF THANKS TO OFFICERS AND MEN OF H.M. SEA AND LAND FORCES.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he could not help expressing his regret that their Lordships should adjourn without making some recognition of the services of Her Majesty's Forces on the littoral of the Red Sea. They had endured great hardships, and they would feel that they had been neglected, as not the slightest mention had been made in Parliament of their services and efforts, while so much was made of what was done two years ago. He felt the more strongly on the point on account of the fact that in the last *Gazette* there had been bestowed a good many honours of various sorts upon officers engaged in the two battles of El-Teb and Tamai; but these did not extend to the rank and file. He should have thought that the rank and file during the late engagements might have been deemed worthy of some recognition on the part of the Government.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he could assure the noble Earl that so far were the Government from having the slightest desire to ignore the gallant services rendered by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men in the recent engagements, that they were deeply sensible of the gallantry displayed by the whole Force. But with respect to the proposal that a Vote of Thanks should be passed by both Houses of Parliament, the Government had looked into the precedents of similar occasions, and this did not appear to them, generally speaking, to come within the precedents on which such Votes had been passed. He might instance the case of the New Zealand War, in which a larger Force was engaged, and the operations extended over a far longer time, but after which it was not thought desirable to move a Vote of Thanks. But he had much pleasure in assuring the noble Earl that the services of the men employed in the campaign would not be forgotten, and they would receive the same consideration in the way of gratuity as was given in the earlier campaign.

METROPOLITAN WATER COMPANIES (REGULATION OF POWERS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to regulate the powers of the Metropolitan Water Companies—Was *presented* by The Earl of CAMPERDOWN; read 1ª. (No. 113.)

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock,
to Monday the 9th of June next,
a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 27*th May*, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means—*Considered in Committee*—£6,519,268, Consolidated Fund, *debate adjourned.*

Resolution [May 26] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Third Reading*— London and South Western Railway, and *passed.*

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (Ennis and West Clare Railway) * [233]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) (Clogher Valley Tramway) * [234]; Purchase of Land (Ireland) [238].

First Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) (Tipperary Union) * [235]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * [236]; Marriages Legalisation * [237].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) (Unions of Delvin, and others) * [210]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) (District of Arlecdon and Frizington, and others) * [212]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) (Parishes of Barnwood, and others) * [214]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) (City of Oxford, and others) * [215]; Local Government Provisional Order (Salt Works and Cement) * [216].

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT OF TERMONFECAN, CO. LOUTH.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it it is a fact that the magistrates of the Petty Sessions district of Termonfecan, county Louth, are all Protestants, whilst the largest ratepayer in the said district is a Roman Catholic, of which religion ninety per cent. of the population belong?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, with every respect to the hon. Member for Cavan, I would like to ask him whether he would consider the propriety of extending to Questions of this nature relating to the Magistracy the same objection which he expressed the other day to his Question relative to the religion of the police in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the matter referred to by the hon. Member is one worthy of consideration; but the reasons which in the main induced me to take the line which I did with regard to the police do not exist in the case of the Magistracy. The four local magistrates who attend the Termonfecan Petty Sessions are Protestants, but the resident Magistrate, who attends regularly, is a Roman Cotholic. The largest occupier rated to the relief of the poor in the district is a Catholic tenant farmer. However, as he pays only half the amount for which he is rated—his landlord paying the other half—and as the four local magistrates hold property in other Poor Law Unions, the comparison suggested in the Question is misleading.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION OFFICE (DUBLIN)—THE DUBLIN CITY AND COUNTY CONSERVATIVE CLUB.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether one of the clerks in the Intermediate Education Office, Hume Street, has been appointed Organising Secretary to the Political Committee of the City and County Conservative Club, Dawson Street, at £2 per week, still holding his appointment in the Education Office?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Assistant Commissioners inform me that it is not the case that any clerk in the employment of their Board has received such an appointment.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS IN THE SOUDAN)—MR. BREWSTER, SUB-GOVERNOR OF SUAKIN.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Brewster, recently Sub-Governor of Suakin, was reported by Sir William Hewett as having rendered him invaluable service, and recommended for promotion; whether he was thanked by General Graham for services which his knowledge of the language and influence with the Natives enabled him to render; whether the present Governor of Suakin, Sir Charles Ashburnham, has reported that Mr. Brewster's services to him have been invaluable, and has again recommended him for promotion; and, whether it is true that, in consequence of his loyal and efficient assistance to English authorities, Mr. Brewster has been dismissed by Nubar Pacha from the post of Sub-Governor of Suakin?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Mr. Brewster was Collector of Customs at Suakin in the service of the Egyptian Government, and was appointed Sub-Governor during the expedition. In that capacity he undoubtedly rendered great services to the British Forces, and Sir Charles Ashburnham recommended that he should be appointed Deputy Civil Governor of the town. It was, however, the desire of the Khedive to retain a Native as Sub-Governor, and Her Majesty's Government saw no reason for opposing His Highness's wishes in this matter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE RATE COLLECTOR OF THE BLACKROCK TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is now the position of the question as to the defalcations of Mr. T. D. Elliott, collector to the Blackrock township, and his further employment under the Local Government Board; whether he has observed that, at a recent meeting of the Township Board, a commissioner declared that "the ratepayers were up in arms against them," and the Board rejected a motion for a public inquiry by an official commission, and also, by the casting vote of the chairman, a motion for a sworn investigation by the Local Government Board; how many members of the present Board have been co-opted, and how many elected; whether a former collector of the township died, leaving an extensive deficit, and how was it made good; whether one secretary of the township absconded, to escape the punishment of fraud; and another falsified his accounts, and was allowed to go unpunished; whether, with regard to Mr. Elliott, the commissioners never required him to provide any guarantee; whether they allowed him to print his official receipt books, and never subjected his accounts to any regular or efficient check; and, whether, against his defalcations of £2,600, they have credited him with £200 in respect of a house, already mortgaged to the full extent of its value, and also with a large sum for poundage of moneys collected, but appropriated by the collector, and never paid into the township fund; and, whether any step is proposed by the Government to protect the ratepayers of Blackrock?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This Question refers to a variety of matters which are not within the knowledge or responsibility of the Government or the Local Government Board. However, I referred it to the Secretary of the Blackrock Township Commission, who informs that it will be laid before the Commissioners at their meeting to-morrow—the Committee to whom the matters of Mr. Elliott's accounts have been referred, not feeling it to be within the scope of their authority to deal with it. In the meantime, however, the Committee say that the inference fairly deducible from the Parliamentary Questions makes it evident that clearly the interrogator has been grossly misinformed as to the "facts in every important particular." I quote these words from the Secretary's letter. I shall be at Dublin in the course of the Whitsuntide Holidays, and shall satisfy myself how the matter stands.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT BY ORANGEMEN AT STEWARTSTOWN, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is intended that the summons cases arising out of an attack by a party of Orangemen on the members of the Stewartstown (Tyrone) National Band, on the evening of the 17th instant, will be heard by the local justices on the 4th proximo, at the Stewartstown Petty Sessions; whether the cases in question arose out of party feeling between Orangemen and Nationalists; whether one of the justices of the local Bench, Mr. Chambre, is Grand Master of the county Orange Lodge, and all of them are either members of the Orange Society or sympathisers with it; and, whether, in the interest of the impartial administration of justice, arrangements will be made to have those cases tried by a Court composed (under section eight of the Crimes Act) of two stipendiary magistrates?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that it is not the case that Mr. Chambre is Grand Master of the County Orange Lodge; but I believe him to be the same gentleman who took the chair at a meeting at Dungannon on the 1st November, at which, after the news of the seizure of the City Hall at Londonderry, and, I presume, the firing there had been received, a resolution was passed congratulating the persons who had seized the Hall. I do not think, therefore, that this gentleman should adjudicate in a party case; and I shall direct that if there be no technical difficulty in the way, the cases referred to in the Question shall be heard before a Court composed as prescribed under Section 8 of the Crimes Act.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF FERMANAGH.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that at the last Fermanagh Assizes, Mr. Edward Archdale, High Sheriff of the county, whose language and conduct in connection with the Orange Society have recently been reproved by the Irish Executive, drove the Judges of Assize through the county town of Enniskillen in carriages, the horses attached to which were decked with Orange bands and rosettes; and, whether similar conduct on the part of any High Sheriff will be permitted hereafter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Mr. Archdale used his ordinary harness on the occasion referred to in the Question. The forehead bands of the horses were orange and the rosettes orange and blue. These colours have, I understand, been adopted by the Archdale family for a long time past. I am informed that their horses run under them at race-meetings. I do not think the circumstance calls for any notice on the part of the Government.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—OFFICERS OF THE MULLINGAR BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is Mr. Vize, J.P., Manager of National Bank, Mullingar, Treasurer to Mullingar Board of Guardians, an ex-officio member of that board; if so, does he act, and will the Local Government Board permit him to continue to do so; is Mr. Vize's son-in-law medical officer of Mullingar Dispensary, medical officer of Mullingar Workhouse, sanitary officer of Mullingar Dispensary District, and consulting sanitary officer of Mullingar Union; and, is Mr. Vize frequently called upon to order payment of fees to his son-in-law from the Board of Guardians thus acting as ordering, endorsing, and paying, moneys levied as poor rates, in his triple capacity of magistrate, ex-officio guardian, and treasurer to Mullingar Board of Guardians?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The National Bank is the Treasurer of the Mullingar Union, and Mr. Vize is the local manager, and, being a magistrate resident in the Union, he is by law an *ex officio* Guardian, and the Local Government Board have no power to prevent his acting in that capacity. The gentleman holding the offices of Medical Officer of the Workhouse and Medical Officer of the Dispensary District is Mr. Vize's son-in-law; but payments made to him are ordered by the Board of Guardians, and it does not appear that the fact that the cheques are cashed by Mr. Vize in his capacity as Manager of the Bank can lead to any abuse or irregularity.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether in the event of the Merchant Shipping Bill being referred to the consideration of a Grand Committee, he will be good enough to consent to the appointment of a Select Committee for the purpose of examining the statements contained in the speech of the 19th instant, relative to insured values, and those valuations made by Messrs. Stringers and others on behalf of the Board of Trade?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I may refer the hon. Gentleman to what I said on the second reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill; but I may add that, if it should be desirable to hold such an inquiry as the hon. Gentleman suggests, I do not think that a Select Committee would be the best tribunal to make it. I think a Royal Commission would be more suitable.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he would be good enough to inform the House when the Debate upon the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill is intended to be resumed?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he was not in a position at the present moment to name a day.

MR. MAC IVER: Will the right hon. Gentleman not drop it altogether?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have had no communication with my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain), and certainly should not drop it without that.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION — APPEALS IN COUNTY CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a large number of appeals have been lodged by the landlords against the decisions of the County Court Judge and of Sub-Commission in county Cavan; and, whether he will urge the Commissioners to hold a Court in Cavan for hearing the appeals of that county?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that arrangements have been made for the sitting of a Court of Appeal in the town of Cavan in the month of July.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT —IRISH INTERPRETER AT SITTINGS IN DONEGAL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that in the Land Court at Lifford Irish-speaking applicants recently had their cases adjourned for want of an interpreter; and, whether the Government propose to allow this delay of justice to the subject to result in increased costs to the parties?

MR. TREVELYAN: As this Question only appeared on the Paper to-day, there has not been time to obtain information with regard to it from the Donegal Sub-Commission, or from the Land Commissioners as to appeal cases, the Commissioners being on Circuit.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. M'CLINTOCK, J.P.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What decision the Lord Chancellor has come to with respect to the conduct of Mr. M'Clintock, J.P. D.L. County Grand Master, in summoning an Orange counter-demonstration in Londonderry, on 17th March last; whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence upon the subject; and, what decision has been come to in the case of Mr. Thomas Roche, J.P. Annakissy, county Cork?

MR. TREVELYAN: The case of Mr. M'Clintock in relation to the transaction referred to has not been finally disposed of by the Lord Chancellor. There will be no objection, when the Correspondence has closed, to lay it on the Table. As to Mr. Thomas Roche, he has given such explanation of his conduct as the Lord Chancellor has been able to accept.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, NEWRY UNION — MISCONDUCT OF RETURNING OFFICER.

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board in Ireland intends to hold an inquiry into the grave charges of misconduct brought against Mr. Joseph Bell, Returning Officer of the Newry Union, in relation to the late election of guardians for the Newry Division; whether such inquiry has been requested by the three outgoing guardians of the Newry Division, and by twelve other guardians of the union; and, whether the returning officer has made any application to have an opportunity of answering at an inquiry the charges publicly brought against him?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that charges were made against the Returning Officer of improperly rejecting and accepting votes, and as to other matters connected with the conduct of the election. His explanations have been forwarded by the Local Government Board to the hon. Member. It does not appear that the return of Guardians would be affected by the votes claimed or objected to; and the complaints as to the Returning Officer's general course of action at the election do not at present appear to the Local Government Board to be sufficiently explicit or serious to render an investigation on oath necessary. However, the Board are quite willing, if cause is shown, to follow the matter up further; and if the hon. Member, or the gentlemen with whom he is acting, will name to the Board any further votes which they claim, or think should have been rejected, with the specific grounds in each case for the appeal against the Returning Officer's ruling, and will formulate distinct charges against the Returning Officer respecting his conduct in regard to matters which they think have not been satisfactorily explained, the

Board will give the application for a sworn inquiry further consideration.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — JUDICIAL RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will ask the Land Commissioners to inquire from Sub-Commissioners Rice and Barry the reason why they did not inspect the farm of Thomas Sinnott at Duncormack, county Wexford, before fixing a judicial rent on it; whether it has not hitherto been the practice for Sub-Commissioners to inspect farms before adjudicating on the applications to have a fair rent fixed; and, whether it is intended to abandon this practice?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I referred this Question to the Land Commissioners for any observations they might wish to make with regard to it. As they are at present away on Circuit, there has not been time for a reply to come to hand. I think it very unlikely, however, that they would consent to ask the Sub-Commissioners for any explanation of their decision in the case. The usual practice is for Assistant Commissioners to inspect lands before settling the rents. It is their duty to do so in any case in which they deem that such visit may conduce to a just decision. There is no intention of abandoning the practice.

CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICIALS.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Board of Customs has refused the request of the employés at the Custom House that the monthly advance of salary due on the 1st June should be paid on the 31st May, the 1st of June being a Sunday, and the following Monday a Bank Holiday; whether payment of salaries is paid in other Departments of the Public Service on the 31st; and, whether the Pay Department of the Customs has advised the Board that such payment could be made in the Customs without inconvenience to the Public Service?

Mr. COURTNEY: These Questions were put on the Paper so late last night that I have been unable to obtain complete answers to all of them; but I have communicated with the Customs, and I find that the point was maturely considered three years ago, and decided on what appears to me to be adequate reasons. I should think that in the case of those salaried officials who find it difficult to wait 48 hours for their monthly pay, it would be a doubtful boon to make an advance on the eve of a Bank Holiday.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the hon. Gentleman's answer was to be regarded as final, or would he reconsider the question?

Mr. COURTNEY said, the announcement was final.

MERCANTILE MARINE—LOSS OF LIFE BY SHIPWRECK.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he would inform the House how many people have been drowned by shipwrecks upon our coasts since the appointment of the present Committee on Refuge Harbours, and how many of the persons thus drowned were fishermen?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he was sorry he could not give the information the hon. Member asked for. The Wreck Returns were prepared for annual periods, and it would not be easy to obtain from them particulars relating to a particular time. The latest number of the Wreck Returns would be published in a few days, and it would give the information desired by the hon. Member down to June, 1883.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA—SALE OF CARCASES.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as President of the Irish Local Government Board, Whether Irish Boards of Guardians sell for use as human food the carcases of cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia, and slaughtered under the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act; and, if so, whether he can state approximately the number of animals so disposed of, and the average price received for the carcases? The hon. Member added that if the Notice he had given had not been sufficient to enable the right hon. Gentleman to answer the Question, he would request him to investigate the subject during the Recess, and to ascertain why Boards of Guardians in Ireland, with the sanction and approval of the Local Government

Board, were permitted to sell this diseased meat when Boards of Guardians in England were not allowed to do so?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he had the information for which the hon. Member had asked. He had not been able, in the time, to ask any question about policy. In the majority of Poor Law Unions in which pleuro-pneumonia occurred, the Boards of Guardians sold for human food the carcases of cattle compulsorily slaughtered for that disease, provided that their Veterinary Inspector pronounces the carcases to be fit for human food. The Guardians were authorized by Section 30 of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878, to sell carcases of animals slaughtered by their order. He was informed that in the year 1883 there were about 1,000 carcases thus sold at an average price of about £5 10*s*.

PRIVY COUNCIL—VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

MR. HICKS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Why the Annual Report of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council for 1883 has not been issued?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, the Report had been presented to Parliament on the 3rd of April. He was informed that the manuscript was in the hands of the printers, and he now learned that the Report would be circulated to Members of both Houses of Parliament on Thursday.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

MR. PELL asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether a serious outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease has recently occurred in Lincolnshire, where one out of forty beasts in farm premises near Louth showed symptoms of this disease on May 17th; whether thirteen out of these forty beasts were thereupon removed a mile away to grass in a park, and the disease reported to the local inspector on May 19th; whether this inspector, on May 20th, found sixteen out of the twenty-seven beasts remaining in the farm premises to be affected, as well as four out of the sixteen which had been moved to the park, and four more out of thirty-eight in a field adjoining the park; whether, up to May 23rd, the local authority had held no meeting, and done nothing towards the isolation of the disease; whether the chief inspector of the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council has been despatched to the spot and made his report; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that the administration of the Law relating to contagious diseases in animals is such as to afford reasonable security against the spread of infection from the county of Lincoln into other counties; and, if not, what steps Her Majesty's Government intend taking to prevent this local outbreak spreading into other districts, and to preserve the live stock of the Kingdom from so serious a calamity?

MR. DODSON: On May 17, one out of 40 animals on Mr. Lister's farm showed symptoms of illness, and on the same day 13 of the animals were moved from the farm to Burwell Park—about a mile. The owner reported the case on Monday, the 19th. The local Inspector visited the premises on Tuesday, the 20th, and found 16 out of the 27 animals left in the farm affected with foot-and-mouth disease, and four out of the 13 in the park. The declaration of the Inspector was confirmed on the same day, but nothing else was done as there was not a quorum of the local authority present, and a meeting was called for Friday, the 23rd. We received notice of the outbreak on the 21st, and Mr. Cope, the Chief Inspector of the Privy Council, was sent on the 22nd to see what was being done. He attended the meeting on the 23rd, and pointed out the serious consequences which might ensue from the negligence of the local authority, who at last, on his advice, adopted the necessary precautions. Mr. Cope at the same time telegraphed to the Privy Council the boundaries of an area to include all the infected places and the neighbouring farms, &c., and an area was declared on the 23rd, which it is hoped will prevent the spreading of the disease to other districts.

ARMY — ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT — MANUFACTURE OF SMALL ARMS.

MR. RITCHIE asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it has hitherto been the practice of the War Office to employ private firms to manufacture a portion of the small arms required by the Department, and to distribute in certain proportions among the various factories the quantity required; and, whether this year the practice has been departed from, and the whole order given to a factory in Birmingham; and, if so, would he explain why this has been done?

Mr. BRAND: The War Department has no knowledge of any Companies or large firms engaged in the manufacture of small arms in this country except the Companies, three in number, which they have employed during recent years, one of which (the National Company) is now in liquidation. As the Department is unable to find efficient employment for two factories, they will in future deal with that one which is best situated for the economical production of arms—namely, the Birmingham factory. The Government, I may add, would obtain no advantage in the matter of price by the employment of the Companies, as the Companies do not enter into competition with each other in this respect.

Mr. RITCHIE: Will the hon. Gentleman tell me why the Government have not, as has hitherto been the case, distributed the quantity required bebetween those two firms?

Mr. BRAND: The reply to this Question would involve argument. I think the better course would be for the hon. Gentleman to wait until the Army Estimates are discussed, or else he can make a Motion himself in connection with the Estimates, when I hope to be able to show very good reasons for the course adopted.

Mr. RITCHIE: I beg to give Notice that I shall call attention to this very questionable transaction.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE BIRMINGHAM DYNAMITERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is true that William M'Donnell was charged before the Birmingham magistrates on May 10th, along with J. Daly and J. F. Egan, for treason felony, and no evidence was adduced against M'Donnell since 1875, and that an application for bail by his solicitor was refused; and, if so, whether the Treasury will offer any opposition to a further application for bail to a Judge in Chambers?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he had not had the evidence before him officially, and therefore could not say whether the statement in the Question was correct; but he believed it was the case that the evidence against M'Donnell did not come down to a very recent period. As to the application for bail, it was a question for the discretion of the magistrates; but it was very unusual to grant bail in treason-felony cases.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (IRELAND) —CONVENT NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has yet matured his scheme for increased payments in Convent National Schools; if so, will he state its details; and, if not, will he say when he expects to furnish it?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I cannot at present add anything to what I stated in reply to a Question asked by the hon. Member on the same subject at the beginning of the present month—namely, that the Estimates before the House do not admit of such an arrangement in the present year. And while I have a pretty fair knowledge of the opinions of the parties concerned, I do not see any reason for coming to a definite conclusion until nearer the time for concluding the next Estimates.

Mr. BIGGAR asked whether a Supplementary Estimate could not be produced?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, it was not proposed to do so in this case.

EGYPT—FLOGGING IN PRISON—INTRODUCTION OF THE CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS.

Mr. GRAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the cat-o'-nine-tails is now in use in the Egyptian prisons; and, if so, by whom it was introduced?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; it is not. The instrument of punishment is the ordinary Egyptian whip found as part of the prison properties. Its use has, however, been restricted to cases of violence and mutinous crime within the prisons, and the maximum number of strokes has been reduced from 300 to 24.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE —NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

Mr. BOURKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can, before the House rises, give Parliament some information with respect to the recent negotiations between France and England upon the subject of Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for having given me Notice of this Question—a practice which I think really is, in the long run, quite as much for the convenience of the House as of the Government. I will answer the Question in the most distinct manner, and likewise the Notice which I understood to be given yesterday by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), but which does not appear on the Notice Paper. I understood him to say that he would press for some information on the subject of the Conference. I am not quite sure as to that, but that I gather to be the purport of his statement; but if I understand these words strictly, I must observe that he will not be surprised at it—that as we have already stated that the functions and scope of the Conference are limited by the invitation, and are certainly limited by our intention to the question of a financial plan which we have submitted for rectifying the balance of income and charge in Egypt, it is quite manifest that that could not possibly be made, without grave injury to important interests, the subject of explanations in this House at the present stage, when we are not yet even in view of the time appointed for the meeting of the Conference. The Question of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bourke) refers to another matter. It refers to the recent negotiations between France and England on the subject of Egypt; and for the sake of clearness I will only remind the House of what has been already said, and to which I shall make an addition that I think is of some importance, and which I hope may spare the House considerable trouble, at least to-day, especially with regard to the discussion of detail. Hitherto the House has known this much—I am not sure that I am reciting everything that has been said; but I am reciting the most important circumstances—that France had requested an interchange of explanations with us upon our general position in Egypt; that we, in common with France, had desired that interchange; that communications were proceeding; that if they resulted in our arriving at a common conclusion, at a common view with France, we should proceed to consult the Powers upon it; and that when that had been done communications on the subject would be made to Parliament. That, I think, is the substance of what is most important in previous answers. What I have now to state is this—the Notice given by the right hon. Gentleman has enabled me, with my Colleagues, to consider the matter, and in the present state of affairs we have arrived at this conclusion, that we can undertake and engage in the event of any common understanding with France, of consultation with the Powers, and of any plan resulting from those communications, that those results and the whole conclusion which we arrive at shall be presented to Parliament before the Conference meets. I am inclined to hope that this distinct engagement, which is one that we shall be prepared to meet, may have the effect of shortening the proceedings of to-day.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the despatch of British troops to Assouan, the patrolling of the Nile by British sailors, and the increase of the Egyptian forces at Dongola and Wadi Halfa, are meant as a check to the armed movement of the Mahdi?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question is, perhaps, not accurately printed, or, if it is, the hon. Member is not quite accurately informed. There has been no despatch of British troops to Assouan. There has been, I think, a despatch to Assouan of a portion of the Egyptian force. There has been some British force—I am not aware how much, but I think it is very limited—sent to Assiout, which is a very different place, and the despatch of troops thither has not quite the same meaning. However, there has been a despatch of Egyptian troops to Assouan, and some small British force has been sent to Assiout. The Nile is patrolled, as I stated the other day, by, I think, three steamers, and there have been certain movements of Egyptian Forces towards Dongola and Wady Halfa. I beg pardon; I am not aware that there has been any increase of Egyptian force at Dongola; but, speaking generally, these measures are measures having relation to the internal security of Egypt. How far there is at present a movement—an armed movement—of the Mahdi I am not able at present with precision to say; and what effect these movements of Egyptian troops may have, if that movement of the Mahdi exists, is rather a matter for the hon. Member to judge of for himself than one which I should give an opinion upon.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, who had also given Notice of the following Question, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have agreed to place the finances of Egypt under International control, and to specifically limit the terms of the British occupation of Egypt; and whether the Conference is to meet upon this basis? said, after the answer which the right hon. Gentleman had given to a previous Question, he did not know whether it would be convenient to him to answer the Question on the Paper; but he would put it *pro formâ.*

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman has, I think, exercised a very sound judgment. All I have to say is that no agreement has been arrived at; and I have already made a statement, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, which I hope will stand in the place of a fuller answer to the hon. Member.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked whether he was to understand the Prime Minister to have given an assurance to the House that, before the country went into the Conference, this House should be made acquainted with the result of the negotiations now going on between Her Majesty's Government and that of France?

Mr. BOURKE: Provided they come to an agreement?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, what he wished to know was whether the Government would give an assurance that they would not, in the course of those negotiations with France, enter into some kind of agreement which would be binding on this country, and with which the House would not be made acquainted until it was entered into? Because, although a pledge had been given by the Prime Minister that when this country went into the Conference the House should know what was done between this country and France, the House would have no opportunity of expressing its opinion on the result of those negotiations with France before they were fully accomplished. He wished, therefore, to know whether, before any agreement was made between France and England having reference to the political position in Egypt, the House should have some power of giving an opinion upon it?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am extremely glad that the hon. Member, especially considering the relation in which he stands to us, is so anxious about the rights and Privileges of the House. But he evidently does not appear to have quite understood the answer that I gave to the right hon. Gentleman opposite. My answer was that if there was a result of those communications it should be made known to Parliament. There might be no result, and I did not state anything affirmatively or negatively as to what should be done in that case. The hon. Member places me in a difficulty, as he must know, when he requests me to give a pledge that the House shall be made a party to negotiations while they are going on. That is a demand which it is very difficult to answer without being involved in questions of difficulty and delicacy. Still, in the present instance, although I cannot give a literal answer to my hon. Friend, yet I will venture to say this—that I am quite satisfied that when these matters reach their proper conclusion—that is to say, when we come, as I hope we may come, to a result in our preliminary communications, and when, as I hope it will, the Conference may have provided a sufficient and effective remedy for the financial difficulties of Egypt, I am quite satisfied—and I say this on my responsibility—that the House will find that due regard has been had by the Government throughout the proceedings to the rights and the Privileges of this House.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I should like to call attention to two expressions that fell from the right hon. Gentleman in his answer to the right hon. Member for King's Lynn. The Prime Minister stated that the Conference would be limited by the terms of the invitation addressed to the Powers—that is to say, to the financial question in Egypt. Then he stated, in answer to the Question of my right hon. Friend, that the interchange of negotiations going on with France was one with regard to the general position of this country in respect to Egypt, and that if an agreement, an arrangement, or a result was arrived at, then they would consult the Powers upon it. That is to say, the Powers in Conference would be consulted upon the agreement come to between France and England on the general position of England in Egypt. I wish to ask, therefore, whether, if the Powers are to be consulted on the result of the negotiations between France and England as to the general position of England in Egypt, how is the Conference to be limited to the financial question solely?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can only say that what I have already stated is literally accurate. We have defined the scope of the Conference, the invitation to the Conference has been accepted without any extension of that scope, and the intention of the British Government remains on that point entirely unchanged. I think, therefore, that I am justified in saying that the scope of the Conference will be thus limited. The answer made by me to-day as to the nature of the preliminary communications with France is not new. The only thing that is new is the engagement to communicate the result of those communications to Parliament before the Conference meet. I have not the least reason to suppose that anything connected with the preliminary negotiations, on which the Powers are to be consulted, are likely to raise any difficulty as to the scope of the Conference.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is it not the fact that the negotiations with France on the general position of England in Egypt far exceed the limits of mere finance? Well, then, I ask, is it the fact, as the Prime Minister stated, that if a result was arrived at in respect to those preliminary negotiations, the Powers would be consulted as to that—namely, the result of the negotiations between France and England as to the general position of England in Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I see how the noble Lord may have been misled by the use of an expression of mine. The consultation with the Powers is not to be a consultation with the Powers assembled in Conference. It means a prior consultation. The communications with France would be but a preliminary proceeding.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Will the Conference have no connection whatever with the result of the preliminary communications between France and England?

MR. GLADSTONE: So far as I am able to answer, I have given the grounds to the noble Lord and the House in respect to the limited scope of the Conference, the acceptance of that limited scope for the Conference by the Great Powers without the widening of it, the adherence of the British Government to that limited scope, and the absence of any intimation from the other Powers.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Do we understand that the communications that may take place, or are taking place with France, will be concluded before they are communicated to this House? Suppose, then, that any question is raised, that any agreement is made with France on any important point—such, for example, as the fixing of the time for the withdrawal of the British troops—such a question, as I understand the right hon. Gentleman, would be decided between this country and France before any communication was made to Parliament. Is that so?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I think not. We are proceeding with reference to European law, and by European law all the Great Powers have a title to be considered in matters affecting the position of Egypt as a part of the Turkish Empire. It is a European arrangement, undoubtedly, that we should contemplate, and not a separate arrangement with France; but the commencement of negotiations in the preliminary form has been with France.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Will the communications to Parliament be after the preliminary consultation with France and before anything has been definitively settled with the other Great Powers of Europe?

MR. GLADSTONE: What I have said is that it will be made before the Conference meet. To make it before the preliminary consultation with France was completed would be entirely out of place.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Will the question be definitively settled by the Great Powers before the communication is made to Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: Again, I say, I am glad to see this liveliness with regard to Parliamentary rights and privileges. I have already said, knowing the responsibility under which I say it, that I have the utmost confidence that, when the time comes for the whole proceedings to be placed before Parliament, Parliament will find that its rights and prerogatives have been carefully considered.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: The right hon. Gentleman says that the preliminary arrangements for the Conference would be settled between England and France. [Mr. Gladstone: No.] Supposing this country and France were to arrive at the conclusion that a Multiple Control was necessary, and might submit it to the Conference as the basis of the Conference, would that question be submitted to the House before being submitted to the Conference as the joint conclusion of England and France?

Mr. GLADSTONE: If any such arrangement were arrived at, it would be made known to this House before the Conference.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I am sorry to trouble the right hon. Gentleman again; but the importance of the statement of the Prime Minister and the gravity of the situation are such that I venture to ask one more Question on the point. As I understand, negotiations are now going on with France. I wish to know whether, supposing a Multiple Control, and also the time during which this country is to remain with its Army in possession of Egypt, are proposed, and before they are definitively settled, the House will have an opportunity of discussing whether the Multiple Control is a wise proceeding or not, and whether our stay in Egypt is to be put a stop to by the Powers of Europe, and not by the decision of that House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is impossible for me to recognize, I am sorry to say, all the suppositions contained in the Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for West Sussex; and I must be content to stand on the declaration I have made—a declaration going far beyond what is usual in such cases. I am quite sure that the House will find, when we make our final communication to it, that ample provision has been made with regard to its rights and privileges.

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR—OFFICIAL RESIDENCES.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Mr. Grant Duff is the first Governor of Madras who has kept up and furnished three official residences at the public expense; whether it is necessary that Mr. Grant Duff should have official residences at Madras, Guindy, and Ootacamund; whether seven years ago the purchase of the Ootacamund House was only sanctioned by the Government of India on the understanding that, with the cost of the addition of two reception rooms, the expenditure on this house should not exceed £7,000; and, whether the expenditure has now exceeded £70,000, Mr. Grant Duff spending £12,250 on furnishing alone?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Mr. Grant Duff is not the first Governor of Madras who has kept up three official residences. Before the construction of the present Government House at Ootacamund a house used to be rented for the use of the Governor. On the 20th of March last, replying to the hon. Member, I explained that Mr. Grant Duff is in no way responsible for the building of the present Government House, which was begun some years before he left England. As regards the necessity for the three official residences, I may explain that the Governor's house in Madras is maintained chiefly for purposes of public business and official residences. The residence of the Governor is at Guindy, a suburb four miles from the town. The India Office has no information to show that a limit of £7,000 was originally placed on the cost of the purchase of the Ootacamund house. An estimate of Rs.2,76,000 was sanctioned in 1879. The total cost of the house, including roads and other incidental works, has amounted to Rs.7,79,150, of which Rs.1,25,000 were expended on furniture.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. Gregory,

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that there was no intention of proceeding with the Railway Bill on Thursday, the 5th of June; and that before it could be sent to a Grand Committee there would have to be an opportunity given for discussing it.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There was an understanding arrived at yesterday that the Business to be taken immediately after the Whitsuntide Recess should be Supply. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the course of the evening, suggested that it should be taken on the Thursday, and the matter was left to be spoken of to-day, in order that we might know when Supply would be taken.

Mr. GLADSTONE: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no intention of forcing on the National Debt Bill on Thursday week. We are most anxious to continue the discussion on the Franchise Bill on Friday. The Franchise Bill is a measure in which a very large number of Members take an interest; and I think I may entertain some hope that if I endeavour to meet the convenience of Members with reference to that Friday, that will be remembered in a merciful way in some of the secondary discussions on the Bill. Under these circumstances, I am prepared to move that the Order of the Day for the Committee on the Franchise Bill should be read for the purpose of postponing it until Monday week, and we shall proceed with the National Debt Bill on Friday.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RELIEF OF GENERAL GORDON.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister, If he could inform the House whether any actual preparations had been made up to the present time to organize an expedition for the relief or rescue of General Gordon?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I must only fall back upon the statements which the Government have already made, and particularly by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, who entered into the subject with the greatest care, in respect to our recognition of our obligation with regard to General Gordon, and our special duty to take care that we shall keep ourselves in a position to fulfil that obligation.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Mr. GORST asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he could give the House an assurance that the Government at present had no intention of abandoning the Merchant Shipping Bill?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; I can give that assurance.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Colonel MAKINS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Mr. Clifford Lloyd has left or is about to leave Egypt; whether his departure is voluntary or involuntary, and whether it wis permanent; and, if so, whether the noble Lord will state the causes which have led to his departure?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that he had received no Notice of the Question; and naturally it would be desirable, before answering a Question of this kind, that he should be able to communicate with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He must, therefore, ask the hon. and gallant Member to repeat his Question on a future day.

MOTION.

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE).

ADJOURNMENT FOR THE RECESS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he hoped that the House would allow him to say one word by way of a personal explanation. He thought that after what had fallen from the Prime Minister he would not be justified in raising a debate upon the Egyptian Question while negotiations were going on. At the same time, he thought that the Government had taken a great responsibility in the course which they had adopted. He would leave them with that responsibility, which he understood to be that they would not allow the scope of the Conference to be enlarged beyond the question of the financial position of Egypt, and that they would also lay any arrangement to which they might come with France on the Table of the House previously to going into the Conference at all. On that understanding he would not trouble the House by bringing on a debate.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not wish to limit the concession made by the hon. Member, but only to advert to what I think was not perfectly accurate in his statement. We have spoken, not of laying an arrangement with France, but of laying an arrangement with the Powers, before the House at a date anterior to the meeting of the Conference.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Prime Minister, whether any arrangement with France could be valid unless acquiesced in by the Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not like to put it in the sense of making an arrangement which is not to be valid; but what we contemplate as the first stage is merely a preliminary arrangement which will naturally take the form of communications with France.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite feel that the Prime Minister, in the statement he has made, has met this House in a very fair and open spirit; and if I may take this opportunity of making two or three observations, it will not be at all with a view of putting the Government to torture, or trying to extract information which cannot be given to the public without disadvantage, but because I think it important that before separating for the Holidays we should understand exactly how we stand with regard to Egypt, and that we should give full expression on this side of the House to our views. I believe that the Egyptian Question is at this moment in its most critical phase. The Prime Minister has told the House that he, on his responsibility, is prepared to assure us, when we have before us the whole Papers, that Parliament will have no reason to complain of the way the Government has treated it. I fully and absolutely accept that statement of the Prime Minister. I do not believe the Government contemplate in the least, directly or indirectly, doing anything which the House can regard as a breach of its Privileges. What I am concerned with, however, is not the Privilege of the House of Commons, but the position of this country in Egypt. I am utterly unable to understand how it is possible for us to enter into any arrangement, either with France alone, or with France and the other European Powers, which shall not have for one of its essential objects the limitation of the English control over Egyptian affairs. The powers of diplomacy do not exist which shall make arrangements which shall not have that effect. Even if the object of Europe were a purely financial one, even if we were to hand over to the Conference only the management of finance, we should be handing over to them a large measure of the control of the affairs of Egypt. My hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) will be able to tell us of his own experience in Roumelia, where he was the financial Representative of the Government in the matter of finance, that those who have the control of finance practically have control of the policy, and it is impossible it should be otherwise. Therefore, if the Government hands over to the European Powers the financial control of Egypt, they hand over the control of Egypt.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Law of Liquidation is the limitation of the scope of the Conference. I do not say there may not be collateral questions that may arise; but that is the subject of the Conference.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If nothing whatever is modified but the Law of Liquidation, the control of Europe will be very great; but there is something besides Europe—there is France. Now, the Prime Minister has told us that the Conference is confined to money matters; but his statement, on the face of it, implies that the negotiations with France deal with other matters. These other matters must have relation to the length of our stay in Egypt, and any arrangement must have the effect of limiting our freedom of action in that respect. I express for myself, and I repeat it for a large number of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, the strong conviction that any limitation of our power in Egypt is a thing to be, at all hazards, avoided. After all, it is we who have fought in Egypt; it is we who have spent blood and treasure in Egypt; and it is intolerable that we should now be called upon to hand over the results of our sacrifices to others. But I do not wish to rest my case solely or chiefly on the interests of this country. I believe if we are to carry out the great duty we have taken upon ourselves in the face of Europe, and in the face of the Egyptian population, we can only do so with any hope of success if we do so absolutely uncontrolled. The Dual Control, in the opinion of the present Government, is altogether unworkable. A European Control would be ten times as unworkable. If they—the Government—cannot drive a coach and pair without coming to grief they certainly would very soon fall into the ditch if they tried to drive six-in-hand. I do not wish to press the Prime Minister with Questions; but I do wish to put on record my strong opinion that if the results of the present negotiations are either that our stay in Egypt is to be limited, or our remaining in Egypt is to depend on France; or on any other Power or combination of Powers, such a course would be deeply injurious to the interests of this country, and not less injurious to the interests of those whose welfare we have taken in charge. I think the Prime Minister has dealt openly with us; but I think it is only fair to the Government to explain to them in return the feeling that we entertain with regard to the probable results of the pending negotiations with France.

MR. RYLANDS said, he had listened with great satisfaction to the replies of the Prime Minister to the many Questions which had been put to him, because he had in his recollection that they had had such things to deal with as secret Treaties which had been entered into by a Government of this country under conditions which necessarily hoodwinked the House of Commons and deceived the people. He was glad to think that, in regard to the present negotiations, Her Majesty's Government had not the slightest idea of taking any steps which would prevent the House of Commons from exercising a legitimate influence upon the position of the Government before it was finally determined by any actual arrangement on the part of the Powers of Europe. He ventured to say that if the result of any arrangement were to materially limit the administrative influence of England in Egypt, such arrangement would be very offensive to the public opinion of this country. He did not believe in the desirability of "scuttling out of Egypt." He entirely agreed that when they bombarded Alexandria, and crushed out the only possible Government in Egypt, and the only chance there seemed to be of any national movement or self-government, they took upon themselves a great responsibility to administer Egypt, and to bring it into a condition when it might be left to the safe and good government of the Egyptian authorities. That might be at a remote period; but he was satisfied that if, after all the sacrifices which this country had made, after all the blood that had been shed and all the property that had been destroyed, they were to give up in favour of some system that would lead to difficulty and disputes the fruits of their exertions and sacrifices, it would meet with condemnation in the public mind of the country. He did not say this from any want of confidence in Her Majesty's Government. He had not the slightest reason to believe that they were going to take the course which he ventured to protest against. But he felt very strongly that if we were brought into complicated partnership with other Powers, it might well happen that, arising out of that complicated partnership, we might have disputes and misunderstandings, and, possibly, war. He did not wish the Government to say one word beyond what the Prime Minister had already said. He believed they would strictly avoid the precedent set by the former Government, and would not involve the country in obligations of which the country was not aware, and which would lead to a large amount of difficulty, and, perhaps, of disaster.

MR. O'DONNELL said, it was quite delightful to hear that veteran of philanthropy and economy, the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), coming out as a real, rampant, roystering Jingo. The hon. Member spoke of British sacrifices in Egypt. What were they? England had destroyed the principal cities of Egypt, and made Egypt pay for the destruction. It had slain Egyptians by the thousands at the loss of only dozens or scores of its own men. He was afraid that on the present occasion the silence of Her Majesty's Opposition boded no good for the Egyptian people; and he was afraid, further, that there were only too many Members of the Liberal Party prepared to make common cause with the Gentlemen who presided over bondholders' meetings and demanded that strong measures should be adopted in regard to the people of Egypt. The hon. Member also observed that on both sides of the House there was the greatest amount of indignation at the suggestion of Europe being allowed to interfere in the affairs of Egypt. So far as he (Mr. O'Donnell) had been able to discover, the mind of Europe was pretty well made up on the matter; and he found a general concurrence and determination that France, Germany, and Russia should have a very effective voice in the settlement of the Egyptian Question. They were promised that the conclusions arrived at would be laid before the House previous to the meeting of the Conference; but could it be imagined for a moment that there was any pith and solidity in an assurance of that kind? Nothing could be more certain than that these communications would practically be final. The Prime Minister had said that the Government desired to enter into a European arrangement for the management of Egyptian affairs; but the right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if it was found that Europe—using the word in its generally accepted sense—and not Great Britain would have the predominance in the Conference; and, in that case, he should like to know whether the Prime Minister would be prepared to go to war with the dissenting Powers? He should also like to know if it was true that the Government had engaged 15,000 Turks to pacify the Soudan; but it would be surprising to find the unspeakable Turk and the eloquent Premier going arm and arm to complete the work of Lord Wolseley. Another and very delicate question to be considered was the position which Russia would take in regard to the Conference. There could be no doubt that the suggestion of the Conference came from Russia; and France and Russia between them held the key of the Egyptian situation. They held this country in the jaws of a vice and on the horns of a dilemma—the one horn being France and the other Russia. It would be a matter of indifference to Russia whether she embarrassed England in Egypt, or whether she took advantage of our complications in Egypt to advance in Central Asia. He wished to impress upon the House his sense of the utter helplessness of the British Empire at the present juncture. Before many weeks they would be required to recognize that neither the bondholders represented by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), nor those represented by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), but Europe at large, would decide upon the position of Egypt and the policy of this country.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was not in the least surprised that the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should urge the Government not to withdraw from Egypt; but he was surprised that he should be followed in the same strain by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and that those two Jingoes almost shook hands over his head. What was the meaning of all that his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley had urged with regard to economy? How were they to expect reduction in the National Expenditure if his hon. Friend was to propose such a Jingo policy to Her Majesty's Government? His hon. Friend said that he spoke for a large number of Members on the Liberal side of the House. His hon. Friend spoke for himself certainly; but he did not know for whom else he spoke, except it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who, he observed, applauded him. Those two "corner men," as they were called, probably formed a Party of their own; but it would be an error to suppose that all on the Liberal side of the House agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley in thinking that we had rights in Egypt. We acquired no rights by bombarding Alexandria or destroying Egyptians. What would the hon. Member for Burnley say if someone was to break into his house, slay the hon. Member, and then imagine that he had acquired a species of fee-simple and right to remain there? When this country went to Egypt, we had no rights. We went to Egypt, not in the interests of England, but of Europe. We had been urged to remain there in the interests of Egypt, and because we had assumed certain responsibilities towards Europe. However, now that it appeared that other Powers objected to our regarding Egypt as an integral part of the British Empire, we were told that we had acquired rights, and the argument of our responsibilities towards Europe disappeared. He hoped the Government would continue the policy they had adopted; and, as he understood it, that policy was to withdraw from Egypt as soon as it was possible to withdraw from it, and not to recognize any of those assertions of rights which were made by irresponsible Gentlemen like his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley and Members opposite. We had not acquired rights, and we had not the right to remain one day more in Egypt than was absolutely necessary.

MR. BOURKE said, that it was very desirable to know whether the sentiments of the hon. Member were the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government; and if they could only get an answer to that question, it would clear up the subject very considerably. What they really wanted to know was, what would be the relations of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the administration of Egypt? If the sentiments just enunciated by the hon. Member were to be followed, then the sooner this country renounced all responsibility for the future the better. But the views of the hon. Member were not those which had hitherto been enunciated by Her Majesty's Government. They had from the first told this House that we had rights in regard to Egypt. Nearly two years ago the President of the Local Government Board admitted that when he said that we were in Egypt by reason of our position in respect to India, and for other reasons. An additional reason had now been afforded by the events of the last two years. One of the alarming considerations with respect to the negotiations that were now going on was that they might have been just as logically initiated a year and a-half ago as at the present time. Everyone who had watched events must come to the conclusion that had these negotiations been initiated 18 months ago this country would now be in a far better and more powerful position, because no one could conceal from himself that, whether negotiations were to be carried on by Diplomatic Correspondence or in a Congress, the weakness of the Government would be much greater than at the period to which he had adverted. Of the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman he had very little complaint to make, because he had felt all along that with respect to the negotiations and the Conference the House must be at the mercy of the Government. It would be unreasonable to ask the Government, while negotiations were going on, to state from day to day what the results of these negotiations were. But that was no reason why they should not feel extremely uncomfortable about the matter, particularly when recollecting the exact state of things as presented to the House that day and on former occasions by the right hon. Gentleman. A disposition had been shown in some quarters to mix up the questions of the Conference and the negotiations; but nothing could be more distinct. One of the strong points which the Government had relied upon when they had been attacked in connection with the Conference was that it was limited to the consideration of the Law of Liquidation. That was a point which the House ought to bear in mind, and to which the Government ought to be held. But the right hon. Gentleman had stated that the negotiations that were going on did not relate to the same subject as that which was to be submitted to the Conference; and, therefore, it was clear, from what had been said that day, that the House would find itself in this position—that these negotiations with France would go on, and that they would be submitted diplomatically to the Powers of Europe before the Conference met. The result was that far more important questions than any which could possibly be discussed in the Conference would be settled, with France in the first place, and then with Europe, without any knowledge on the part of that House of what was being done. He had understood the Prime Minister to say that when the negotiations were concluded they would be submitted to Europe, and then possibly to the Conference.

MR. GLADSTONE: No. There is no idea whatever of their being submitted to the Conference.

MR. BOURKE: Well, the House would see that the hon. Member for Hertford spoke very truly when he said that a very critical point had been reached, because the result of the steps taken by the Government would be that while all questions relating to the future administration of Egypt might be submitted to France and to Europe, the House would know nothing of what was going on until the conclusion of the negotiations. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would take care that the rights and Privileges of the House should be regarded. He did not understand what, according to the right hon. Gentleman, those rights and Privileges were, because the other day the right hon. Gentleman seemed to say that the House would be consulted if any financial arrangements which would require the assent of the House were come to in connection with Egypt. It followed from that that all questions, with the exception of finance, might be discussed without any conclusive expression of opinion by that House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that does not follow.

Mr. BOURKE: He was glad to hear it; but he certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that when the negotiations were concluded the rights and privileges of the House would be respected. If that were so, then all the important questions relating to the administration of Egypt could be settled before the House should have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon them. He believed that the Government were within their right in taking up that position; but that did not make the House and the country less nervous about the future. There was no question connected with the financial administration of Egypt that was not *quasi*-political. He could imagine no more prolific source of differences between England and other Powers than questions connected with the *caisse de la dette.* Other Powers might insist upon having Representatives upon the Board, and that might cause great difficulties. He trusted that the Government would not consent to any arrangement which could lessen our power in Egypt and the influence which we exercised upon the Government of that country. If the Government sincerely meant what they had always said—namely, that they had gone to Egypt for the sake of good government—the sooner the control exercised in any Egyptian Department by other Powers than ourselves and Egypt came to an end the better. If, however, we were to go on being interfered with, not trusting to what we considered to be the best way of administering all Departments in Egypt, we could not leave that country too soon. He hoped that the Government would not forget during the negotiations that the House of Commons would never consent to an abdication of the position which we now occupied in Egypt. His object was not to embarrass the Government, but to increase their power; and he felt certain that if they would declare that they were determined to maintain the interests which they had stated over and over again to be the interests of England, and to accomplish the object for which they went to Egypt—namely, the establishment of good government—and that they would allow nothing to interfere with them in carrying out that object, they would receive the support of the House of Commons and of the country.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, the Prime Minister's statement, as far as it went, was satisfactory; but there was some ambiguity about it which he would like to have cleared up. He understood the matter to stand thus. The Government had invited the Powers to attend a Conference respecting the Egyptian Debt, and that Conference was to deal with nothing but the Debt. The Government, however, were also engaged in negotiations with France, who had, like England, special interests in Egypt. These negotiations might eventuate in an arrangement between the two countries; but this would not become operative without it had the sanction of the other Powers. The Prime Minister promised that their arrangement with France should be submitted to Parliament before it was shown to the other Powers. Thus far the matter was clear. But it was not clear whether the arrangement had to be submitted to Parliament before it was ratified. The Prime Minister said he would engage that the Privileges of Parliament should not be infringed by anything that was done. That was well enough, but the Privileges of Parliament were very elastic; and, as far as Treaties were concerned, all the privilege that Parliament had was to discuss them. The House of Commons could not make a Treaty. The making of it rested with the Sovereign, acting through Her Ministers. Members, however, could dismiss a Ministry that made a Treaty they disapproved of. Now, what he would like to have from the Government was a distinct statement that, before any engagement with France was made, Parliament should be consulted. It was the opinion of Gentlemen sitting near him that the Prime Minister had already given such an engagement; but he scarcely thought so. They seemed to think that the arrangement with France would require to be ratified in the same way as that about the Suez Canal. The Government made the latter bargain with the Suez Canal Company; but before it was completed the House of Commons expressed an adverse opinion, and the agreement was never carried out. Would the Ministers say that the same thing would be done with respect to the arrangement with France about Egypt? They had not said so yet. He had no wish to continue the discussion; but, like the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), he wished to put on record his opinion that the Government had not so far made such an arrangement with the House. One other remark he wished to make, and that was that if the Members of the Cabinet believed they could surrender the advantages that England had purchased in Egypt at such a sacrifice of life and treasure, either to France or any other country, they were greatly mistaken. The opinion of the English people on some points of the Egyptian Question might not have been very clearly expressed; but they would be unanimous in demanding that the Government should not throw away the position we had earned by our own sacrifices.

MR. RATHBONE: The question of Egypt involves matters of the most serious consequence. We have been told that we are not to abdicate the position which we hold in Egypt at present, and we were told by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that we were not to lose the fruits of the sacrifice we have made or the privileges which we were entitled to. I must say, Sir, that I do not see the fruits which we should be so anxious to monopolize, and I do not see the privileges which we are so entitled to. I confess I never felt more anxious as to the future of the country, and as to the position which we appear to be drifting into. When we see a Parliament returned with the almost distinct mission to put a stop to aggressive measures calculated to add to the great responsibilities and duties which this country has already undertaken—when we see, in spite of a Government, one of the most powerful we have ever had, and headed by a Minister also the most powerful of this century, and known to be opposed to undertaking greater responsibilities than those which I venture to think this country already has the greatest difficulty adequately in fulfilling, unable to prevent such dangerous undertakings, I must say I do think that there is great danger that this country has reached the point which has been reached in other nations when they have undertaken difficulties and responsibilities beyond what it is in their power to perform, and thus begun the decline and fall of the Empire. And really it is very curious to notice either the want of knowledge or the want of candour with which some statesmen speak on this subject. They speak as if this country had peculiar interests in Egypt and the Suez Canal which were not possessed by the other Powers of Europe, whereas it is exactly the contrary. This country has only a common interest and a common right with the other Powers in Egypt and the Canal. That Canal inflicted the greatest blow upon the supremacy of England—especially its maritime supremacy—and are we then to take the whole burden and difficulty of this Egyptian Question upon our shoulders? I am not now speaking of those difficulties and responsibilities which we have undertaken towards the people of Egypt from what has already been done. That is a question so difficult that I do not venture to speak about it, but will prefer to leave it to those who are much wiser and more experienced than myself. But as a merchant and shipowner I can understand, and I do say, that the interest of the Mediterranean Powers in Egypt and the Suez Canal is in some respects special beyond that which we possess, and is in other respects the same as we possess, and that, therefore, we have no right or duty to claim the monopoly of this question of Egypt and the Suez Canal, and have no right to throw upon this country the enormous sacrifices which, if we insist on remaining permanently in Egypt, we must entail upon this country. I am speaking not of what is said in public, but of what is said in private. In private it is often said—"Oh, let us remain now that we are there;" but I venture to say that the people of this country will eventually not allow you to stay there. I venture to call the attention of the House to the fact that the most intelligent part of our working classes have become, or are becoming, more and more opposed to wars, especially wars of aggression. You may have the country with you for a time, and so long as everything goes on prosperously in a course of aggression, and they will naturally applaud the valour of our soldiers; but when trouble comes, as trouble will in these things, you will find the Democratic feeling in this country will not support you, or carry you through the blunders in which you may be involved. And, therefore, after having entered into these great undertakings and pursued them unwisely, you will have to abandon them with discredit and disgrace. I feel very strongly on this subject; but I do not say we ought to abandon at once the work we have undertaken in Egypt. But when we come to speak as if we were permanently to demand and maintain the special and exclusive charge of Egypt and responsibility for it, then I say we are attempting to do what we are not able to do. We are adding another place to garrison and defend when we already have an Empire sufficiently large for our resources. And remember this is not a financial question alone. If it were I should look upon it with much less anxiety. The question is the blood tax you are imposing upon this country. There is no natural boundary between Alexandria and Capetown; and if you remain in Egypt you will be led on step by step, as in India, to make still further encroachments, and get further responsibilities, until the blood tax will be too heavy for the nation to bear, and you will, as I have already said, have to retire with discredit and disgrace.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he thought the hon. Member's views were probably in harmony with those of the peace-at-any-price Party, and were more suitable for a Radical meeting than for discussion in the House. The hon. Member, however, did not realize that our obligations with regard to Egypt were daily increasing, and that the necessity of keeping the route to India in our own hands was becoming more and more imperative. The question was, whether the rights of this country regarding Egypt should be handed over to the arbitration of other Powers whose interests were not identical with our own, and whether the obligations of England should be submitted to the consideration of Parliament. However explicit the words of the Prime Minister appeared to have been, he ventured to think that on one point, at least, those explanations were not explicit enough. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the communications which might pass between this country and France prior to the Conference would be submitted to the House; and he went on to say that, as far as he could give any assurance, the question to be submitted to the Conference would be one of finance. The question which might be submitted to the Conference might be one of finance; but it did not follow that the question between France and England was one of finance. He had asked the Prime Minister, supposing the control of Egypt was in future to be not a Dual Control, but a Multiple Control, whether that question would be submitted to the House, not after it had been discussed by France and England, and made the basis of negotiations which should be continued at the Conference table, but prior to any arrangement entered into between the Governments of the two countries? That question had not been answered by the Government. An hon. Member had referred to certain rumours as to the negotiations that had taken place between the Government and the Porte relative to a joint expedition of Turkish and English troops to the Soudan and Upper Egypt. He had intended asking the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs two Questions on this subject. He had given the noble Lord private Notice of the Questions; but he had received a note stating that in regard to Questions of this character longer Notice was necessary. It had been impossible for him, under the circumstances, to give longer Notice, and it had been equally impossible to postpone the Questions. Those Questions materially affected the negotiations which would take place at the Conference. They were so important that he maintained the House was entitled not only to an answer, but to an opportunity of considering them. It was alleged, and it had not yet been contradicted, that the Turkish Government had accepted the English invitation to the Conference on the condition that neither the annexation nor the Protectorate of Egypt should be discussed at the Conference, and that Turkey had further said that in the event of a question being raised as to the annexation or protection of Egypt the Turkish Representative at the Conference would leave the meeting. This, he submitted, was a question of the gravest importance. Considering the rights which England had acquired over Egypt by the expenditure of her blood and treasure, and by the obligations which she owed to her Indian Empire to preserve that road open, it was of the utmost importance that the House should be informed by the Government whether or not they went into that Conference cramped and confined by obligations entered into with the Turkish or any other Government. Again, the question had been raised by an hon. Member as to whether or not it was the fact that the Government had entered into negotiations with Turkey for the purpose of using Turkish troops in the Soudan and Upper Egypt. That question had not been denied. The Prime Minister had said that Notice must be given of it; but what did this mean? Surely the Foreign Office was in a position to say "Yes" or "No" as to whether this was really the case or not. This uncertainty, however, was another example of the dangers into which they were being driven. He urged upon the House that the Government were bound to consider the paramount duty imposed upon them, and not to try and escape from the responsibilities which their acts had driven them to incur. They were also bound to consider how they should best consolidate the power of the Empire which had been confided to them.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, great injustice had been done by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). He had listened to the speech of that hon. Member, and he was gratified to hear coming from him sentiments in harmony with the general feeling of the country. He had been denominated a Jingo; but he thought those persons who made this charge were guilty of a remarkable thinness of humour and paucity of intelligence. If Jingo had any meaning at all, it meant a Party that was fond of military adventures, and that involved the country in unnecessary wars. The history of the past four years showed that the Liberal Ministry had exceeded all other Governments in their useless and discreditable military operations. Hon. Members opposite would, he hoped, be a little more careful how they used these senseless epithets in the future. With regard to the question of the Conference, he thought it would be evident to the country that the Prime Minister had distinctly retrograded from the satisfactory statements he made a few days ago. Two points came out prominently from the discussion that afternoon—one that negotiations were going on with France, negotiations which were to be submitted to the Powers, and which, if accepted by them, would form a fresh basis for the Conference. ["No, no!"] If that was not the case, then what was the object of those negotiations? Were they being conducted as a blind to France? If those negotiations had any point whatever, their point was to widen and extend the scope of the Conference. If it was the case that this country, under any conditions, was going to submit its position in Egypt, its political influence in Egypt, and its paramount interests and supremacy in Egypt to France, or to the control of Europe, such a course would be highly dangerous and unsatisfactory. The policy of a Multiple Control was one utterly unsatisfactory, and would be, if persisted in, disastrous to the interests of the country. Turning next to the question of General Gordon at Khartoum, he asked the Prime Minister whether the Government were prepared to state to the House that some preparations had been made to organize an expedition for the relief of General Gordon? Ministers made statements on the 3rd of April which subsequent information had proved to be misleading and inaccurate, and now the Government took refuge in a policy of silence. But this much was known—that a Special Envoy of the Queen at Khartoum had been for six or seven weeks cut off from all communication with this country. They knew he was hemmed in by savage and cruel fanatics; they knew that he was in danger from enemies without and from treachery within the town. Notwithstanding that all these facts had been for a long time in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, they were not even now in a position to make a statement on the subject, and to assure the country that steps were being taken to send out an expedition for the relief of that chivalrous man. Her Majesty's Government alleged military reasons as an excuse for not telling the country what they were doing; but the real fact was that they feared to commit themselves to any decided course of action. The Government were taking no steps to relieve General Gordon; and how was he to rescue the garrisons and accomplish the object of his mission except by mili-

Gentleman has chosen to say that everybody had a suspicion that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government was exceedingly unfair. [Dr. CAMERON: No; I said I had not.] Well, everybody in Scotland except the hon. Member had a suspicion that the Government were dealing very unfairly and with a want of sincerity and earnestness with regard to these questions. He promised us—which I very much regret—a totally different class of Representatives from Scotland from those who at present exist. As I have a very great respect and admiration for the present class of Representatives from Scotland, I should be very sorry if my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow has already determined that the whole of that class is to be changed. But, with regard to the conduct of the Government, all I have to say is that a Report has been presented by the Commissioners of very great importance, containing recommendations unquestionably of a novel character requiring careful examination; that these are founded upon very voluminous evidence, constituting four thick volumes, which, I am ashamed to confess, I have not had time yet to read. As for the notion of embarking on legislation of this character, and announcing the intention of the Government on an afternoon before the Whitsuntide Holidays with reference to matters of such importance, I do not think that is a reasonable demand. Therefore, if Members had been here in greater numbers the Government would have said nothing but what they now say, that it is their duty to examine the recommendations of that Report extremely carefully—especially to examine the evidence upon which it is founded, and how far the evidence bears out these recommendations. It is perfectly impossible, even if the Government had nothing else to do, that they could have made that examination before to-day. I do not know if the hon. Member for Glasgow is prepared to say that he has read the evidence through. If he has, I am prepared to say that he is the only man in this House who has done so; and if that be so, I do not see how the Government can have exposed themselves to the severe censure which he has passed upon them for not having been able this afternoon to announce the resolution at which they had arrived.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he did not understand the hon. Member for Glasgow to expect the Government to announce to-night the legislation which they proposed. He understood that what his hon. Friend had complained of was that the Government, by their action with regard to the hour of proposing the Adjournment, had deprived him of the advantage which he had gained by the ballot with respect to his Motion. Before the Easter Recess the Prime Minister had expressly arranged his Motion for the Adjournment, so that it should not prevent an Evening Sitting. He maintained that the people had a substantial grievance in the fact that the Government, to save a couple of hours' inconvenience, had so arranged the Motion for Adjournment as to preclude the hon. Member from discussing a question of the highest importance to the tenants of Scotland, and of the deepest interest to the people generally. His hon. Friend had not made any complaint of the Government having refused to lay down a Land Bill for Scotland; he had not expected anything so rapid from Her Majesty's Government on that subject. The Government had not at any time shown very much anxiety to deal with and reform the Land Law of Scotland. Even the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act of last year had been so framed as to admit now of an interpretation highly detrimental to the people. The Lord Advocate was answerable for the doubtful framing of that Act, which, instead of being a relief and a protection to the people, was now proving very detrimental to the people of Scotland. They were being evicted after 40 days' notice, in spite of the Act, which said that from the 1st of January they were entitled to six months' notice. He had taken the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey), which, he believed, the Lord Advocate himself would allow stood as high as that of any Member on the Government Bench, and that opinion was distinctly contrary to that of the Lord Advocate. He was afraid that when eminent legal authorities were in direct conflict, the people of the West of Scotland were likely to fall between two stools. He was, however, of opinion that they had not lost much by being deprived of the discussion that evening, because, from the remarks of the Home Secretary, they would not be likely to receive much comfort from the Government at present on the subject. He desired, however, to impress upon Her Majesty's Government the fact that Scotch Members had a very substantial grievance—namely, that the Government, to save a few Members three hours' inconvenience, had so arranged the adjournment as to preclude the hon. Member for Glasgow from bringing on his Motion for the benefit of the crofters.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY said, he desired to express his opinion with respect to the crofters. He was not going to refer to the Report of the Commission; but he thought the position of the people in those parts of the country towards the law was a very unsatisfactory one indeed. The administration of the law in the Western Islands was extremely unsatisfactory, and caused great dissatisfaction to the people there. The Procurator Fiscal, a public official, was also land agent to the proprietor who owned the whole of the country; and the poor crofters frequently did not know when he was acting in the one capacity and when in the other. The consequence was a general want of confidence on the part of the people in the impartiality of the administration of justice; and the Government might expect, in consequence, serious results. He thought it was now the duty of Scotch Members to bring the state of affairs fairly and fully before the Government. If they had a Minister for Scotland they would have someone responsible for redress of the grievances complained of. But as they saw the Government were dealing with this question of a new Minister for Scotland in a very unsatisfactory way, he considered that Scotch Members were perfectly right in complaining. It was all very well for the Home Secretary to reply as he did to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron); but the Government need not be surprised if the people of Scotland should not prove so docile as heretofore, and if their Representatives showed themselves determined in having more attention paid by Government to Scotch affairs. His object in rising was to call the attention of the Government to the state of things existing in the West of Scotland, and to the expectations entertained by the people of Government action on the Report of its own Commissioners. He hoped the Home Secretary would devote some of his attention to the Report of the Commission during the Holidays, and that after the Recess the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be in a position to intimate what the Government intended to do on the Report of the Commission.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. NORWOOD said, that he wished to call attention to the position of affairs with respect to the Merchant Shipping Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had made an able and very lengthy speech on the second reading, and had advanced what he no doubt believed to be valid and satisfactory charges with respect to the conduct of certain shipowners. It had been impossible, at the late hour at which that speech had been concluded, to give anything like an answer to the statements and allegations made. Many of the statements, he was sure, could be disproved, or, at the least, materially modified; and he asserted, on the part of the shipping commerce of this country, that they were entitled to a very early opportunity of resuming that debate. He ventured to say that the onus of any loss of life, if it was true that loss of life did occur from preventible causes arising from delays in passing the Bill through the various stages, must not be laid upon the Representatives of the seaports, but on the Government, unless they took steps at once for the resumption of the debate. Not one of the shipowning Members of that House had been a party to the negotiations concerning the Amendments proposed in the Bill; and until they had seen the new clauses they were not prepared to say what position they were going to take. They must have an opportunity of expressing their views and those of their constituents.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he did not rise to continue the discussion on the Report of the Crofters' Commission. He only desired to point out to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), and to the other Members who echoed the complaint he made, that they were entirely mistaken in supposing that the action of the Government in moving the adjournment of the House at the Morning Sitting had in any degree prejudiced their position. If the Motion for the adjournment of the House had been made at the Evening Sitting it would not have enabled the hon. Member for Glasgow to bring forward his Motion, because the discussion they had at 2 o'clock this afternoon would have been resumed at 9 o'clock, and would have anticipated the Motion of the hon. Member for Glasgow, so that the prospect of bringing forward that Motion would have been very slight indeed. In reference to the point that had been raised by the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood), he had no doubt that on an early opportunity after the Recess his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government would be able to state the intentions of the Government with regard to the Merchant Shipping Bill. It was generally admitted by Members who spoke on both sides of the House that a pledge had been given by the right hon. Gentleman that the fullest intimation respecting the communications going on between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France and other Powers should be laid before the House at the earliest opportunity, in such a manner as would afford hon. Members an opportunity of forming an opinion upon them. The protests which had been made by hon. Members on various sides of the House would be an assistance to the Government in forming an opinion on the difficult question they had under consideration. It had been generally admitted by those Members who had spoken that it was impossible for the Government to add anything, while negotiations were in progress, to the communication that had been made by his right hon. Friend. He now appealed to the House to allow the discussion on the crofters' question to come to a close, so as to enable his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland to make his promised statement on the proposed amendment of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was sorry to interpose at the present moment; but he thought the House ought to consider the position in which it stood with regard to the Merchant Shipping Bill. Certain grave and serious charges had appeared in the newspapers in reference to the shipping interest and various shipowners, and among others with regard to Captain Hatfield, a respectable constituent of his. Those charges had been made, it had been ascertained, without any kind of notice or kind of inquiry into the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is clearly out of Order in referring to a previous debate of the present Session.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was only referring to statements which had appeared in the newspapers.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was explicitly referring to what passed on a previous occasion, and therefore he is out of Order.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was simply desirous to refer to a statement which had appeared in the newspapers; and although it was the same in all he could not say distinctly that it had emanated from the Board of Trade. Still, it stated, apparently with some degree of authority, that a certain speech was to be printed and circulated; and when one saw the same statement in all the newspapers one naturally had an assumption that it had been sent to those journals. He should like to point out to the House that whilst the proceedings in the House were privileged, and whilst it might be possible to make unjustifiable attacks upon individuals which might be believed outside, yet such libellous statements, if published in pamphlet form, would render their authors or publishers liable for the consequences. He felt, after the ruling of the Speaker, that he must not refer even to the newspaper reports of what was said on a previous occasion; but he now wanted to point out this—that this paragraph which had appeared in the newspapers with so much apparent authority had since been contradicted; and it had come to his knowledge that one of the gentlemen who might have had recourse to legal proceedings against the Board of Trade would find himself in a difficulty, because of the withdrawal of what he thought really was the original intention. He would ask the President of the Board of Trade explicitly whether he did not at the present moment hold in his possession a formal request from Captain Hatfield to correct certain libellous statements which had been made, and whether he persisted in those statements, because he would take the liberty of saying that he knew Captain Hatfield to be an honest, straightforward fellow. He had lost certain ships, and he (Mr.

Mac Iver) wished to know, with reference to these statements, whether it was not a fact——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is distinctly reviving a past debate.

MR. MAC IVER said he bowed to the Speaker's ruling, and could only express his regret that in his desire to say a word or two in justification of a man he knew well, and whom he thought had been unjustly attacked, he should unwittingly have called upon himself the intervention of the Speaker.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Member had asked him a distinct Question, and he would answer it distinctly in two or three words. The hon. Member asked him to state if he had received letters from Captain Hatfield to set him right in regard to certain statements he had made. He had not. The only letter he had received was one which had been published in the newspapers, and which was so offensive in tone, that he thought it quite unnecessary to take any notice of it. But there was another letter published by the same Captain Hatfield, in which he practically admitted that he had had 12 ships and lost 11 of them in seven years.

MR. MAC IVER said, he respectfully contradicted the accuracy of the statement. He had in his possession a copy of the letter which was sent to the right hon. Gentleman.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. KENNY said, he wished to call attention to the conviction of the Delahuntys at the Cork Winter Assizes, and the bearing of the dying declaration of the witness Slattery on that case. Having stated the evidence in the case, the hon. Member asked that an inquiry should be held into the facts connected with it. If an independent inquiry was granted, he would produce evidence that the person, Donnellan, who was supposed to be fired at, was mentally affected, and that he admitted in Court that he was subject to delusions; he would produce evidence to show that a telegram was sent by Constable Halloran from Cork to get Slattery released in order that he would produce Markham to get evidence that he heard the shot fired; he would produce evidence that Markham said he would swear anything if he were paid for it; and, of course, they would have the dying declaration of Slattery that his own evidence was false, and that he had suborned the evidence of other two witnesses. In the circumstances, he asked that an inquiry should be made with a view to justice being done to two possibly innocent men.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that he was quite prepared to do what he had already done more than once before—namely, to consult with the Law Officers, and ascertain whether it would be proper to refer the affidavit of Slattery to the Judge who tried the case, and ask him what bearing it had upon the trial over which he presided. He considered that step was quite within the bounds of propriety; and it was very much what the hon. Member himself had asked for when he referred to the fact that consideration would have been given to the request by the Home Secretary if this case had occurred on this side of the Channel. He could not, however, hold out any prospect of a sworn inquiry being granted.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Motion [26th May],

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881,' and to provide facilities for the sale and purchase of land in Ireland."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. TREVELYAN: It will be my interest and my duty to show my gratitude to the House for giving me this opportunity of making a short introduction to the proposals of the Government; and I shall not enter at any length, nor, perhaps, shall I directly enter at all, into the motives which actuated the Government in making these proposals. The pressure in the direction of an extension of facilities to tenants to purchase their holdings has come from two quarters.

In the first place, there are the advocates of peasant proprietary, those who believe that there is supreme virtue in possession; that the sense of possession is a spur to labour, to thrift, to the quiet but continuous enterprize which is essential to make farming successful. Among these may be included those who look rather to the political than the economical advantages of the movement; and who hold that to be owner of his farm makes a man a good citizen, so that a large infusion of farming proprietors into the social system of Ireland would mean that there would be so many more contented and law-abiding men who could be trusted to remain such in any dangerous emergency. These ideas have been, comparatively speaking, of old standing, and one who held them most sincerely and warmly was the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). The Irish Church Act and the Land Act of 1870 both passed while he was connected with the Government; and both Bills contained an honest, and in the first case a successful attempt to promote the system which he had at heart. The same aspirations left their mark on the Land Act of 1881, and the hope that the Purchase Clauses of that measure would be among its most important provisions held a larger space in the minds of its supporters than, perhaps, they now remembered. But the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act of 1870 have not succeeded, and the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act of 1881, in comparison with the hopes entertained, have failed. Only 870 tenants purchased under the Land Act of 1870 during the first 12 years of its operation, and it is doubtful whether all those could be classed as peasant or even farming proprietors. Under the Act of 1880 about 430 peasant proprietors have been created in the course of two years. If the two Acts between them have made one farmer in Ireland out of every 400 a possessor of his farm, it is the most they have done. Now, the Government believe, and earnestly believe, that the social and political state of Ireland and its agricultural conditions are such that there never was a country in the world in which it is more important that many of those who till the land should own it. They recognize that former legislative attempts to bring this about have not met the success that could be wished; and in the measure which I have the honour to lay before the House the Government have done their utmost in order to accomplish an end which, if it can be accomplished, I believe the whole House and the whole Kingdom would regard with satisfaction. And the other great class who urge an extension of purchasing facilities to tenants are those who, from private interests or on public grounds, view with anxiety the deadlock in the Irish land market. No one, I think, can deny that when the land of a country is practically unsaleable it is a great misfortune to the community and a great hardship to a very large class of individuals. And it certainly cannot be denied that such a state of things now holds in Ireland. In the year 1849 the land market in Ireland was in a state to which men look back as to a phenomenon. The distress among landowners, the burdens on property, the impossibility of realizing the value of it, was such that Parliament had resort to measures which, in considering the opinions of those days, must have seemed nearly revolutionary. And what was the state of things which induced a Parliament with the ideas of nearly 40 years ago to pass the Encumbered Estates Act? These estates were in the hands of Receivers, the rental of which was £750,000 per annum, and there were nearly 1,000 Chancery suits in which the rights of the parties had been ascertained, but in which it was impossible to realize the property. Well, Sir, at the present moment estates with a rental of £440,000 are in the hands of the Court Receivers, and there are at least 750 properties ready for sale, or ripening towards sale, if only the market were open, which cannot now be sold at all. The block in the land market of 1884 already bears comparison with the famous block of 1849; and another three years like the last would make it every bit as bad. For the state of things during the last three years has been exceptional to a degree that the public are hardly aware of. Between 1850 and 1858 the Encumbered Estates Court sold £23,000,000 worth of landed property. Between 1859 and 1879, inclusive, the Landed Estates Court sold £29,000,000 worth. The average annual sales of those 30 years were at the rate of £1,750,000 a-year. The average annual sales of the 20 years between 1859 and 1879, which it is fairer, perhaps, to take, because they represent the normal dealings of the country, were at the rate of £1,500,000 a-year. The average sales in the last three years have been as near as possible £250,000; and this does not represent the full strength of the case, for of the £750,000 of property sold in the last three years £300,000 was town and house property, and the quantity of agricultural property sold was about £150,000 in each year, as against £1,500,000 in ordinary years. The officers of the Court tell me that in an ordinary year they had about 200 estates awaiting sale. They now have, at least, 750. Between 1865 and 1881 the average of the agricultural property sold in no year fell below 20 years' purchase. In 1882-3 the little that was sold only fetched 18 years' purchase; and if sales had been pressed it is not easy to say to what figure it would have fallen. And even so, and at this price, out of 108 lots that were offered for sale in 1882, 63 remained unsold. Out of 165 in 1883, 123 remained unsold. In old days when a large estate was under the hammer the number of bidders would be such that auctions were held in the Round Room of the Rotunda or in the largest chamber at the Four Courts. Now, when auctions are held in the Landed Estates Courts, sometimes, including loungers, hardly 20 people are present. Sir, there is one cause of the deadlock which this Bill will undoubtedly remove. The Committee of the House of Lords have mentioned several obstacles in the way of the tenants purchasing; but they have not mentioned a principal one, which is that they are waiting for better terms. After so large and influential a Committee had once held out to the tenants the prospect of having the whole purchase money, it is certain that not a tenant will purchase until he knows what answer the Government would make to such a proposal. Until, as far as a Ministry can ordain it, finality is established in this matter—until the terms are clearly laid down up to which the Government will go, and up to which Parliament will follow it, the deadlock in Irish land will continue, and grow worse, if there is room for it to grow worse. And, therefore, the Government, in the measure which I beg leave to introduce, have gone to the utmost limits which the welfare of the State and the security of the Exchequer will permit; and if the Bill finds favour enough to become an Act, the Irish tenants will know the utmost which in this matter they are to expect from Parliament so long as Parliament is guided in any way by the present Government. In referring to the Exchequer, I cannot leave without mention the deep personal interest which my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken in the furtherance of this question, the active initiative with which he has urged it from first to last, and the minute care which he has bestowed on the details of a scheme the unfolding of which would come more effectively from his lips. But he chooses to keep himself in the background, and I shall try to make up for my deficiencies in the only way I can—by the studied brevity which, in laying our scheme before the House, I shall endeavour to reconcile with as much clearness and lucidity of explanation as it is within my power to compass. The method I shall adopt is to state in succession the obstacles to the purchase of estates by the tenants, and the provisions by which this measure proposes to alleviate or to obviate them. These obstacles may be divided into two great classes—the legal obstacles, by which I mean the drawbacks of time, trouble, and costliness which are involved in the present state of the laws of purchase, sale, and title; and the administrative and financial obstacles, which consist in the insufficient attractiveness of the terms offered to the proposed purchaser, And, first, with regard to title. At present a tenant for life or other limited owner, if he wants to get the favourable terms of the Act of 1881, must sell to the tenants under the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act by a process which does not give the purchasing tenant a complete and absolute title, and which lays on him a possibly very large and undefined cost, inasmuch as all the expenses of dealing with the purchase money, ascertaining to whom it is due, and distributing it to the right claimants, must be borne by the purchaser. This liability in itself renders it necessary for the purchaser to employ a solicitor, if it were merely to ascertain that the case was a safe and simple one; and where it is not perfectly safe and simple, no man in the rank of a plain farmer can be expected to venture to buy a property which has so serious a responsibility attached to it. To be responsible for the distribution of the purchase money under a complicated settlement, and then to have a title which may possibly be defective, is a prospect that may frighten the boldest. Well, Sir, this difficulty the Government measure will entirely obviate. That measure proposes to take advantage of the machinery of the Settled Estates Act of 1882, and enable a limited owner to make title, through the Land Commission, to the fee-simple of an estate, for purposes of sale, with as much freedom as if he were the absolute owner. We propose, likewise, that the Land Commission may give the purchaser an absolute statutory Parliamentary title. There will be no legal expenses to the purchaser, except such as may arise from his thinking it convenient to employ a solicitor to make his application, or represent him in his absence from Dublin —expenses of which the Court could not take cognizance. The stamp duty, a matter of one-half per cent on the purchase, is the most that he will have to pay. There will be little or no delay, for as soon as the seller has proved to the satisfaction of the Court that he is an owner competent to make title under this Act, a vesting order, in lieu of a conveyance, will then and there be made out in favour of the purchasing tenant, and he will not have to wait for his title until the rights as to the purchase money have been ascertained. The expense of making out his title will, of course, be borne by the owner who wishes to sell. The expense of investigating the title will be borne by the Land Commission. The tenant's part in the transaction, if he assents to the financial conditions I am going to describe hereafter, will be limited to marching off with his Parliamentary title in his pocket as clear and undoubted an owner of his farm as if he had purchased it in the Landed Estates Court. Another main difficulty at present is that the purchase-money, in the case of a settled estate, can only be invested in the Government Funds or other securities yielding a very low rate of interest, or in a fresh purchase of land, the very idea of which may be dismissed as beside the question while the present condition of things lasts. Of course, in an estate of which the settlements contained selling clauses this difficulty would not exist; but those estates are very few indeed in Ireland, so strong has been the attachment of the Irish landlord to landed property, and so profound in old days was the habit of providing for younger children by burdening the property instead of by selling it. The Committee of the House of Lords describe this difficulty in very forcible terms, and suggest a remedy which our Bill adopts. We propose to authorize investments in all the securities which are sanctioned by the Settled Estates Act of 1882—East India Stock and guaranteed railways, mortgages, Stock of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and other securities; and we give the Land Commission power to appoint trustees to buy, hold, and administer these securities. We have every hope that under these arrangements the former owner and those dependent on the estate will enjoy as large an income from the produce of the sale as will be consistent with their own security. Another difficulty connected with the landlord's title arises where the land is subject to a quit rent or to a chief rent, which, the Lords' Committee informs us, is said to be the case with one-third of the land in Ireland. There is now no power to apportion this burden, and the whole rent continues to be payable out of every holding into which the estate is divided. The Bill of the Government gives the Land Commission express power to redeem the chief rent, apportioning the price of it among the holdings in arranging the instalments of the purchase-money, and they are likewise to have all the powers of the Landed Estates Court with regard to the apportioning of quit rents and Crown rents in such a manner that, where the chief rent is not brought up, the new tenant proprietor will pay his share of it, and his share only. Sir, I will venture to say that such a complete and searching proposal for the simplification and cheapening of legal proceedings never entered the mind of man—[*A laugh*]—not even those of the hon. Members for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) and Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold). I have listened to many speeches on the cheapening of law in this House; but I certainly have never heard one which exceeds this proposal, which, as soon as a *primâ facie* case for the ownership of land is established, enables the would-be purchaser to obtain an indefeasible title with no legal cost except that of the stamp duty; and I think I may call upon the hon. Member who laughs to tell me the means by which the transfer of land can be made cheaper than that. I will say a word to the English Members here, and state a fact which, I think, is a most interesting one, by which I think I prove conclusively that, besides being convenient, this plan of the Government is perfectly safe. It is impossible to abstain from a reflection of what this bugbear—the possible insecurity of landed property is—which has for generations frightened us from reforming our system of conveyancing in England. The system which I have described in principle is that which prevails in the Landed Estates Court and prevailed in the Encumbered Estates Court for a collective period of 30 years. In those 30 years £50,000,000 of property, one-fourth of the land of Ireland, has passed through the Court, and has come out with a Parliamentary title attached to it; and I am informed by the officials of the Court that there is not in their memory a single case of any rightful owner of an estate who, in the end, found himself robbed of his property. In one case the dividing line between one farm and another was in one of the Court maps drawn a few yards too much to the right or to the left, and, of course, that could not be altered, but will have to remain so until the Day of Judgment; but that is the whole sacrifice in the way of security to property which Ireland has made in order to have the ownership of one-fourth of her soil put outside the province of litigation and uncertainty. And now, Sir, I leave the legal side of the question and come to the administrative; and, without beating about the bush, I will go straight to the point, and inform the House what our proposals are. The present state of things, familiar to Irish Members, but, perhaps, not always so present to the minds of English Members, is this. Under the Land Act of 1881 the Land Commission may lend to the tenants three-fourths of the purchase money. It is lent at 3½ per cent. The tenant pays £5 a-year for 35 years for every £100 of the loan. This is the Sinking Fund, and at the end of that period accounts are wound up between him and the State. Now, Sir, I have forborne from quoting any part of the Blue Books which contain the result of inquiries into the land system of Ireland. If one once began one would never stop; for these inquiries have been conducted by highly competent men, who examine highly competent witnesses, and there is interest and instruction in every page. So now I will quote nothing in support of my assertion, but will say only that the evidence about tenants who have purchased under the various Acts goes with irresistible weight to prove this proposition — that of the tenants who have purchased their holdings, the most thriving and prosperous have been those who have paid down, out of their own resources, the margin of one-third or one-fourth which they did not borrow from the Government. The next class in prosperity are those who had credit to borrow that margin at a reasonable rate. The third, and too often most unprosperous class, are those who borrowed the margin at a high and even ruinous rate of interest—such men as those whom we are told of in the evidence of Mr. Murrough O'Brien before Lord Bessborough's Commission, who borrowed the margin at 20 per cent interest, and borrowed likewise the money to pay for the legal expenses of the conveyance and for the mortgage deed on their holdings. Now, Sir, the principle of our scheme is that we wish to have as many of the purchasing tenants of Ireland as possible in the first class, and none in the third. We hold very firmly by the belief that a man cannot invest his savings better than in the purchase of his home and homestead; and, on the other hand, we are determined that, if a tenant is fit to become a proprietor at all, he shall not have to become one by hampering himself with usurious interest. In order to induce the thrifty and saving tenants of Ireland to put a helping hand to the task of making themselves owners, the Treasury has consented to reduce the interest from 3½ to 3¼ per cent in the case of those tenants who provide a fourth of the purchase money, and to extend the term of years—an extension which may safely be granted in the case of men who have given a sort of hostage to Providence by putting down hard cash of their own. Instead of paying £5 on every £100 for 35 years, they will henceforward pay £4 10*s.* for 40 years. If such a man at present pays £100 a-year rent, and purchases his farm at 20 years' purchase, his case will stand thus —he will pay on the £1,500 advanced by the Government £67 10*s*. The margin of £500, at £5 per cent, would come to £25. Then come the extra rates which, as a proprietor, he will henceforward have to pay. To this calculation I have devoted more hours than it will take seconds to give it to the House; and the House will, perhaps, take it on trust when I put it at 6 per cent on the rent—that is, £6; making a total of £98 10*s*. If such a man bought at 20 years' purchase, he would, if he provided a fourth of the money himself, become full owner of his farm at the end of 40 years, during which he would pay in interest, rent, and extra expenses somewhat less than he pays in rent now. But, besides giving an advantage to the tenant who is willing and able to contribute to the purchase, the Government desire to fulfil their object, and exempt every tenant from borrowing at usurious interest. To accomplish this end they propose two means; one very small, indeed, in comparison to the other, which I will describe in a single sentence. They propose to allow, in the case of a limited owner, that part of the purchase money may remain on mortgage on the farms which he has sold under the Act, so that arrangements may be made between tenant and landlord in a manner that would facilitate sales, give a good rate of interest to the one, and protect the other from the evils of usury. But the other proposal of the Government is indefinitely larger. The Government, after long and anxious consideration, have come to the conclusion that whatever they could be induced to do in the future they should do now and at once; and so they have arrived at the determination, under certain—as they think, sufficient—conditions and guarantees to advance to the tenant the whole purchase money. In the first place, the Land Commissioners must assure themselves that the price is a fair one, the security good, and the transaction one which will benefit the tenant and the community. When they have satisfied themselves of this they may advance to the tenant the whole of the purchase money, not, as at present, at 3½ per cent, but at 3¼. Paying £5 every year the tenant will be enabled to become full and absolute owner of his farm at the end of 33 years; and I maintain that such an offer has never been made by any State to any class or condition of its citizens. It is impossible to ask the taxpayers of the United Kingdom to show such confidence in the farmers of Ireland unless the taxpayers of Ireland evince that confidence themselves; and the liability of the tenants who have borrowed the whole sum from the State will have to be strengthened by a local guarantee which will not be required in the case of those who have borrowed only three-fourths. It is proposed—and here I must beg hon. Members to hear the whole of what I have to say before they make up their minds on a point—it is proposed to make the county cess responsible for the deficiency in the payments of the purchasers. Hon. Members must not think this very alarming, for I am glad to say that the experience of the Land Commissioners is that this liability is very small indeed. The Land Commissioners, under the unfavourable terms under which it has sold land, either itself, or as the inheritor of the Church Commissioners, easily and cheaply collects its instalments from purchasers by a very simple process of receivable orders, which I suppose are cashed in banks; and between March 1883 and March 1884 it has only increased its arrears of rent by £150 for the whole of Ireland. We may, therefore, believe that these deficiencies will be very small indeed. But where the Land Commission fails to collect these instalments—for it will continue to collect them in the case of the new loans as it has in the case of the old—the county cess will have to make them good. It would be manifestly unjust that, in an operation intended to benefit both landlord and tenant, the guarantee should fall upon a fund to which the tenant, in most cases, alone contributes; and in the payments which will have to be made in case of deficiency the cess will be divided between tenant and landlord. Again, it would be unjust that a district should be burdened with a liability which it had had no voice in accepting; and consequently each purchase scheme, after being approved by the Land Commission, will be submitted for approval or rejection, and only for approval or rejection outright to a local body. The composition of that body was a subject of long and nice discussion. At first the idea was to have a Board composed of representatives elected, half of them by the owners and half by the occupiers of the county; but this idea had to be abandoned on account of its expense and complexity. The proposal now is that a Board, not less in number than eight, not more than 16, shall be appointed in the following manner:—The elected Guardians of every Union, if, as in half the counties is fortunately the case, there are between four and eight Unions, shall elect each of them one person who is either an elected Guardian or a person qualified to be an elected Guardian by property situated within the county. [Mr. SEXTON: That is, each Union shall elect one?] Yes; that is the system we shall endeavour to adopt. To these the Grand Jury shall add as many more persons, whom they themselves shall nominate. If the Unions in the county are more than eight, as is the case in four counties, the Local Government Board will be responsible for grouping them. If they are less than four, as is the case in 12 counties, the Local Government Board will be responsible for making arrangements by which at least four representatives will be returned. The Board will be elected for three years. A casual vacancy among the representatives of the Guardians will be filled by election, in the case of the representatives of the Grand Jury by co-option; and no contract will be complete unless three-fourths of the members sign their names to it. This machinery, in default of any better existing, is a very cheap and ready method of getting, not only the opinion of the county, but the opinion of both classes in the county; not only the opinion of the county as a whole, but the views, the local knowledge, the local co-operation of every corner of the district which is affected. If this Board accept the liability it will be the business of the Grand Jury to carry it out, and the Grand Jury will have against defaulting tenants all the powers at present possessed by the Land Commission, powers which I am glad to say—for it speaks very well for the Irish tenant when he sees his way to an independent position—they have seldom and almost never been under the necessity of employing. And one more point. Many of those who have taken interest in the formation of an Irish peasant proprietary, have seen in it an incidental means of providing thrifty Irish tenants with a handy and lucrative class of investment, which is at this moment so sorely wanted in Ireland. The Irish peasants who place their collective millions of savings in deposit banks which pay them, one year with another, little over 1½ per cent would be glad of an Irish security easily attainable, easily transferable, the interest on which was paid down at their door, and which, when paid, was well worth their while to take. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) urged the formation of such a security in his speech of last year, the re-reading of which has been a pleasant task; and Mr. Vernon, in his admirable evidence before the Lords' Committee, described the effect which such a security, if issued in small sums and payable in Ireland, would have in promoting saving habits and in encouraging attachment to the law. The Government, entering into these views, propose that the Treasury shall have power to pay the whole or part of the purchase-money in Three per Cent Debentures of the Land Commission, issued in small amounts, by the Bank of Ireland, the interest to be payable at the Bank of Ireland out of the instalments received by the Land Commission, with a Treasury guarantee at the back of them. In the opinion of the Government, bonds issued under these conditions would, to a large extent at any rate, stay in Ireland, and provide the Irish peasant with a form of national investment which small farmers on this side of the Channel will be inclined to envy him. The staff of clerks and inspectors which will be required for carrying out these duties will, in the main, be appointed under the 45th section of the Land Act; but power will be taken to provide the Land Commissioners with such skilled legal advisers as they may require to do the work of conveyancing. And there is one still more important personal change on which a few words must be said. The work of the Sub-Commissioners is going forward steadily and satisfactorily, as far as pace is concerned, and we begin to see daylight fast approaching through the cloud of arrears of applications to fix a fair rent. In a non-argumentative speech I make no remark on any other part of their work; but we see an immense quantity of arrears being removed. But it is quite another matter with the appeals. There the work to be done has gone fast and far ahead of the means of doing it. The Land Commissioners have laboured as men have seldom laboured. They have worked hard, and have worked conscientiously. They have rejected, as we might be sure such men would reject, all the advice that has been offered to them to shorten their labour by giving off-hand and superficial decisions. In spite of all their exertions, the work has grown so upon them that the last Report shows that out of 15,700 appeals more than 10,000 remain to be dealt with. Seven hundred and sixty came on in the month of April, against 180 that were disposed of. It is impossible for the Government to leave such a condition of things any longer without a remedy, and the remedy they propose is this. The tenure of the fourth Land Commissioner, who is a layman, lapses in August. Lord Monck was appointed only until August, and has done his duty under very great disadvantages. The Government propose to appoint a fourth lay Commissioner for two years certain. Moreover, it is proposed that the Lord Lieutenant may select two Chairmen of counties to serve on the Appeal Courts of the Land Commission, and out of these materials two Courts of three members each may be constituted. Judge O'Hagan would preside in the one, and the next Judge appointed to the High Court—whoever he may be—in the other; and, till that appointment is made, Mr. Litton would act in his place. Each President would have a Chairman and a lay Commissioner as his Assessors. With this addition to their sorely overworked body the Land Commission could grapple with the mass of work before them; and, when a serious impression was made on that mass, the experience of other Courts of Law which have got into arrear, and afterwards recovered themselves, is that a good deal of what remained would melt away of itself. The Government earnestly trust that on this point hon. Members will make allowances for the difficulties that must beset every scheme, and will co-operate to remove an evil which all acknowledge, and which presses heavily on everybody concerned. And now, Sir, I have referred to the main points of the measure, with one exception. It is proposed to limit the amount of money lent by the State under this Act to £5,000,000 in any one year, and to limit the total amount to £20,000,000. The measure would not be justified if the possibility was even admitted that the Government could become at one and the same time the mortgagee of the whole of Ireland. And this brings me to the consideration of a proposal which has been made by influential deputations, and important public meetings, that the Government should lend money to Irish landlords at a low rate to consolidate their mortgages. Sir, the Government cannot see how any practical distinction can be made and kept between one class of charges on land and another. They believe that the loan would extend to all mortgages on land in the country, and these in the aggregate have been roughly estimated at £100,000,000; that it would be a financial operation gigantic beyond any precedent or conception; and that it would nullify the pecuniary limit which they have laid down in the Bill, and would end practically in making the State the absentee landlord for half the value of the land of Ireland. Nor does the Government discern how a distinction can be drawn between Irish landlords and other classes, whose incomes have been diminished, and their interests affected, by public legislation. Nor, again, is it easy to resist the claim of English and Scotch landlords who have suffered as much—in my belief, at least, as much—from economical causes as Irish landlords have suffered from legislation and economical causes combined, in a manner which it will be very hard for a practical political economist strictly to define and separate. The undertaking on which we are asked to embark is absolutely unlimited in its scope. The Government would have to cut itself free from the principle which has hitherto governed all loans from the State to individuals; and that principle is that loans shall be made for purposes of public utility, or that combine a large element of public utility—agricultural drainage, sanitary works, labourers' cottages; not the mere relief of the individual from pecuniary pressure, however undeserved and however lamentable. There is another principle from which the Government cannot depart. When loans are made from the State to individuals, they are made not for an indefinite period. They are terminable within a certain fixed number of years. And when the landlords found themselves unable to pay off their mortgages, when the interest is only 5 per cent, we do not see how they could pay 5 per cent to the Government, even if by doing so they could gradually recoup their principal. And now it only remains to meet the possible objections which may be made by those who think that the Government should have adopted other methods of attaining their purpose. It may be asked why we have not taken any of the ingenious plans for the institution of a land bank as intermediary between the tenants and the Government. Sir, my answer is that in all the plans I have seen the proposed bank would be virtually a Government Department, with a body of shareholders, who would be paid by Government for bringing in their capital. There is no profit to be made by a Corporation which everyone would regard as a part of the Executive, and which would be watched by its clients, and their Parliamentary Representatives, with a determination that the money which Parliament lent should pay not a penny of toll on the way. Prussia, which has been quoted in favour of land banks, is an instance to the contrary ; for the banks of Prussia are all State banks, and the rates are so adjusted that the margin just covers the State expenses, and no more. I could say more, were it not that I believe that the hon. Members for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) and County Cork (Mr. Shaw) had brought in their proposal of a land bank because they considered that to be the form in which private Members could, with most propriety, make suggestions to Parliament, not demands on the Treasury; and that, if the object which they have so much at heart is served, they would be willing not to take exception to the precise method, even though it is not that which they might, if they had the first word in the matter, have preferred. A good deal has been written, and something said, in favour of giving over the working of the Purchase Clauses to the Landed Estates Court instead of the Land Commission. The Landed Estates Court and the Board of Works worked the Bright Clauses of the Land Act; but in 1881 it was thought best to alter this, and give the duty to the Land Commission; and I think the change was a right one. To carry out these clauses properly two kinds of work are necessary—work of an executive character, the making of advances, the consideration of the character of the security, the consideration whether the purchase is not improvident, and the negotiation of purchases. Then there is work of a *quasi*-judicial character, involving the making out the vesting order to the tenant, and the investigation of the landlord's title. The Land Judges are a branch of the High Court of Justice, and it would be a thing foreign to their functions to impose on them the duties of an executive kind just stated. The Board of Works could not exercise *quasi*-judicial functions; and it is manifestly convenient and conducive to expedition to intrust the conduct of the entire business to one body, and there is no body except the Land Commission qualified to exercise both executive and judicial functions. Well, Sir, that is the scheme; and the only thing that remains is to see whether it will be taken advantage of by those for whose benefit it is intended. I see that Mr. Davitt states that this Bill is introduced for no other purpose than to save some landlords from bankruptcy, and he advises the tenants to be very slow to avail themselves of its provisions. Sir, my belief is that in the course of time, if not immediately, the tenants will begin to see what a great boon is offered them; and then no advice in the world, coming from whatever quarter it may, will prevent them from taking the chance that is given them. By pledging the credit of this great and wealthy nation, we are enabled to offer to the Irish farmer such terms as no other Government in Europe has ever offered, or has, up to this time, been able to offer, or even to approach. And for the peace of Ireland, and the happiness of Ireland, it is earnestly to be hoped that tenant and landlord alike will lay to heart the conviction that the Government firmly believes that in this Bill it has gone as far as the nation, as a whole, is prepared to go, and that they will consent to regard this Bill and the Land Act of 1881 as constituting together, not a shifting and temporary arrangement, but a veritable and permanent land settlement for Ireland.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he did not wish to offer any criticism or any opinion whatever on the very remarkable and very important statement which had been made by the Chief Secretary very clearly, as he always made a statement. He did not intend to say one word on the matter, although some of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, particularly towards the close, invited warm criticism. At the time at his disposal, however, it would be impossible to enter into the matter; and he only rose for the purpose of impressing on the right hon. Gentleman that this Bill should be at once printed and circulated, in order that, whether they viewed the matter from the landlord or the tenant or the English standpoint, they might have an opportunity of forming a real and clearly satisfactory judgment on what he said to-day. He would suggest the Bill should be issued during the Recess.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, he did not wish to detain the House by offering any criticism on this important matter; but it would require serious consideration. All he hoped was that the Bill would not be rushed through the House in the small hours of the morning, as the Tramways and Public Companies Act was.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that the Government would have the Bill printed, and circulated as rapidly as possible. Some of the clauses were already printed, and others required further consideration; but he could assure the hon. and gallant Member that the Bill would issue as rapidly as possible.

Mr. GRAY: When?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he could not yet fix the day.

Mr. PARNELL said, that nobody, of course, could be expected, nor would it be right, to express any opinion whatever on the weighty proposals in the Bill which had just been explained by the right hon. Gentleman. He would only say that he wished to direct special attention to the provisions in the Bill requiring a local guarantee for the whole money where the tenant did not advance any portion of the purchase money himself. That provision was of a most momentous character, and it was one which would have to be very carefully considered, and its operation weighed, since it might entail consequences resulting from too high a price being paid for the land, which would be most unfortunate for the ratepayers of Ireland. As regarded the other proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, he would not express any hasty opinion; but he would say that the constitution of the fresh Appeal Court which it was proposed to constitute was a most unfortunate one. It was proposed to bring into the Land Commission Court two County Court Chairmen; and he ventured to say that there were not three such officials in the country who were fitted to be intrusted with the impartial consideration of these contested land cases. The result would be, therefore, of a Court constituted as it was proposed to be by the Bill, that there would be a large increase in the number of final appeals, and a block still greater than existed at present in the progress of the Business, owing to the unfortunate decisions which had been given by the Land Commission already in existence. He would say nothing further in regard to the other proposals of the Bill than that they were, in his view, most important in their character, and that they would receive most candid consideration by Members representing Irish constituencies.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 238.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [May 26] *reported.*

Resolution read a first and second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Debate arising;

And it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *Thursday* 5th June.

MOTIONS.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in Ireland relating to the Ennis and West Clare

Railway, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 233.]

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in Ireland relating to the Clogher Valley Tramway, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 234.]

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 5th day of June. — (*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

HER MAJESTY'S ATTORNEY GENERAL *v.* MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

Ordered, That Sir Thomas Erskine May' K.C.B., Clerk of the House of Commons, have leave to attend and give evidence and produce such papers as may be required, on the trial of a suit brought against Charles Bradlaugh, Esquire, a Member of this House, by the Attorney General, on behalf of Her Majesty; and that leave be also given to the proper Officers of this House, and to the Shorthand Writer attending this House, to attend the said Trial, and give evidence, and produce the Journals of this House, and such other Papers and Documents as may be required. — (*Mr. Attorney General.*)

House adjourned at five minutes before Seven o'clock till Thursday 5th June.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Athlone Borough, *v.* Sir John J. Ennis, baronet, deceased.

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Class I.—Public Works and Buildings—Votes 4 to 21—23 to 26.

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order * [221].

Committee—Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) [124] [House counted out].

QUESTIONS.

——o——

EGYPT—GAMBLING AT PORT SAID.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware of the establishment of a public gambling table at Port Said; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will take the necessary steps for its immediate suppression?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office have no information on the subject; but inquiry has been made. I must not, however, be understood to be admitting the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government in such matters as that to which the hon. Member alludes.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — POSTAL COMMUNICATION IN CO. WATERFORD.

Mr. VILLIERS STUART asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that, previously to the opening of Waterford and Lismore Railway, a mail bag was daily conveyed by car from Cappoquin to meet the mid-day mail from Lismore to Cork and Dublin, enabling the inhabitants of the district to answer their letters by return of post; whether, on the opening of the Railway to Lismore, the car was taken off, but no mail bag by train substituted, although a train runs daily corresponding with the mail from Lismore; whether, in consequence, it is no longer possible to reply by return of post; whether numerous and influentially signed petitions have been forwarded from Dungarvan, Cappoquin, and neighbouring districts, urging the grant of a mail bag by the train referred to; and, whether he will grant the prayer of the petitioners, and restore to the inhabitants of those districts the postal facilities previously enjoyed?

Mr. FAWCETT: The facts are substantially as stated in the Question of my hon. Friend. Cappoquin formerly received its day mail by car from Lismore; it has since 1878 received its day mail by train from Waterford, with the result that, while gaining certain facilities of communication on the Waterford side, it has lost certain facilities of communication with places on the Lismore side. Dungarvan, as well as Cappoquin, is concerned in the question; and to give both places a communication *viâ* Lismore, as well as *viâ* Waterford, would lead to considerable outlay beyond what the amount of correspondence to be benefited would warrant; but I have been deferring my reply to the applications on the subject until it can be seen whether any improvement results to the district from the contemplated acceleration of the Irish Provincial mails.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENTS OF SORTING CLERK AND FEMALE TELEGRAPH LEARNER—OPEN COMPETITION.

MR. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the appointments of sorting clerk and female telegraph learner in the General Post Office, Dublin, are open to competition; and, whether similar appointments in the General Post Office, London, are open to competition?

MR. FAWCETT: Admission to the situation of female telegraph learner in London is by means of open competition. Admission to the situation of sorter in London will, when certain claims have been disposed of, be thrown open to competition, with the restriction that every fourth vacancy shall be reserved for a competition amongst the London postmen. Exactly the same rules have been laid down *mutatis mutandis* for Dublin. An open competition has already been held for sorters; and the next vacancies which occur in the class of female telegraph learner in Dublin will be recruited by open competition.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—ELECTORAL DIVISION OF RATHORNAN, CARLOW UNION.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the case of the late election of a Poor Law Guardian for the electoral division of Rathornan and Ridge, in the Carlow Union, the Local Government Board have decided that Mr. Jeffers, the candidate returned as duly elected by Mr. Jameson, the clerk of the Union, did not obtain a majority of the valid votes given at the election, and that, consequently, Mr. Cullen, the other candidate, did obtain a majority of valid votes; and, whether, notwithstanding this decision, the Board have decided to put the district to the expense and inconvenience of a new election, instead of ordering the substitution of Mr. Cullen for Mr. Jeffers as the duly elected candidate?

MR. TREVELYAN: The return of Mr. Jeffers as a Guardian having been set aside by the Local Government Board under the powers vested in them by law, the office of Guardian for the electoral division in question is vacant, and can only be filled up by a new election. The Local Government Board have no power to appoint a Guardian, and cannot place the other candidate, Mr. Cullen, in that position.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE KILRUSH BOARD OF GUARDIANS—DISORDERLY CONDUCT OF CHAIRMAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Government has been called to a report in *The Clare Independent* of May 24th, 1884, of certain occurrences at the meeting of the Kilrush Board of Guardians of the previous Saturday; if it is correctly reported that Mr. Benjamin Cox, J.P., Chairman, had an altercation with Mr. John S. O'Donnell, and ultimately assaulted him; and, if the subject has been brought to the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the newspaper account referred to exaggerates the circumstances considerably. An altercation occurred between those two gentlemen, in which probably the fault was not all on one side. No assault was committed, nor is there anything calling for the notice of the Lord Chancellor.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE KILBIGGAN NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, in 1879, a community of nuns opened a school at Kilbiggan West, Meath, building a schoolhouse at their own expense; whether the pupils from a neighbouring National School unanimously removed to the Nuns' School; whether the Commissioners of National Education refused to recognize the Convent School till the Nuns had first paid £240, being the expense incurred in building the National School; and, whether he will take means to have this amount refunded?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that what occurred was as follows:—A vested National School was first in existence, and towards its erection and fitting up the Commissioners had made grants. Subsequently a community of nuns opened a school; and the Rev. Mr. Hope, who was manager of both the schools, closed up the girls' department of the old vested school, and removed its furniture to the new school conducted by the nuns. Then he made application to the Commissioners for grants to the Convent School, which were declined, on the ground that its establishment suppressed the vested school. Finally, the Rev. Mr. Hope proposed to repay the amount expended by the Commissioners in the erection and fitting up of the vested school-house, with a view of removing it from the category of vested schools, and thus getting rid of the bar to the making of the grant by the Commissioners to the Convent School. This proposal was accepted by the Commissioners, who accordingly made the grants to the Convent Schools, and even dated them from the time of the original application. It is impossible for the Commissioners to comply with the suggestion that they should again pay over the amount referred to.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED ASSAULT ON THE POLICE BY LORD CALEDON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that on the 24th May Lord Caledon, Captain of Militia and J. P. for county Tyrone, committed an assault on the head constable of police at Omagh; and, if the attention of the Lord Chancellor will be directed to the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: A complaint has been made of an alleged altercation and trifling assault by Lord Caledon, and the Constabulary authorities are in communication on the subject with the Colonel commanding his regiment. Lord Caledon is not in the Commission of the Peace.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. KENRICK H. JONES, CO. ANTRIM.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Kenrick H. Jones, J.P. for county Antrim, has recently compounded with his creditors in the Irish Bankruptcy Court; and, if so, will the Lord Chancellor allow him to continue to be a magistrate?

MR. TREVELYAN: When the bankruptcy of this gentleman was gazetted, the Lord Chancellor directed that his name should be omitted from the Commission of the Peace, and that the necessary notice thereof should be sent to him. These directions were duly carried out.

SCOTLAND—THE CLERKS IN THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

MR. FRASER MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether clerks of the First, Second, and Third Classes in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, are employed, irrespective of class, in preparing abridgments of the writs recorded in the Register of Sasines, in superintending the printing of these abridgments, as provided for in the ninth section of "The Land Registers (Scotland) Act, 1868," and in preparing the Search Sheets from which searches are issued to the public; whether the Returns of the work made up daily in each of the six districts into which the Sasine Office is divided show that clerks of the First, Second, and Third Classes are entrusted with and perform work identically the same without respect to class; whether he will order a copy of one of these Returns to be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether, the remuneration being so different, though the work is identical, he will take steps to abolish the classification, and make the remuneration more equal?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I am informed that the clerks of the First, Second, and Third Classes in the Sasine Office in Edinburgh are employed upon the same descriptions of work; but that the value of the work of the respective classes is very different, as the experience and acquirements of the First-Class clerks as a class are materially greater than those of the Second Class, while the attainments of the Second-Class clerks are superior to those of the

Third Class. I have no objection to lay on the Table one of the Returns asked for; but I do not think it will give any information beyond what I have stated. The number of First-Class Clerks is 8; the number of the Second Class is 12; and the number of the Third Class is 63. The present arrangements were made in 1881, in conformity with the Report of a Committee appointed by the Home Office and the Treasury. The effect of abolishing the existing classification would be to level down the superior clerks at least as much as to level up the lower clerks. I cannot see any reason for making such a change, and I think the existing arrangements should be maintained.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. THOMAS WALPOLE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Thomas Walpole, of the Queen's County, is one of the Land Law Sub-Commissioners; and, if so, whether he is the same Mr. Walpole who, about the year 1875, handed to his tenant, Michael Higgins, what he (Mr. Walpole) termed a letter of lease, as between himself and Higgins, bearing no date and having the signature of neither the landlord nor the tenant attached, and which the tenant never agreed to; whether this document contained a clause depriving the said tenant of the benefit of the Land Act of 1870, so that the tenant thereby forfeited all claim for improvements under that Act, or any other Act which might be passed; and, whether, considering this, and that he is himself a middleman landlord, Mr. Walpole will be continued in the office of Sub-Commissioner?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that about the year 1875 Mr. Walpole handed to Higgins a memorandum of agreement which he had drawn up at Higgins's request, embodying terms which had been previously agreed upon between them. By the terms of the agreement Higgins contracted himself out of the benefits of the Land Act and future land legislation. This he did for considerations already agreed to; and his rent was fixed at £19, being £5 a-year less than Mr. Walpole himself paid to the head landlord.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—ALLEGED RESISTANCE TO SHERIFF IN LEWIS—CASE OF DONALD GRAHAM.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, with reference to the case of Donald Graham, committed to prison in Stornoway for a breach of the peace arising from an attempt by a sheriff's officer to pull down a house erected by Roderick Graham on his father's lot of land; whether Murdo Graham, the father, was made a party to the sheriff's officer warrant without his authority; whether the warrant proceeded on an interdict which was not executed until the house was finished; whether it was this irregular warrant the sheriff's officer was attempting to execute when the breach of the peace occurred; whether, at the trial of Donald Graham, the sheriff substitute and procurator fiscal attempted to extract evidence from one of the witnesses incriminating persons not on trial; and, whether he will make any special inquiry into the alleged irregularities in the proceedings referred to, and into the causes of the general dissatisfaction with the administration of justice which exists among the rural population in Lewis; and, if not, what steps he proposes to take to satisfy the Crofters of the impartial administration of the law, considering that the agent for the estate is also the public prosecutor, and that the Crofters have difficulty in determining whether his acts are by authority of the landlord or of the Crown?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): With reference to the first part of this Question, I am informed that the warrant was not obtained without the authority of Murdo Graham, father of Roderick Graham. Murdo Graham complained to the Chamberlain on the estate that his son was proceeding to erect a house on his (Murdo Graham's) croft, and he granted a mandate to the Chamberlain to petition for interdict against the son erecting the house, and also for warrant to pull down any building erected by the son. Murdo Graham was made a party to the petition in virtue of this mandate. My information in regard to the second head of the Question is that the house was roofed in, but not completed internally, when the interdict was served. It was an ordinary beehive hut, built of dry stone, and thatched with turf or straw, such as is usually erected in a few days. Before Roderick Graham began to build he had been warned that he would not be allowed to do so, and the petition, besides craving interdict, also prayed for warrant to pull down what had been built. No defence was offered; the Sheriff's interlocutors appear to have been warranted by the prayer of the petition; and I do not find any irregularity in them. There appears to be no ground for the suggestion that the Sheriff Substitute and Procurator Fiscal attempted to extract evidence from one of the witnesses for the purpose of incriminating persons not on trial. Three persons were tried for breach of the peace; and one of the witnesses, when pressed to state who were concerned in it, mentioned the names of other persons besides the prisoners. I see no impropriety in this fact having been brought out. I have already twice made inquiries in regard to the proceedings referred to, and no further inquiry seems to me to be necessary. I am not aware that general dissatisfaction with the administration of justice exists among the rural population in Lewis, nor do there appear to be any grounds for such dissatisfaction. There can be no difficulty in determining whether proceedings are taken by the proprietor of the estate or by the Crown, as in the former case the proceeding will bear to be at the instance of the proprietor, and in the latter at the instance of the Procurator Fiscal in his official capacity.

THE NEWSPAPER PRESS — ARTICLES ON CURRENT TRIALS FOR TREASON-FELONY IN IRELAND.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that articles have appeared in *The Birmingham Weekly Post*, *Birmingham Daily Post*, and *Birmingham Daily Mail*, articles and paragraphs prejudging the case for the defence of the three persons charged with treason felony; whether copies of *The Daily Mail*, describing evidence against Egan as "damning," and expressing the opinion that—

> "There would be nothing surprising in the announcement that pick and spade had dislodged some more sensational evidence against Egan,"

were circulated in Court during the trial; and, whether he proposes to order a prosecution of the proprietors of the above papers?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think I have answered this Question before. I have no information on this matter that would justify me in instituting a prosecution.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART — THE MAY EXAMINATIONS AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the several examiners of the South Kensington Department have absolute control over the awards of the May examinations, both as regards the preparation of the questions and the marking of the answers; whether the Paper on Theoretical Mechanics, set at the recent examinations by the Rev. J. F. Twisden, M.A. was formally approved by the Department before being printed; and, whether he can state the per-centage of answering required by Mr. Twisden for, respectively, first-class and second-class pass on the several stages of his examination?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Examiners have not absolute control over the awards of the May Examinations. They are required to prepare their questions in accordance with a syllabus laid down by the Department, and to mark the answers in accordance with instructions furnished to them. The Paper in Theoretical Mechanics was formally approved by the Department. The percentage of answering required for the several classes is fixed by the officers of the Department in concert with the Examiners, so as to keep the standard from year to year and between the different subjects as nearly as possible the same. I should add that Mr. Twisden is one of the most experienced and trustworthy Examiners of the Department.

NAVY—BURSTING OF A 100-TON GUN.

Mr. CARBUTT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether there is any truth in the report that another of the 100-tun guns has burst; and, whether the Government have any information on the subject?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I have no information on the subject; and I may remind my hon. Friend that I am not now Secretary of State.

Mr. CARBUTT: Can the Surveyor General give any information about the matter?

Mr. BRAND: I have heard nothing regarding this matter.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any intelligence has been received at the Foreign Office with regard to General Gordon, or with regard to the position of affairs at Khartoum and Berber?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think it would have been better if the hon. Member had followed the example of other hon. Members and had given Notice of his Question, which covers a great deal of ground; but in regard to General Gordon and the position at Khartoum, I may state that no information has reached the Foreign Office since the House rose, except a few rumours resting on so vague and uncertain a foundation as not to constitute anything authentic.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he thought that the noble Lord was rather unreasonable in asking for Notice. Did he understand the noble Lord, in referring to the reports as vague, which had been the only ones that had come to hand since the House separated, included in that category the Report of Major Kitchener?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think that is essentially a Question which I might ask for Notice of. The right hon. Gentleman asks as to a Report of Major Kitchener. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give some clearer statement as to what he refers to. To answer the Question now might lead to some misunderstanding.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: I can quite understand that being so. What I wish to ask is this—whether a report which has appeared in all the leading newspapers, as delivered to Reuter's Agency, purporting to be a Report by Major Kitchener of certain duties undertaken by him at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, is included by the noble Lord in the category of vague statements?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think the House will see that that is a Question to Notice of which I am entitled.

MERCHANT SHIPPING — NORTHERN LIGHTS COMMISSIONERS—LIGHTING OF ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, What steps have been taken with respect to an application made in 1882 to the Northern Lighthouse Board for the efficient lighting of the west coasts of Orkney and Shetland; whether the Northern Lighthouse Board have made any communication to the Board of Trade on the subject; and, if so, when, and with what result; and, whether, with the object of preventing the loss of vessels and human life, the Board of Trade will take immediate steps to improve the lighting of these coasts?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: A short time since a Report was received from the Northern Lights Commissioners with reference to the new lights which are proposed for Shetland, Fair Isle, and Orkney. The estimates for the work, which amount to £191,843, besides £6,522 per annum for maintenance, were only received on April 15, and the papers have been referred to the Trinity House; but the scheme is so extensive and so costly that it will require very careful consideration and examination, the more so that, in all probability, the expense will, to a great extent, have to be borne by the shipping and other trades, which will derive no benefit from the lights.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked whether the Trinity House authorities would visit the localities this season, with the view of considering whether these lighthouses could be erected?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN doubted whether it would be necessary for the Trinity House authorities to make a personal visit. They were well acquainted with the localities; they had all the charts and particulars; and he did not think it would be necessary for them to make a personal visit; but if it was thought necessary, he had no doubt they would do so.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY: This season?

[No answer.]

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE DRUMCONDRA POST OFFICE.

MR. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office at Drumcondra, Dublin, was suddenly closed, without any preliminary notice, some weeks ago; and, whether he is aware that great inconvenience has been thereby caused in the neighbourhood?

MR. FAWCETT: The Drumcondra receiving office was closed on the 28th ultimo. Owing to circumstances of a family nature, the receiver was unable to continue to carry on the duties, and requested that he might at once be relieved of the office, which was accordingly closed. The Drumcondra Road office is only distant about three furlongs from the Drumcondra office, and when this office was closed the telegraph business was transferred from it to the former. The Drumcondra office will be reopened whenever the necessary arrangements for installing the receiver, who has been nominated to the office, are completed.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—CIRCULAR OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

MR. MAC IVER: I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, on a point of Order relating to the Motion for the Adjourned Debate on the Merchant Shipping Bill. I have received this morning, from the Board of Trade, a Paper with the name of the President of the Board attached to it, containing certain alternative proposals to those which appear in the Bill. Upon examining the Paper I found that it contained 42 clauses, and that it involves the withdrawal of almost the whole of the remainder of the Bill. What I wish to ask you, Sir, is, whether the President of the Board of Trade is in Order in introducing what is substantially a new Bill; or whether the right course would not be to move that the Order for the Second Reading of the present Bill be discharged, in order that a new Bill may be reintroduced? The alternative proposals virtually constitute a new Bill, and are in substitution for those contained in the Bill now before the House.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Before Mr. Speaker replies to the hon. Member, may I be allowed to state what the Paper is to which the hon. Member has somewhat inaccurately referred? It is a Parliamentary Paper, containing a correspondence between myself and certain gentlemen who have assisted me with their advice in reference to the Merchant Shipping Bill, and it includes a copy of draft clauses which were drawn up partly for and partly in consequence of the discussion which took place the other day. The Paper has been issued in consequence of the representations of certain hon. Members who have thought that it would be extremely convenient to see the Amendments which it is proposed to introduce, and also the form which the Bill will assume if those Amendments are adopted.

MR. MAC IVER: Perhaps I may be allowed to repeat the words of the President of the Board of Trade. In this Paper he says—

> "The accompanying draft clauses are to be substituted for those on the same subject in the Bill now before the House."

There are 42 new clauses contained in this Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: No formal Notice has been given, and there has been no irregularity, hitherto, in the action of the President of the Board of Trade.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £22,063, to complete the sum for the Houses of Parliament.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that if he were not afraid of alarming the Committee by the anticipation of a long speech, he would preface the remarks he was about to make by showing how the genius of folly seemed to have presided over the construction of the building in which they were assembled. Hon. Members who were condemned to spend a portion of their lives within those buildings were well acquainted with the insufficient accommodation provided inside the House itself. The only way in which a Member was able to secure a seat was by being present at prayers, at 10 minutes to 4 o'clock every day. Now, he did not propose to enter into any argument with the First Commissioner of

Works as to the propriety of making the right of a Member to a seat depend upon his devotion. He would only point out, as a remarkable fact, that at prayer time the whole of the Treasury Bench and the Front Opposition Bench were empty. He was unable to give a reason for that circumstance; but he thought it was fair to assume that those who were charged with the destinies of a great Empire like this were even in greater need of devotion than many others. Indeed, in the prayers which were daily read there was a distinct allusion to the Divine assistance which statesmen stood in need of. Nevertheless, the statesmen who sat on both sides of the House were uniformly absent when the assistance of the Deity was invoked in their behalf. Personally he thought it would be as well that this particular temptation should be removed from their path, and that they should be required to "turn up" in the House like anybody else, at the proper time, in order to secure a seat. The House of Commons had been described by those who were not acquainted with it as the best Club in London. Now, as far as he had any experience of it, the House of Commons was certainly the worst Club in London, and he wished to call the attention of the Chief Commissioner of Works to the extraordinary want of the means of intercommunication which existed between the different parts of the House. Supposing, for example, that a Member wished to go from one part of the House to another that was at all separated from the body of the House, he was compelled to go at the risk of losing the opportunity of taking part in a Division, or of having to run back again at a break-neck pace, which was certainly not convenient to Members of advanced years or to those who were of somewhat robust form. Suppose a Member went up to the Ladies' Gallery and a Division was called; it took him, at the smallest calculation, two minutes to get from the Ladies' Gallery into the Division Lobby; and as the theory was that no Member of Parliament should vote in a Division unless he had listened carefully to everything that had passed in the debate, without desiring to make any suggestion as to the influence of the Whips or otherwise, it was quite plain that a Member who had to run down from the Ladies' Gallery into the Division Lobby in order to record his vote was bound to act upon the suggestion he received from the Whips as to the way in which he ought to vote. Then, again, supposing a Member was down in the lower Smoke Room, writing a letter or putting down a Notice or a Question, or writing out his own speech in order that he might not run the risk of being imperfectly reported by the gentlemen connected with the Gallery above—hon. Members belonging to that very numerous class, who were unable to collect their thoughts without the aid of previous preparation, and who might be engaged in writing at the furthest table in the Smoke Room when a Division was called found themselves in this position—that they had to proceed from that furthest table round by the back of the Speaker's Chair in order to communicate with the Reporter's Gallery, and it was necessary to undertake a walk which occupied at least two minutes. Was there any other Club in London where members had to run about from corner to corner in that way? Then, again, the atmosphere of the House was at times almost unbearable. He did not know what the experience of other Members was, but two or three hours' endurance of the atmosphere of the House of Commons was enough to paralyze the physical and intellectual energies of any Member. He was unable to explain the reason, but he fancied that it was the unequal atmosphere of the place. In fact, he could only describe the atmosphere of the House of Commons as a torrid zone tempered by arctic blasts. In one part of the building it was extremely warm, while in another part it was icily cold. He would suggest to the First Commissioner of Works that some of the evils he had pointed out might be very easily remedied. For instance, with regard to intercommunication between different parts of the House, it might easily be arranged to have messages carried from one part to another. That was a matter which it could not be difficult for the First Commissioner of Works to make provision for by making an addition of two or three to the existing staff of attendants in the House, whose duty it would be to deliver messages in the furthest parts of the House. He did not think that the small amount of money that it would be necessary to expend in order to carry out these purposes would be grudged. With regard to other points, he thought he might fairly leave them to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he did not know whether the Committee would expect him to make any reply to the observations of the hon. Gentleman in reference to the attendance of Members upon that Bench and upon the Front Opposition Bench at prayer time. He did not think the remarks of the hon. Member were intended to be serious, and it was obvious that Members of the Government had other and important duties to perform which kept them away from the House until the last moment. With regard to the other matters which had been brought under the notice of the House by the hon. Gentleman—such as the want of intercommunication between different parts of the House, that was a subject to which attention had been directed from time to time, and perhaps some means might be devised in future for saving time and trouble to hon. Members. He would carefully consider the suggestions which had fallen from the hon. Member in order to see whether he could do anything in the matter. With regard to the atmosphere of the House, the hon. Member had made a complaint which he thought was hardly well-founded. As far as he himself had observed, he thought the atmosphere of the House for the most part was extremely equable, and that, as a whole, the House was as well ventilated as it possibly could be. He had given great attention to the subject, and had been in constant communication with Dr. Percy in reference to it whenever any complaints were made. In point of fact, whenever he heard a complaint he made it his business to institute inquiries; and although he found that there were occasional changes of temperature in different parts of the House, yet it was admitted that the ventilation was, on the whole, very well carried out.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked if the right hon. Gentleman would state what was intended to be done in reference to the proposed restoration of the West Front of Westminster Hall?

MR. J. LOWTHER remarked, that before the Committee went into that point, which was no doubt a very important one, he would like to say a word or two upon the matters which had been raised by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), and especially in regard to Members on the two Front Benches having precedence over other Members of the House in regard to seats. The hon. Member had omitted to note that if any persons had a right to complain of the arrangement which was made for the accommodation of Members of the House, it was the occupiers of the two Front Benches themselves. If the hon. Member would count the number of seats on each of those Benches, he would find that each Bench was capable of accommodating about 16 persons, whereas the Members of the Administration in that House were about 34 in number. Altogether, there were something like 40 Members of the Administration, which caused them to be known by a familiar term he would not repeat now; but, at any rate, the Members of the Administration of the House of Commons largely exceeded the amount of accommodation provided for them. To a considerable extent the same remark applied to what was called the Front Opposition Bench. The Committee would be aware that that Bench was apportioned not only to Members of the out-going Administration, who ordinarily occupied it, but also to Privy Councillors, who might not have been recently in Office. He only referred to that fact with a view of calling the attention of the First Commissioner of Works to the very serious want of accommodation which existed in all parts of the House. They talked about obtaining what was popularly called "a seat" in Parliament. That was, however, a designation which was more or less questionable, because it frequently happened that although it was extremely difficult, as many of them had found out, to obtain or retain what was commonly called "a seat" in Parliament, their difficulties did not end there. When he (Mr. Lowther) first succeeded, now some 20 years ago, in obtaining a seat in Parliament, he quickly realized the fact that there was often considerable difficulty in obtaining even standing room in the House itself. He knew that many objections were entertained to the adoption of any plan for providing a seat to be permanently appropriated by each Member of the House; but, short of adopting that extreme plan, he thought some means might be devised whereby Members of the House would be able to obtain a seat with the view, if the occasion arose, of being able to rise from it for the purpose of addressing the House. Even on the two Front Benches it was frequently only by the courtesy which fortunately prevailed among Members themselves, that it was possible for any Member who desired to address the House to obtain facilities for doing so. He thought the First Commissioner of Works must be fully aware of the great inconvenience which was occasioned to any Member of the House, whatever his opinions might be, if he found himself entirely dependent on the courtesy of a Friend for obtaining momentarily a so-called "seat" in the House. The hon. Member for Galway had also referred to what were usually known as the precincts of the House—the Chambers in which they smoked, and which they used for other purposes. He was unable quite to endorse the hon. Member's complaint in regard to the particular Galleries and parts of the House to which the hon. Member had referred. He thought the Ladies' Gallery, and what was known as "the Reporters' Gallery," were not parts of the House which Members were called upon very frequently to visit, and he did not think that any general inconvenience was experienced from the few minutes which might elapse if an hon. Member found it necessary to ascend to or descend from either of those Galleries. At the same time, he thought that a very great deal remained to be done with repard to providing adequate accommodation for the personal convenience of Members of the House. The hon. Member for Galway talked about the House of Commons being a very bad Club. He knew that in former days it was known by the designation alluded to by the hon. Member, of "the best Club in London," not physically, but socially, and in various other ways. It was not for him to say how far the same state of things actually prevailed now; but so far as physical matters were concerned, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would not be so wholly absorbed by the political questions in which he took so great an interest as not to be able to devote some of his time and his eminent ability to providing adequate accommodation for Members who attended the Sittings of the House in the discharge of their public duties.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, that he was sorry to differ from his right hon. Friend who had just sat down, and who seemed to advocate that the House should be enlarged. Now, he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had noticed that at the beginning of every Parliament — in the first Session of every new Parliament—some hon. Member invariably put down a Motion, and raised a discussion, as to the desirability of increasing the size of the House. He recollected on one occasion an hon. Member putting a Question of that kind to Her Majesty's Ministers from one of the side Galleries, because, he said, that he was unable to find any other seat from which to put it. But he had also noticed that, although this question was always raised in the first year of a new Parliament, it soon died out, and however long a complaining Member continued to retain his seat, he never said anything further about that particular grievance. It was true that the House might be inconveniently full on an occasion when some important Division was expected, or when some great orator was addressing the House; but on ordinary occasions, not only was the House large enough for the business transacted within it, but it was a great deal too large for those who usually attended in order to take part in the discussion of important questions. On such occasions there was plenty of room for any Member who desired to be present, and even a good deal to spare; and although on certain occasions the House might be inconveniently crowded, as an ordinary rule, it was quite adequate for the accommodation of those who had real business to transact. Perhaps there might be one exception to the rule—namely, the Question time, when the House was invariably full, and when occasionally the attendance was so large as to be inconvenient. He frequently read of hon. Members going down to address their constituents and talking about the time taken up in the House in asking Questions; but if the constituents throughout the country only knew what really happened in the House itself, they would find that no part of the Business of the House was more popular with hon. Members than that which was taken up in hearing Her Majesty's Ministers answer the Questions which were put to them. Under these circumstances, he could not agree with his right hon. Friend that it was desirable to enlarge the size of the House. On the contrary, it seemed to him to be more important that the House should be comfortable for those who really came there to transact the Business of the country. It was not necessary to make more adequate provision for hon. Members who merely used the House as a Club, and only came down to hear Questions asked and answered, to listen to some great orator, or to take part in a great Division. Those who ought to be considered were those who spent a great deal of their time in the House, and who really did the work of the House; and for them the House was as comfortable as it could be. There was one other remark he should like to make, and it had reference to the complaint made by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), which had been answered by the First Commissioner of Works, in regard to the temperature of the House. He was certainly disposed to agree with the right hon. Gentleman, and he had been somewhat surprised to hear the statement of the hon. Member for Galway. Considering the difficulties under which those who were entrusted with the ventilation of the House must labour, he thought the gentlemen who discharged that duty deserved the greatest credit for what they had done.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he only wished to make one observation in confirmation of what the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had said. He was quite prepared to admit that the atmosphere of the House was equable, but, at the same time, it was extremely depressing. It had no vitality in it, and it was utterly impossible to sit in it for any length of time without being subjected to a feeling of great depression. Personally he was not acquainted with any attendance anywhere which took so much out of him as his attendance in that House. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if it was not possible to introduce some little—he would not say ozone, but something like ozone, into the atmosphere of the House? No doubt they got an equable atmosphere, but it was a very depressing one, and he was anxious to know if something could not be done to improve it?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he was disposed very much to concur in the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) in regard to the atmosphere of the House of Commons, and as to its quality, or rather want of quality, on many occasions. He was sure that if high medical and scientific opinion were taken upon the subject of the ventilation of the House, as it was at present arranged, it would not be carried on very long in the way in which it was ventilated now. For example, at that moment an extremely cold and rarefied current of air was passing up from the floor of the House, owing, he presumed, to the introduction of the iced atmosphere from below. Perhaps a little later the atmosphere might be a little more equable. It was not, however, the atmosphere that hon. Members complained of as much as of a certain peculiar quality, or as he had said want of quality, in the air, which, he was bound to say, was extremely trying, and was not to be found in other public buildings. If he might make a suggestion, he thought a better mode of ventilation might be devised by the adoption of the system known as the Tobins' Tube System of Ventilation. He was not disposed to follow the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) in his complaint as to the difficulty of approaching the Reporters' and Ladies' Galleries. He did not know whether those gentlemen in the Reporters' Gallery, who assisted the House in making known their views to the country, would desire to have a more easy means of communication between Members of the House and themselves, nor did he know whether the ladies who visited the Ladies' Gallery desired any better means of access to it for Members. As to the convenience provided for hon. Members in the House itself, he would make two suggestions in regard to particular details in which he thought better accommodation might be provided. At present one of the most conspicuous deficiencies of the House was the absence of a room or rooms for enabling Members to see persons who had business to transact with them. He was quite aware that the argument urged against this was that increased accommodation for interview-ing their friends and constituents would tend to increase that most obnoxious custom of "Lobbying." He was quite aware that that was the traditional reason which had been given against increasing the accommodation; but he did not think there was much in the argument. He thought that several private rooms might be secured in which Members could receive their friends without any risk of increasing the practice of "Lobbying." In the second place, he objected to the condition of the Tea Room. The present provision for the Tea Room was most unsatisfactory. He did not say anything as to the quality of the tea, although it was certainly not what it might be; but the room itself was very hot and badly ventilated. Indeed, he thought it was the worst ventilated room in the House, and when there were many Members in it it was almost unbearable. He was of opinion that these were points upon which the First Commissioner of Works might do something to increase the comfort of Members. He concurred with one observation which had fallen from the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) in reference to the absence of Ministers at the time of prayers. He quite agreed with the hon. Member that Her Majesty's Ministers stood more in need of those devotional exercises with which it was the custom of the House to commence its proceedings than any other Members of the House; and he would venture to point out to Her Majesty's Government that probably the serious misfortunes and misadventures which had befallen them in their Ministerial career might be due to their constant absence from the Front Bench at the time of prayers.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had put a question to him in regard to the restoration of the West Front of Westminster Hall. He was sorry to say that he was unable to give any more definite answer at present than he had given a few days ago. He was daily expecting from Mr. Pearson, the architect, the plans for its restoration, and until he received them he would not be able to make any statement to the House. He hoped, however, to be able to do so before the close of the Session. He only wished to say, in explanation, that the work which was thrown upon the architect was of an extremely difficult and responsible nature, involving careful examination of the foundations and other details, together with an examination of all the old prints and plans of the Hall. Therefore, the work was one of the utmost responsibility, and he was not at all surprised to find that it had been found necessary to devote a considerable time to the subject. He thought that the House, when the plans were laid before them, would become aware that no time had been really wasted. He did not think the House would expect him to enter at any length into the discussion which had just taken place. He entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler) in most of the observations he had made. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had alluded to the state of the Tea Room. He thought there was some foundation for the complaints of the hon. Member, and there could be no doubt that the room was much hotter than it ought to be. He did not know whether that defect might not be remedied by extending the room, and he would consider whether that could be done. Of course, he should be glad to increase the accommodation and convenience of Members in every other way, as far as it was possible. On the whole, he thought that he had, during his tenancy of the Office of First Commissioner of Works, succeeded in doing a good deal for the Members of the House of Commons. Unfortunately, he had been limited to a certain number of rooms; but he had succeeded in obtaining no less than three rooms from the service of the other House, and altogether he thought he had been extremely successful; but beyond what he had already done he certainly could not see his way to doing very much more.

Mr. GRAY said, he thought that in what had been mentioned by his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) about the Ladies' Gallery, the difficulty seemed to be not in getting to it, but in getting away from it. As to the question of ventilation, he quite agreed with the remarks which had been made by his hon. Friend in reference to the condition of the atmosphere of the House. He had frequently suffered great inconvenience from it; but he did not think that the suggestion of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-

Bartlett) as to the adoption of the open tube system would meet the difficulty, because, although it would admit the outside air, it would entail a great deal of trouble and would not be altogether successful, if the air itself was sometimes impure, as he often believed it to be. He thought this was possibly occasioned to some extent by the dust collected in the air after the process of cleaning and purifying was carried out. A considerable amount of dust must be caught up by the air when the mats were removed; and he found in the Estimate now before the Committee an item of £650 for taking up hair-cloth, mats, &c., and cleaning the dust from the floors of the House. Mixed up with that item was also the supply of mats and hair-cloth. Now, he had only had the honour of a seat in that House for seven years; but during that period he did not remember any new mats or hair-cloth being supplied, and therefore he could only presume that the major part of this sum of £650 was spent in taking up the old mats and hair-cloth. As that was a very substantial sum to pay for beating mats, he thought they might be kept a little cleaner than they were. Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works suggested a further introduction into the House of the electric light. He found an item of £1,950 in the present Vote for a supply of oil lamps for the Committee Rooms, Lobbies, Reporters' Rooms, Residences, &c. "Residences, &c.," was an exceedingly vague phrase, and he supposed it meant the private residences connected with the House. He found that the sum for these oil lamps amounted to within £1,000 of the entire sum spent for gas. Surely it was not necessary that so large a sum as £1,900 should be expended in oil lamps. He should like the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to say whether he was satisfied, on the part of the Government, with the introduction of the electric light into the building? He thought that Members generally were satisfied with it; and if that was really the case, he would suggest the desirability of considering whether the electric light might not be extended, and a corresponding economy produced in the supply of oil lamps. He was certainly astonished to find that so large a sum was spent upon oil lamps. He would also invite the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the inconvenient way in which the item to which he had referred for taking up hair-cloth, mats, &c., was divided. He thought all the items ought to be properly divided, and the Committee ought to know how much was spent for new material, and how much for maintenance. It was absolutely impossible to obtain that information from the Estimates as they were now laid before the House, and the consequence was that no Members were able to judge whether the expenditure was a reasonable one or not. It might be reasonable to expend £3,000 or £4,000 in buying new material, whereas it would be altogether unreasonable to spend £650 in beating old mats. There was an item of £390 for the supply of fuel, light, and household articles to the officers of the House of Lords. He should like to know what the household articles were that were supplied to the officers of the House of Lords? It seemed to him to be a strange mixture, and although it was perhaps a small matter he should like to know something more about it. There was a similar item in regard to the House of Commons; but the expense in that case was very much larger, amounting to £1,100. What were these household articles, and were they supplied for the use of the officers of the House? These were points upon which he thought it was desirable that the Committee should have some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the question of the further introduction of the electric light was now under consideration, and the experiments in that direction, so far as they had been proceeded with, were considered to have been satisfactory. Hon. Members would recollect that some three years ago an attempt was made to light that Chamber with the electric light; but it did not give satisfaction, and as the gas-lighting was as perfect as it could be, probably that would be the last part of the House to which the electric light would be applied. But there were a large number of other parts of the House where the electric light might be applied advantageously. He had now before him an estimate for applying it to every part of the House, except to that Chamber, and also to the House of Lords; but it would involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of money, and at present he was weighing the matter carefully, and considering whether he ought to ask the Treasury for the sum of money that would be necessary or not.

Mr. RITCHIE asked if there would be competition?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he did not think there could be competition. The present electric light was supplied by the Edison Company, which had been recently amalgamated with the Swann Company, and he did not think that it could be possible to introduce another independent system side by side with that which had already been established. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) had asked a question about an item which appeared in the Vote for oil lamps. It would be found that oil lamps were supplied to all the residences in the House, and that they were used in the Lobbies and in most of the Chambers. There were a very large number of residences under the roof of that House, and in all of them oil lamps were used down even to kitchen lamps, and they all were supplied under that Vote. No doubt, the charge appeared to be a very large one; but there was a very large number of persons who used the lamps, including residents in the House of Lords, and they must continue to be used, notwithstanding the introduction of electric lighting, because moveable lamps could not be dispensed with. As to the beating of carpets and mats, it would be inconvenient to separate the expenditure incurred in cleansing and beating, and in providing new ones. All he could say, in regard to the cost of beating carpets and mats, was that large as it was it was very necessary. Every week the carpets in the House were taken up and beaten. Recently he had made a contract with the convict prisons, by which the mats were to be beaten in future, and he thought some economy would be obtained from the new arrangement.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH understood from his right hon. Friend that he contemplated the possibility of producing a Supplementary Estimate by-and-bye with the view of extending the system of electric lighting at present partially applied in the House. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he intended to introduce also a Supplementary Estimate for the reconstruction of the West Front of Westminster Hall? He had understood his right hon. Friend to say that he was not in a position to give any information on the subject at present, and, therefore, that it would be more prudent to leave out the item in regard to the estimated cost; but the right hon. Gentleman would see in the Estimate an item fixing £6,000 as an approximate cost of the service, of which £1,500 had already been obtained. [Mr. Shaw Lefevre: Yes, last year.] That Estimate still held good, and the expenditure for the restoration of the West Front still appeared in the Votes as £6,000. He did not think that anybody complained of the amount; but he thought the public ought to have complete information, and he should like to have some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that the matter would not stand over in the shape in which it now stood. The subject was exciting much public interest, and any information in regard to it would be welcomed. He hoped it was not contemplated to keep up the hoarding which had been temporarily put up for the whole of the winter without some attempt being made to proceed with the work of restoration.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he should like to say a word before the right hon. Gentleman answered the question which had been put to him. He was glad to see that no definite sum had been put down for restoring the West Front of Westminster Hall, and he, for one, hoped that the Government would altogether give up the idea of restoring the West Front. He trusted that they would reserve the vacant piece of ground for the enlargement of the House itself, and especially in view of the possible necessity of providing accommodation for the Grand Committees. If the system of Grand Committees was to be enlarged in the way the Prime Minister contemplated, it would be absolutely impossible to provide the enlarged accommodation without taking this vacant space. If, however, it were utilized, they would not only be able to secure first-rate Committee Rooms, but also to make some use of Westminster Hall itself, instead of allowing it to remain, as at present, totally useless. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would seriously consider that matter before introducing a scheme for the restoration of a sham ancient Front. He was by no means satisfied that in the end they would succed in turning out anything like a work of high art. No doubt, Westminster Hall inside was splendid; but they could not by any process produce the same effect with regard to the exterior. As to the ventilation of the House, it seemed to him that the long and short of the matter was that they had too much of the air which a learned doctor chose to give them of his own rather than that God's air which was to be found under the canopy of Heaven. All that he could say was, that they were sometimes obliged to open the windows, and, personally, he wished they had them opened more frequently.

Mr. MACARTNEY wished to ask, as the Government were considering what was to be done with the West Front of Westminster Hall, whether it was intended to continue the disfigurement of the inside of the Hall with the existing paltry inartistic plaster statues mounted upon the most mean-looking pedestals ever set up? He should be glad, so far as he was concerned, to see the whole of them removed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he hoped to be able to lay an Estimate on the Table of the House before the close of the Session in reference to the West Front of Westminster Hall. The item which appeared in the Votes, and which had been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth), was voted last year, and did not commit the House or the Government in any way whatever. There was no expectation that the item would be larger than the sum mentioned. In regard to what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), it would be altogether impossible to leave the West Front of Westminster Hall in its present condition. Something must be done in the matter. As to the statues in Westminster Hall, he certainly did not regard them as works of Art; but he did not feel inclined to take any responsibility upon himself in connection with their removal. He had lately found how extremely difficult it was to deal with the removal of one statue, and he did not know what might happen if he were now called upon bodily to remove seven—consisting of the statues of six Kings and a Queen.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF complained of the system of drainage in the House, and expressed a fear that there must be something radically wrong with regard to it. He asked the First Commissioner of Works to make some inquiry into the matter, because anything wrong with the drainage was calculated to affect seriously the health of hon. Members.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, he would be glad if the Secretary to the Treasury would explain to the Committee an item in the Vote which must either be a mistake or a misprint, or the Vote itself must be of an objectionable character. They were told that the net decrease in the Estimates they were now asked to pass, as compared with the Estimates of last year, was £7,132; and, to account for that decrease, they were told in a foot-note that the original Estimates for 1883-4 were £40,115, to which they were to add a sum of £80, which was stated to be a transfer from Class II. —"House of Lords Offices"—and which increased the original Estimate to £40,195. But the Estimates last year amounted to £35,220, or £2,159 more than the sum stated; and the decrease, therefore, was only £4,975, and not £7,132. The difference arose from a practice which he regarded as highly objectionable—of including as an original Estimate the Supplementary Estimates voted in the past year. If a fire took place, or an earthquake, or anything else that was unexpected, and it happened to involve an expenditure of money which was not originally anticipated, that sum was added to the original Estimates, and the increase or decrease was calculated on that sum, and not upon the original Estimate itself. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his speech in introducing the Budget, he spoke of several Estimates as the original Estimates of the year, and of the Supplementary Estimates separately; but it would be found that the item in the Vote of £40,195, which was put down as the original Estimate of 1883-4, in reality included the Supplementary Estimates passed last year. Therefore, a statement showing the increase or decrease of the Vote was altogether fallacious. If the Committee were to have any control over the Expenditure of the Government, they ought to have placed before them the difference between the original Estimates of one year and the original Estimates of another, leaving the Supplementary Estimates to be accounted for in another way, as was done with perfect lucidity in the Navy Estimates. Of course, when the Estimates were passed in Committee of Supply, sometimes at 1, 2, or 3 o'clock in the morning, it was impossible to make the intricate calculations that were necessary in order to arrive at the true state of the facts. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to explain how the original Estimates for last year came to include the Supplementary Estimate passed since those original Estimates were voted?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that his hon. and gallant Friend was quite right in stating that the £40,195 included Supplementary Estimates to the amount of about £5,000, which were taken last year. That should have been shown in a foot-note, so that there could have been no mistake, and he could not explain why it had not been done. His hon. and gallant Friend, however, would see that if they deducted that amount from the sum which was given as a decrease of the original Estimates themselves, or as compared with those of last year, it would still be found that there was an actual decrease of over £2,000, which he did not think was altogether an unsatisfactory state of things.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten to mention that £2,000 had already been taken for the restoration of the West Front of Westminster Hall. He wished to call attention to a practice which he regarded as most objectionable, but which this was the first opportunity he had had of challenging, as it was only within the last few years the Auditor General had entered the transaction in the accounts. He found that in the year 1882-3, in the Vote for the Houses of Parliament, the deficiency in Vote 4, for services belonging to that Vote, had been supplied by contributions from five other Votes to the amount of £1,097. If the Estimates of the Department were insufficient, an application ought to be made for Supplementary Estimates in order to meet the deficiency; but he found that in 1882-3 that course was not taken; and if there was one thing more dangerous than another, it was to allow a public authority to take money from one Vote for which it had been specifically passed, and apply it to another with which it had no connection whatever. Nevertheless, that was the course which appeared to have been followed in this instance, although, as far as he could make out, it was taken for the first time. It arose from the adoption of a most objectionable system which he had on a previous occasion brought under the notice of the House. There were two modes of bringing forward the Estimates. One was to make each Estimate complete in itself, so that all the charges connected with a particular Department should be shown under one head. That was the system that was practised both in regard to the Army and the Navy Votes. In regard to the Civil Service Estimates, all the expenditure on account of new works should appear in the Estimates as expended for new works, under that head in Vote 5, in order to bring the items under one Department, and under one head. But here, in Vote 4, they would find charges for new works, repairs, alterations, furniture, and various other things which were also asked for in other Votes. He hoped that something might be done to prevent a similar practice in the future, and he should be glad to learn by what right money had been taken from other Votes and applied to the Houses of Parliament, for which provision was made under the present Vote? He certainly thought it was a practice that was liable to be greatly abused.

Mr. SALT said, that before the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works replied, he wished to call attention to two small items in the present Vote. But although they were only small items, it was of the utmost importance, for the purpose of securing economy, that all the items should be carefully examined by the House in detail. There was one item mentioned under Sub-head B, which related to the maintenance of buildings—for external repairs of stone work. Now, that was a rather important item, because it was impossible to know, without further explanation, what such expenditure might lead to. Was it part of the ordinary expenditure, or was it the completion of an expenditure? What was the condition of the stone work? He thought it would be well to have the matter fully explained. Then, again, under Sub-head C.—for the maintenance of approaches and gardens—there was an item of £540 for horticultural works for gardens. In addition to a charge for the maintenance of gardens, he found that the item for horticultural works included the maintenance of a constable. Now, the gardens about the Houses of Parliament were not very large, and it was somewhat difficult to know or understand how these horticultural works could involve an expenditure of more than £500 a-year. These two matters might appear to be of small moment; but he thought that as the Civil Service Estimates were constantly increasing, they ought to be carefully examined when they came before the House. He was much obliged for the promise which had been made to publish the accounts in another year in such a form as would enable the actual Estimates to be compared with those of a previous year. The question which had been raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) was of considerable importance, because, although, of course, it was quite unintentional on the part of those who prepared the Estimates, it might be possible to show an apparent decrease, where, in reality, there had been an increase. He hoped the course which had been taken in regard to the present Estimates would be rectified in future. He also thought that some explanation ought to be given of the fact that Votes voted for one purpose had been applied to another.

MR. COURTNEY said, that in reply to his hon. and gallant Friend the the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour), he might say that his hon. and gallant Friend was labouring under a complete misapprehension. There was no transfer of charges from one Vote to another. The items to which the hon. and gallant Member referred were charges connected with the Houses of Parliament; but they were more immediately connected with other Departments, and the Controller General had brought all the various charges together which were strictly expended upon the Houses of Parliament, so that hon. Members should be made acquainted not only with the expenditure connected with the present Vote, but with all the other items of expenditure upon the Houses of Parliament which appeared in other parts of the Estimates. In the first place, there was the expenditure under the present Vote; in the next, there was the expenditure for the supply of water, there being a constant supply of water to all public buildings; and then Vote 18 had reference to the rates upon Government property, such rates being contributions to the various parishes in the locality in which the public buildings were situated. But in making out an account of the expenditure upon the Houses of Parliament, the total expenditure was given for the information of the House. There was, however, no transfer from Vote 18, for instance, for the purposes of Vote 4, or from Vote 4 for the purposes of Vote 18. Vote 4 paid for itself, and Vote 18 paid for itself. The same thing would be seen with regard to other heads of expenditure—for instance, in the case of County Courts, under Class III., where the expenditure was very much greater than that which appeared under the present Vote. The salaries of the County Court Judges were provided out of the Consolidated Fund, while Class VI. and other Votes made provision for superannuation allowances and other expenditure. They were, however, all brought together in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, in the Appropriation Accounts, Vote 1, in order to show what the total amount expended upon the County Courts was. That, however, did not imply the transfer of one Vote to anther, but simply the bringing together of the total expenditure incurred for the purpose of supplying the House with information. Precisely what was done in the case of the County Courts on a very large scale was done in this case with regard to three or four items of expenditure which were not provided for in the present Vote, but were in reality provided for under other Votes.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had asked a question as to the expenditure of £2,000 for repairing the stone work of the Houses of Parliament. His hon. Friend would be aware that the exterior stone work had for some years been in a very bad state, and that it had been necessary to repair it at considerable cost from time to time. This was owing to the surrounding atmosphere and to the bad selection of stone at the time the building was originally constructed. Three years ago the same Vote amounted to £3,000; it was £2,500 last year; and now the sum asked for had been reduced to £2,000. He believed it would be found that not so much would be required in future; but, at the same time, it would be necessary from time to time to spend money in that direction. As to the horticultural works, the hon. Member would be aware that there were three gardens attached to the Houses of Parliament, and they cost about £480 a-year to maintain.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he congratulated himself upon having initiated a very interesting discussion. He had complained of the ventilation of the House, and every Member who had spoken since, with the exception of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler), had agreed with the description he had given of its character. Of course, he did not count that right hon. Gentleman, because anyone who was able to indulge daily in turtle soup and Madeira would care very little about the surrounding atmosphere. He thought, however, that he was entitled to a more distinct answer from the First Commissioner of Works. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he had passed over a certain portion of the remarks he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had made, because he did not look upon them as serious; but the right hon. Gentleman had not answered another question which was of great importance—namely, the necessity of providing better means of intercommunication between the different parts of the House. The right hon. Gentleman did not make a single remark upon that point; but he had raised another question altogether. Now, if the right hon. Gentleman would look into any newspaper office in Fleet Street—take *The Standard* or *The Daily News*, for instance —he would be able to find out more readily there what was taking place in the House of Commons than if he went into the Tea Room or any other room of the House except the House itself. He thought that was perfectly monstrous. If he went into a newspaper office, and asked the editor who was speaking in the House of Commons, what the subject was, and what side the hon. Member who was speaking was taking, the editor could by his electric appliances inform him immediately who the speaker was, what the subject was, and what side he was speaking upon. In fact, the means of communication now established between the newspaper offices and the House of Commons were so complete, that whereas formerly the leader writer had to attend the debates of the House, he was now able to write his leaders with much more facility at his own newspaper office in Fleet Street. He might allude to the experience of an hon. Gentleman now sitting on the Treasury Bench. He presumed that it would not be a violation of confidence if he stated that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had distinguished himself, before he entered the House and obtained his present position, as a brilliant contributor to the newspaper Press of the country. Now, supposing that the hon. Gentleman was a smoker, and was to go down to the lower Smoke Room in order to write a newspaper article, it was very probable that he would not be able to write it until 11 or 12 o'clock at night, because he would want to know how the debate was going to turn. He did not mean to say that the hon. Member would suit his opinions to the fortunes of the debate, but he would certainly accommodate his remarks to those fortunes. If the hon. Gentleman began to write his article at 11 or 12 o'clock at night, he would probably have to write against time, and then what would he be required to do? If he desired to send his newspaper article by instalments, he would have to trot up from the Smoke Room to the back of the Speaker's Chair, at a time when every single moment was precious to him, in order to convey the article from the place where he was writing it to the Reporters' Gallery. Now, if the hon. Member had been a member of the Reform Club, or of the Carlton Club, and had been writing in one of the rooms of either of those Clubs, and wished to have his letter sent away, all that it would have been necessary for him to do would have been to place his finger upon the electric bell, when a page would at once attend upon him and convey his message to any part of the building. Why could not that be done in the House of Commons? Could the right hon. Gentleman point out any objection to having two or three additional messengers for the purpose of performing that duty?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: There are attendants already.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked if he was to understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that such attendants already existed? It was impossible to ask the waiters down in the Smoke Room, because they were obviously too busily engaged. With regard to the question of intercommunication, he wished to know also if it would not be easy to establish telephonic communication between various parts of the House? He did not see any reason why Members should not be able to find out in different parts of the building what was going on in the House, just as readily as a newspaper editor sitting in his office in Fleet Street. The right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) had found fault with him for making complaints in regard to the want of intercommunication with the Ladies' and Reporters' Galleries. Now, he had said nothing about the Reporters' Gallery; but with regard to the Ladies' Gallery, where he certainly appeared much less than many other Members, he did not see any harm in being called upon to visit a lady who might have obtained admission under his own auspices. He apprehended that even the proverbially austere nature of the right hon. Gentleman himself would unbend on such an occasion; and why should the right hon. Gentleman find himself compelled to run a race for three minutes in order to get down to the Division Lobby, or to take a written communication up to the Reporters' Gallery? He thought that all the improvements he suggested might be carried out for an annual expenditure of £200.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the question of providing additional messengers in the House had not been raised before.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had raised it last year.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had no recollection of the fact. The hon. Gentleman now said that there ought to be messengers in every part of the House ready to obey the command of any hon. Member who chose to ring for him to inform him of what was going on in the House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that was not what he had suggested. He had proposed that there should be attendants to carry notes to different parts of the House, as there were in every fourth or fifth rate Club in London; but as to communicating what was going on in the House, that was a different and independent matter altogether.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had never heard any complaint with regard to a want of messengers; but, even if the question had been raised before, it could not come upon the present Vote, which was for new works. If it were found necessary to increase the staff of messengers, it would come more properly on the Vote for the payment of the staff of the House of Commons. It would not fall under his duty to make any provision for it. He should be glad to confer with the hon. Member privately in order that he might place the hon. Member's views before the proper authorities, and see whether some arrangement could not be made to meet them.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he thought there was a great deal of force in what the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had stated. The hon. Member had spoken of the conveniences supplied by Clubs in comparison with those provided by the House of Commons. Now, he did not make use of the rooms provided for the comfort of Members in various parts of the House to any large extent, nor was he in the habit of writing leading articles such as those of which his hon. Friend had spoken. But before he came into the House he was often told that it was the best Club in London. That was probably because the Members paid the largest entrance fee. It could not have obtained that distinction in any other way, because for any other purpose it was, if not absolutely the worst, very nearly the worst Club in the Metropolis. If a Member wished to find out whether there was any news from Khartoum or Berber, or any other place, he had to hunt about after it, taking his chance of finding a telegram in the entrance room to the Library or some other part of the House. Now, he did not see why there should not be a public intelligence board in the Lobby, such as *The Central News*, or any other News Agency, would provide. In regard to the Ladies' Gallery, he had sometimes occasion to go there, and he had always found it a matter of great inconvenience to go all the way round from the back of the Speaker's Chair; and if he wanted to go there he generally waited until some Member passed through, and then asked him for leave to pass.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he thought that his meaning had been misunderstood by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). He did not wish the House or the Committee to understand that he attached no importance to providing the readiest means of access from all parts of the building to the body of the House itself. The hon. Member who had just sat down had reminded him of a point which he had forgotten. When he spoke previously he had been under the impression that any Member who desired to go to the Ladies' Gallery could use the means of egress and ingress which was provided behind the Speaker's Chair. The suggestion he would make to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, who had always shown himself most anxious to meet the personal convenience of Members, without prejudice to Party, on both sides of the House, was whether it might not be possible to make some provision, by some rearrangement of door-keepers, which would give Members the means of going out by the door at the back of the Speaker's Chair, and thereby save them the necessity of passing through the somewhat large crowd of persons who crowded the Lobby, many of whom, he thought, might very reasonably be excluded from the immediate purlieus of the House. Hon. Members would then be able to get into the Lobby and other parts of the House without being comcompelled to pass through what he could only describe as the crowd of Lobby loungers who surrounded the door. The hon. Member who had just spoken had referred to the desirability of having some means of reference to news telegrams; and, personally, as they altogether failed to obtain any news whatever from Her Majesty's Government upon matters of great moment respecting occurrences in various parts of the world, he thought it was most desirable that there should be some means of supplying Members with the latest news without requiring them to give Notice of a Question. Even that afternoon it would have been most convenient if they could have had some independent source of information. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would consider the suggestions which had now been offered, and which, if adopted, would remove many of the complaints which had been made.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he thought the suggestion which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman was of considerable importance. He did not know why every hon. Member should not be allowed to pass through the door behind the Speaker's Chair as well as certain privileged classes of the House, such as the occupants of the Treasury Bench. The inconvenience of rushing down at break-neck speed when the Division Bell was rung was now very great, and it would be considerably obviated if hon. Members were allowed to pass in and out of the magical door behind the Speaker's Chair. He wished to ask, further, whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works proposed to do anything in regard to the removal of the railings which now formed a screen in front of the Ladies' Gallery? Hon. Members would recollect that the genie mentioned in the *Arabian Nights* used to carry his wife about with him in a glass box. He had often wondered whether it was in imitation of that mythical personage that the House of Commons had always locked its ladies up in an iron cage. He hoped it would be found convenient to abolish the present absurd and useless system. He did not know that the presence of ladies at their debates would do much harm. Surely they were not so much more timid or susceptible than noble Lords in "another place," and were quite as able to sustain the presence of ladies in the open Gallery. An intelligent Eastern lady—in fact, an Eastern Princess—had spoken to him, among other things, about the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons, and had asked him why hon. Members had their ladies screened away from the public view? He reminded her that she was herself going every night to the opera, where she was much more entirely screened; but she pointed out that there was this difference. In the first place, it was one of the usages of Mahomedan countries; and, in the next, she said that her ladies found it very pleasant, upon a hot summer's evening, to go into the opera-box in their night-dresses. Of course, that was a substantial reason in favour of a screen; but he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works would take measures for removing the present absurd and unnecessary grille in the House of Commons.

MR. GRAY said, that with reference to the question of giving facilities to Members for becoming acquainted with the news of the day, there was a little instrument supplied to every first-rate hotel and club in the Metropolis by a Company called the Exchange Telegraph Company, or some such name. That Company provided a continuous printed slip giving all the news of the day, and it cost a very small sum—something like £30 or £40 a-year. If the right hon. Gentleman would consider that it would be a matter of great convenience to Members to be supplied with this news, and that the expense would be so very small, he would probably consent to post up the news in question in the Reading Room, or some other convenient place, where hon. Members would be able, among other things, to see a continuous summary of the debates. It was no new experiment; but, as he had stated, news of this kind was already supplied to almost every hotel and club in London.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would take the matter into consideration.

MR. MAC IVER asked the First Commissioner of Works, if he intended to present any Supplementary Estimate for the completion of the Mosaics in the Central Hall, which had been frequently referred to by the late Mr. Schreiber?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE replied in the negative.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT wished to say a word in regard to the important question of access to different parts of the House, which had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther). He thought that something might be done to allow private Members of the House to pass through the doorway behind the Speaker's Chair. He did not see that it would lead to any increase of the danger Ministers were supposed to be surrounded with in the approaches to the House. But, if so, another and a separate entrance might be made at the corner of the right-hand Lobby. He wished to make a protest against the views enunciated by the hon. Member behind him (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) in regard to the remarkable views of some Oriental Princess as to what ought to be done to render the Ladies' Gallery more comfortable. Apart from that particular suggestion, he was not at all prepared to say that something might not be done to increase the accommodation for ladies in that House. Hon. Members must often experience a difficulty in gratifying the desire of friends who were anxious to visit the House on certain occasions. The number of seats provided was entirely inadequate to the demands made by those who might almost be said to have a right to visit the House. It must have occurred to hon. Members that, except on very rare occasions, the two Galleries on either side of the House were by no means occupied. At present, a great amount of space was wasted in these Galleries. The existence of some kind of screen in front of the Ladies' Gallery might be an advantage to the House itself, and even to the ladies visiting it. At the same time, he did not see why a portion of the side Galleries might not be fitted up for the accommodation of ladies who wished to be present, and even one or two of the rooms adjoining the Galleries might be placed at their disposal. In addition, a certain amount of wire-work or screen might be put up. With regard to the ventilation of the Ladies' Gallery, it was highly defective, and he had heard many complaints with regard to it. The ventilation of the existing Ladies' Gallery, especially late at night, was simply abominable, and could not be described in language too strong. He would not say that the screen in front of the Ladies' Gallery was not more substantial than was absolutely necessary, not, perhaps, for the sake of Members of the House, but for the comfort of the ladies who sat in the second and third rows, and experienced the difficulty of trying to see through the wire-work. He threw out these suggestions to the First Commissioner of Works; and, although he would not advocate the entire withdrawal of the screen, he thought that much might be done to increase the accommodation for lady visitors to the Gallery.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had raised a question as to the opening of the door behind the Speaker's Chair. That was a matter which had often been under consideration; and if the door were opened for the use of Members desiring to go to the Ladies' Gallery, the services of extra doorkeepers would be required. With regard to the Ladies' Gallery itself, the objection to the want of ventilation was not a new one; and he was prepared to admit that the ventilation was not satisfactory. The evil, however, would be remedied, to a great extent, by the use of the electric light there. As to the grill in front of the Ladies' Gallery, he was certainly opposed to it; but great difference of opinion existed upon the subject, and he was bound to act in accordance with the general opinion of the House. When he found that the general opinion of the House was in favour of the removal of the grill, he would willingly have it removed.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out certain objections against throwing open the door behind the Speaker's Chair; but he wished the right hon. Gentleman to direct his attention to another matter—namely, the state of the Lobby outside. He thought the right hon. Gentleman might use his influence in order to improve the existing state of things. He fully recognized the importance of the Press, and that the duties of the representatives of the Press, and of some other persons, required them to be there, and he did not propose to refer to them. They had a right to see hon. Members; but he was afraid that a number of other persons who had no business there whatever, and who simply went there to amuse themselves and see a few Members they happened to know, found access to the Lobby; and if, in their case, a more efficient supervision were exercised by the officers of the House, a great amount of advantage would be derived.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would communicate with the authorities of the House upon the subject.

Mr. COURTNEY trusted that the Committee would now consent to pass the Vote.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would modify his zeal for the rapid despatch of Public Business. It often happened that the more haste the less speed. With regard to keeping the Lobby clear, there had been very loud complaints of the manner in which it was allowed to be crowded. He had drawn attention to the matter 16 or 17 years ago, and an order was given by the then Serjeant-at-Arms (Lord Charles Russell) to keep the Lobby clear, and for some time the nuisance was, to a great extent, abated. Things had now relapsed very much into their former condition, and he thought the attention of the Chief Commissioner of Works ought to be directed to the subject. Something must be done soon. Either the Lobby must be kept clear of strangers altogether, or means must be taken to enable Members who wished to get from the House itself to the Library and the adjoining rooms to pass to and fro without having to force their way through a crowd of loungers. That was a practical question, and he thought the Committee were justified in asking the right hon. Gentleman to direct his attention to it.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would give the matter his best attention. Of course, it was not one that was under his immediate control; but he would call the attention of the authorities of the House to the complaint that had been made, and he had no doubt that it would be attended to.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST expressed a hope that the First Commissioner of Works would also direct his attention to the suggestions which had been made by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), in regard to providing news telegrams in the House. He had himself asked a Question upon that subject two years ago, in the hope of having some instrument like Mac Mahon's provided for supplying the news of the day. The objection at that time was that it would necessitate the cutting about of the building. Since that day, however, a telephone had been provided downstairs. Certainly, at the present moment, the House of Commons was the worst place in London in which to obtain information. He really thought they ought to be able in the House to know what was going on outside; and he would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the desirability of providing some means by which news could be supplied. Hon. Members who did not go down stairs knew nothing of what was going on at all. Very important news was received, of which they had no knowledge until they were going away from the House.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE intimated that if the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), and the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would explain their views to him upon the subject privately, he would do all that he could to give effect to their wishes.

MR. BIGGAR desired to say one word in regard to the state of the Lobby outside. It was all very well for hon. Members to say that the Lobby was overcrowded. One cause was this—persons who were constituents of hon. Members went to the outside Hall, and sent in their cards. Hon. Members were called out, and arranged to bring these visitors into the Lobby, in the hope of being able to find them a seat in one of the Galleries. It was very difficult to refuse an appeal of that sort, as hon. Members very well knew; and he did not see how any remedy that had been proposed would really cure the evil. No doubt the Serjeant-at-Arms, from time to time, might clear the Lobby; but people outside the House took great interest in the proceedings that went on within it, and induced hon. Members to bring them into the Lobby on the chance of being able to obtain a seat. If Members could not find a seat for them, it would certainly be very hard to turn them out of the Lobby altogether. He thought the only legitimate means of curing the evil would be to provide another means of egress and ingress to the House, by the use of which hon. Members would be able to avoid coming in contact with the persons who went to the Lobby. On a recent occasion the Irish Members had a meeting in the Conference Room to decide what course they ought to take in regard to a particular Division. When the Irish Members entered the Lobby, after the meeting, there was at once a rush of newspaper correspondents, Members of Parliament and others, asking them to divulge what had taken place at the meeting. If hon. Members had been able to get into the House by some private way, all that trouble and confusion would have been saved; and, after all, he thought the only real cure for the evil would be to provide a private entrance for Members.

MR. GRAY remarked that a suggestion had now been made to the First Commissioner of Works in favour of the introduction of one of the Exchange instruments into the House. He wished to remind the right hon. Gentleman that about two years ago a suggestion was made in regard to the introduction of the telephone. After considering the matter for about two years the instrument was introduced. An ordinary individual would have decided the matter in five minutes; and what he was now apprehensive of was that if the right hon. Gentleman took the same length of time to consider the introduction of one of these news instruments, some of those who were at present sitting upon those Benches might not happen to be there when the instrument was provided. What was asked for was for the use of the Members of the present Parliament, and not for those who might happen to come after them.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £106,555, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he wished to call attention to the sum of £1,300 for rent of the office of the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy. Business for the last quarter of a century had probably never been so bad as at the present time; there had never been so large a number of people suffering from the commercial distress which prevailed, and yet there were, perhaps, fewer bankruptcies than there had ever been before. Looked at in one sense, that was not a matter for congratulation; because there was no doubt that a large number of arrangements were entered into behind the back of the creditors, which were not always of a satisfactory kind. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade were in his place, he would ask him for an explanation as to the working of the Bankruptcy Act of last year so far as it had gone; because it appeared to him that although the number of adjudications were less, that was not the case with regard to bankruptcy itself. How far the arrangements he had spoken of were binding upon the parties interested in the estates of bankrupts he knew not;

but it was a matter that seriously affected the large commercial constituency he had the honour to represent (Newcastle), and in which there was much commercial depression.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he also wished to draw attention to the subject which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Newcastle. He believed that he should be perfectly in Order in dealing with this subject in the manner which he proposed. The question of the working of the Bankruptcy Act was scarcely a topic which, in his judgment, could be relevantly introduced in connection with the present Vote; but he thought the Committee had the right of asking the President of the Board of Trade for an explanation of the charge made against the public funds for Works, Buildings, Rent, &c., in connection with the working of that Act. Now, the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), who, unfortunately, was not in his place, had given Notice of a Motion to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,098 for rent of offices, which Motion, in his absence, would, he feared, hardly have justice done to it. The House had been given to understand, when the Bankruptcy Bill was passing through Parliament, that all charges arising under the Act would be defrayed, not by a Vote on the Estimates, but from a totally different source. He had made such hasty reference as he could to the debates which took place during last Session in connection with this point, and especially to the speech of the President of the Board of Trade on the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, and he found that the right hon. Gentleman, in dealing with the question of new officials—High Bailiffs and others, who would be appointed under the Act—said that the new appointments would probably be few in number; that the cost would be met from several sources. In the first place, the fees in the case of every bankruptcy petition would be the same as would be levied in cases of bankruptcy in future. The right hon. Gentleman would not pledge himself to the exact figures; but he said his belief was that the requirements of the case would be satisfied by a fractional addition to the then charge. In addition to that source of revenue, the right hon. Gentleman said he expected to be paid, in the shape of interest, on the aggregate balance of something like £1,000,000 in the hands of the Government, £25,000 or £30,000 per annum, and that these various sources of income would amply provide for the expenditure contemplated under the Bill. After that statement of the right hon. Gentleman, the House believed naturally that there would be no charges in connection with the new Act. But here was a charge of £1,300 for the rent of a house in Carey Street for the Chief Official Receiver, £605 8*s.* 4*d.* for the rent of No. 31 Great George Street, Westminster, for the offices of Inspector in Bankruptcy, and on the next page there were a number of items amounting in all to £1,098 for rents of offices of Official Receivers in various towns throughout England. It was to be regretted that the hon. Member for Evesham was not present to move the reduction of the Vote of which he had given Notice; but, in his absence, he thought the Committee might ask the President of the Board of Trade why it was that, after the assurance given by him to the House last year, the charges he had specified were upon the Estimates.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, in answer to the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), he was unable to supply further information as to the working of the Bankruptcy Act than was already in the possession of hon. Members. With regard to the second complaint, that of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), he thought the hon. Member was in error in supposing that the expense of working the Act would come upon the Consolidated Fund and be charged to the taxpayers. It was quite true that he had stated he did not expect that any expense would fall upon the taxpayers, and that he believed the fees and other sources of income would provide for the whole expenditure. He did not like to commit himself to an estimate of cost at so early a period; but so far as he had gone into the matter, he had every reason to believe that there would be a balance upon the sums receivable, and that balance would go against this Vote in relief of the taxpayer.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it might be his fault; but the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman was, to his mind, not altogether clear. He had understood that all the expenses would be met from the estates in bankruptcy, the interest which the Government expected to realize from that source being £25,000 or £30,000 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman now said they would be met by some kind of set-off against the money voted by the taxpayer, which would come from the source mentioned. But there was nothing in the Estimates to show that anything was to be received by the Treasury in connection with this Vote which would serve as a set-off; there was nothing documentary, therefore, to tell the Committee that this charge would not be an annually recurring charge against the taxpayer; and they had, therefore, no guarantee whatever that the bankruptcy estate account would really be drawn upon to meet the new charges which the right hon. Gentleman said would be defrayed from that source.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, there was no other guarantee than his statement that there would be no charge on the taxpayer. If the fees at present levied were found to be insufficient, and a balance remained against the taxpayer, that balance would have to be made good by increasing the fees. As far as he had gone at present, he believed that the fees would be amply sufficient. That was his present opinion. He believed there would be a balance quite sufficient to meet these charges, which, in subsequent years, would be returned as extra receipts. The hon. Member said he found nothing in the Estimates to that effect. That was quite true, because these were Estimates put down for the purpose of promoting discussion on the subjects they related to; but next year, when they had settled the mode of accounting, there would be an alteration. Until they knew the number of bankruptcies, they could not, of course, put down the exact figures in the Estimates. The amount in the Estimate was an assumed one for the purpose of the Estimates; but it was not placed there with any understanding on the part of the Government that the sum put down would be the actual amount required.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he understood that this subject was to be discussed on a Vote in Class II. He should be glad to know what guarantee there was that the items specified in the Estimate were all the charges which would come forward for the country districts. Was it likely that there would be an increased charge on account of other towns than those named?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had stated on a former occasion that he had authority to make 50 or 60 appointments of Official Receivers for life, at a fixed salary, and to give them offices. But he had made only six life appointments, the rest being annual only. Under the circumstances, the latter appointees would have to find their own offices. It might possibly be that some alteration of the arrangement might be necessary hereafter; but he saw no need of it at present.

MR. GREGORY asked if, in the case of the life appointments, the houses were merely hired for the present year, or did the items represent a permanent charge on account of these offices?

MR. MAC IVER said, nothing could exceed the candour or the explicit character of the right hon. Gentleman's replies; but it happened, unfortunately, that sometimes when he was most explicit he was inaccurate. Now, the portion of the Vote under discussion very much affected his constituents, who thought that this money about to be given practically by way of increased salaries to gentlemen appointed by the President of the Board of Trade——

THE CHAIRMAN said, the question upon which the hon. Member was entering should be raised on another Vote.

MR. MAC IVER said, he would leave the question of salaries. It seemed to his constituents in Birkenhead that it was giving rather a Party aspect to this business to confer offices rent free upon a number of gentlemen who were the political opponents of hon. Members on those Benches. That was why his constituents did not agree with the views of the right hon. Gentleman; and there were many who thought that these rents should not be cast upon the public, but that they should be paid out of the salaries of the Official Receivers appointed by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Member having alluded to a subject that he thought was disposed of by a vote of the House, he would take the opportunity of saying that the majority, or at least a large proportion, of the appointees to the offices in question turned out to belong to the Party of the hon. Member.

Mr. GREGORY said, he observed in the Estimate charges for the offices of the District Registry in various places. He had no objection to raise to those charges, which were, no doubt, right and proper; but he would like to know whether the offices were fire-proof, or were provided with fire-proof depositories, because that question was of considerable importance, having regard to the documents sent to the office. They were original wills, and they ought to be as safe at the District Registries as they were in London. He thought it a fair question to ask what were the arrangements for providing for the safety of the documents deposited?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member had certainly raised an important question. He doubted not that the safety of documents had been provided for; but as he did not know exactly what the arrangements were he would inquire into the matter, and let the hon. Member know the result.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH asked for information as to the amount expended on sanitary improvements in Public Offices. The estimated cost of these was £30,000, and it was stated in the Estimate that £16,000 would probably be expended up to the 31st of March, 1884. It would appear that sufficient money had not been asked for, but that more than the amount in the Vote had already been expended.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was not contemplated to spend more than £5,000 this year — the nature of the work being such that it could only be done when the offices were not fully occupied. The £5,000 voted last year had not all been expended.

Mr. WARTON said, the Committee were indebted to the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) for calling attention to the items of rent in connection with the Bankruptcy Act. He thought that a note ought to have been appended to the Estimate to show that the charge was but a temporary one, especially as it appeared there for the first time, and in view of the fact that the appointments to which it related had been called in question by a vote in that House. Although he thought there was ground for further inquiry on the subject of the appointments, he would not urge it then; but he wished to know what was the exact amount they were at present liable for—whatever might be the case with regard to the future—in respect of the items for rent of offices? Did the aggregate sum of £1,098 for offices in the towns mentioned, and the sum of £605 8*s.* 4*d.* at Great George Street, Westminster, represent all the new charge or not? The latter item seemed to differ from the charge of £1,300 for the Chief Official Receiver's Office in Carey Street, in that it occurred last year as well as this—the £1,300 being for this year only. He wanted to know whether the charge of £605 8*s.* 4*d.* was a temporary charge or not, in addition to the £1,300? The President of the Board of Trade was very clear last year when he was passing the Bill as to the expense of administering the Act; but the right hon. Gentleman now said he could not speak with exactness. He hoped it was not intended to pooh-pooh inquiries until these charges became permanent. There were foot notes to the Estimates relating to such trifling items as 2*s.* 2*d.*, and it was absolutely scandalous that no information was given with regard to charges which involved the whole question of Bankruptcy expenditure.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, it would be absurd to put a note in the Estimate to say that this charge was temporary, because it was undoubtedly a permanent charge. The fact was they had appropriated to the use of the Inspector in Bankruptcy a building which belonged to the Crown. The charge was made, in the first instance, upon the Vote; but the money would ultimately come out of the Bankruptcy Estates Account. He could not say whether the charge would hereafter be diminished or increased, because that depended upon the amount of business to be transacted at the office. If that business increased more room would have to be placed at the disposal of the Inspector; but at present the premises seemed to be ample for the work to be done.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked whether the sum of £200 for the protection of Ancient Monuments related to those which had already been inspected, and as to the protection of which it was intended that some action should take place?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the sum in question was not on account of any distinct monuments. The hon. Gentleman would be glad to hear that a considerable number of the owners of monuments had placed them under the protection of the Act. Personally, he was rather against the expenditure of money upon the monuments; but if it was absolutely necessary it would have to be incurred. He believed that up to the present time 14 monuments had been put under the protection of the Act.

MR. MONK asked, whether the lease of Dover House had not fallen in during the last year, and if it was to be renewed?

MR. COURTNEY was understood to say that the lease had expired, and the tenancy would be determined whenever the house was wanted.

MR. WEST remarked that there was a great deal of expenditure on account of the various legal offices in the great towns. He ventured to express a hope that the right hon.Gentleman would bear in mind that a considerable saving might be affected by a combination of these different offices. In many towns the District Registries and Courts of Justice might be combined, and that forthe sake of economy the offices of Official Receivers might be united with them under one roof. He hoped that the Treasury would exercise a general supervision over the acquisition of new buildings for legal purposes, particularly as his experience had shown that in former times much unnecessary expenditure had been incurred under that head.

MR. BIGGAR said, he saw on page 19 a Vote of £10,000 for the National Gallery—or rather, altogether, £10,300, there being a second item of £300 "For folding doors at the entrance." Last year the total Vote was only £5,000, so that there had been an increase of £5,300; and it seemed to him they ought to have an explanation of this increase, seeing that the building was an old one, and was not in course of construction. On what grounds could such a sum as £10,300 be asked for this year? He himself was at a loss to imagine the grounds. There was another item, a new one, on page 21—the last item but one—namely, "Spring Gardens, No. 30, Parliamentary Counsel." Why should they spend £200 on rent for Parliamentary Counsel? He should like to have an explanation of that. Then there was a further item of £1,910 for Westminster Bridge. Last year this Vote was £4,700. What was the reason of the decrease, and why were they not getting rid of this item altogether? No doubt it was right that there should be proper means of communication between one part of London and another; but he was at a loss to know why the local taxpayer, who was benefited by it, should not bear the expense. It appeared to him that the item for Westminster Bridge should be struck out.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE replied that the care of Westminster Bridge was one of those things which would be transferred to the new government of London, when the Bill for the reform of the municipal government of the Metropolis, which was now before the House, became law. The measure would probably be passed during the present Session. As the hon. Member (Mr. Biggar) had pointed out, the item for the Bridge was much less this year than it was last year. This was to be accounted for by the fact that last year the Bridge was repainted at a cost of £2,500. As to the Vote for the National Gallery, the matter was fully explained last year when the plans of the Government were generally approved of. Although the front and major part of the building was old, there was a large part of the rear which was very recent, having only been built within the past three or four years. It was now considered necessary to add to that new portion, and to extend the building further back. A part of the barrack yard would be taken for the purpose. There was some further land at the back which was devoted to other uses, and this the Metropolitan Board of Works wished to acquire. They would pay a sum of money for it which would recoup the Government for the expenditure they proposed to incur. With regard to the item for rent of offices of Parliamentary Counsel it was necessary to employ Parliamentary Counsel, and for such counsel it was necessary to have offices. £200 a-year did not seem a very large item for this purpose.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £65,000, to complete the sum for Public Offices Site.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, that before this Vote was agreed to he should like the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to tell the Committee in what position they were in regard to the contemplated new Government buildings? The subject was a very interesting one to the public; and the Committee should be informed as to how far the arrangements had gone, and whether or not the plans were completed?

Mr. GREGORY wished to know whether the purchases would come within the estimate?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE replied that the purchases effected had only been of freeholds, and they had been within the estimate. The purchases had tallied in a remarkable manner with the estimates of Sir Henry Hunt, which was a testimony to the value of his services in the matter. The competition, as the Committee was aware, was of a double character—that was to say, there was first an open competition, which was entered into on the understanding that nine or ten selected competitors would compete again with more finished designs. The first competition had already taken place; 128 designs were sent in, and out of these the judges had selected nine competitors, who were now at work elaborating their plans and designs. By the 21st of this month, he hoped, the finished proposals would be sent in, and then the judges would meet again, and would advise the Government as to which of the designs should be finally selected. He trusted that before the end of the Session they would be able to lay the selection before the House and to take a small Vote on Account, with the view of determining the selection made.

Mr. RYLANDS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would inform the Committee of the names of the judges? He understood that the plans and designs were sent in by a small number of architects, who had been applied to for the purpose. If that were so, some of them must have sent in more than one each; and he, therefore, wished to know what was the original number of competitors, which was now reduced to nine?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The number of competitors was 128.

Mr. RYLANDS: Then do I understand that the 128 competitors sent in each a single design?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Yes.

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

Mr. RYLANDS: And that out of the 128 designs nine have been selected?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Yes, by the judges.

Mr. RYLANDS said, that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would inform the Committee of the names of the judges. As one who had taken a great interest in this question, and had had the honour of serving on the Committee which sat to consider it, he might say that it was a strong point urged by the witnesses examined before the Committee, that a dwelling should be provided for the First Lord of the Admiralty within the new building. He had been surprised to hear, from a statement made a short time ago on behalf of the Government, that that part of the scheme had been omitted. Witnesses had declared that the First Lord should have this residence, for the reason that in time of war it was essential that he should be always on the spot, and within the reach of the permanent officials when important telegrams were received at critical periods. There had been no reason given for the alteration of the plans originally determined on by the Committee, which was appointed at the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre)

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE repeated that the competitors were 128 in number, and that they had each sent in several drawings of the same building, showing the different storeys, and giving different views, but without being elaborated as to details. The designs in the first competition were reduced to a certain scale, in order to induce the best architects to compete — and the Government had reason to believe that several of the best architects had competed. Out of the total number of designs sent in nine had been selected, and the authors of these nine had now been invited to compete with very much more accurate and elaborate designs. The judges in the matter were Mr. Philip H. Hardwicke and Mr. Ewan Christian, the eminent architects, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) and himself. With regard to the dwelling of the First Lord of the Admiralty, many people thought that it should be within the new building; but there was a difference of opinion on the subject. The Admiralty had considered the proposal, and were against it. But it would still be possible, if it should be thought that the First Lord should reside in the neighbourhood of the Admiralty, to erect a house immediately adjoining the new Offices. Thus the residence, though not under the same roof as the Admiralty Offices, would be contiguous to them. It was very possible that that would be the plan eventually decided upon. The designs had been ordered to be prepared on the understanding that the First Lord of the Admiralty should not have a residence within the new building.

Mr. J. LOWTHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that it would be possible to build a residence for the First Lord of the Admiralty on land already acquired?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: On land that can be acquired under the Public Offices Site Act, 1882.

Mr. J. LOWTHER wished to know what would be done with that land in the meantime? Would it be left vacant, or would it be applied to another purpose, so that, when required, it could be put to the use referred to? No difference of opinion on this matter had been manifest in the House, notwithstanding the fact of the presence amongst them of such a rigid economist as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). The difference of opinion had been found to prevail within the sacred circle of Her Majesty's Advisers. They had had the Secretary to the Admiralty defending what the hon. Gentleman had supposed to be the determination of the Government to arrange for a residence for the First Lord of the Admiralty in the new building; and they had subsequently ascertained that the Treasury had applied the pruning knife to the scheme as originally recommended by the Admiralty, and that the Vote had been reduced. He (Mr. J. Lowther) did not know whether, without divulging official confidences, the Secretary to the Treasury could state on what grounds the Government had receded from the position they originally assumed in the matter. There might be a good deal to be said as to the desirability of uniting private residences with Public Offices; but he should have thought it would have been easy for a capable architect to devise means by which a dwelling-house could be connected with a new Public Office. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could state what his own opinion in the matter was; but, without asking him for his personal view, he would ask him if he could inform the Committee on what ground the Government had set aside the distinct expression of personal opinion tendered to the Committee in favour of having the residence of the First Lord within the Admiralty building?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT wished to point out the extreme inconvenience, architecturally, which might result from the course the Government were pursuing in regard to this official residence of the First Lord of the Admiralty. If the new building was to be a handsome structure, and not an eyesore, as so many public buildings in London were, it should be made symmetrical from the commencement. If, however, the architects who were submitting plans for the approval of the authorities were forbidden to make provision for the residence in their designs, the result would either be that a very unsightly and imperfect structure would have to be added, or else great expense would have to be incurred. It appeared to him that the best course to take would be to have provision made in the new designs for a dwelling for the First Lord of the Admiralty. It could afterwards be built or not as was thought best.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor) said, he should be glad to have some information either from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) or the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) upon a point to which they had both alluded. It was said that it would be very important, in the event of a war, that the First Lord of the Admiralty should have a dwelling under the roof of the new Admiralty. If that was the case with the First Lord of the Admiralty, he should like to know whether it would not also be the case with the Secretary of State for War—should not he have a dwelling under the roof of the War Office? The two positions seemed to him to be very similar—one being head of the Navy and the other head of the Army. If it was important that the First Lord of the Admiralty should reside in or near his Office, why was it not equally important that the Secretary of State for War should do the same? He should like to have his ignorance enlightened on this matter.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had raised a very pertinent question—namely, why if the First Lord of the Admiralty had a residence under the roof of the Admiralty building the Secretary of State for War should not also have a residence under the roof of the War Office? But that argument cut both ways; if it was not necessary for the Secretary of State for War or the Commander-in-Chief to have dwellings in the new building, why was it necessary for the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Naval Lord to have dwellings? No one had contended for a moment that it was necessary that the Secretary of State for War or the Commander-in-Chief of the Army should have official residences; and it had, therefore, been considered unnecessary to provide them for the First Lord or the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty. It had been thought unnecessary to have residences in the new building for these four officials; but, at the same time, though it had been decided that the First Lord and the First Naval Lord should not be provided with residences under the roof of the new building, if it should hereafter be deemed desirable it would be possible to provide dwellings for them immediately contiguous to the Office. Hon. Gentlemen would see the plans before the building was erected; and, no doubt, would be satisfied that it would be possible to erect an official residence adjacent to the new Public Offices without interfering with the architectural beauty of the design. It was difficult to explain the matter; but he should be able to show the plans to any hon. Member who wished to see them.

Mr. RYLANDS could not say he was satisfied with the statement of his right hon. Friend in having lost sight of the recommendations which were made to the Committee of which he had been a Member. It was shown in evidence that it was most important to make this great improvement; and he had the clearest recollection that it was considered by the witnesses a most essential point that the First Lord of the Admiralty should have a residence beneath the roof of the new building. He could not altogether answer the question put by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler), as to why it was more necessary to have a residence for the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Naval Lord than for the Secretary of State for War or the Commander-in-Chief; but he believed the fact was that the First Lord of the Admiralty at present had a residence within the Admiralty building, and he presumed it had been found such a convenient arrangement that it was not thought desirable to alter it in the new Offices. What did the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works now say? He evidently was not so satisfied that it was not desirable to have this arrangement effected; and he wished them to accept the present proposal because, as he had said, there was plenty of room to build a suitable mansion for the First Lord of the Admiralty adjacent to the new Offices later on, if it should be thought necessary. He (Mr. Rylands) held a very strong opinion on this subject. He did not know of his own knowledge whether or not it was necessary for the First Lord of the Admiralty to have an official residence in the Admiralty building; but he remembered the evidence of the experts who had been called before the Committee. He certainly was of opinion that if they went on with the present plans, excluding a residence for the First Lord, then, changing their views—as, he was sorry to say, they were too often in the habit of doing—arranged for a residence for him contiguous to the new Offices, they would be spending a great deal more than it would have cost them in the first place to include the residence in the original plan. No doubt the Secretary to the Treasury, if he thought himself justified in divulging the secrets of the Department with which he was connected, could show that pressure had been put on the Admiralty. He (Mr. Rylands) sympathized with the Secretary to the Treasury in his desire to stop extravagance; but this he did say—that if they put the Vote down and established this expenditure, it should be once for all. There should be no addition allowed to be made to the building hereafter. He remembered the circumstances the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther) alluded to, when the Secretary to the Admiralty got up and argued in favour of the First Lord of the Admiralty having an official residence in the new building. On the following night, in reply to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), the hon. Gentleman, in a most sheepish manner, had to get up and declare that there was to be no dwelling provided for the First Lord of the Admiralty. The hon. Member had not been aware of the fact that this had been made a Cabinet question, and that it had been solemnly decided that there was to be no official residence. If a dwelling was to be erected, it should be done at once as a part of the new Offices, and should not be left to be constructed until after the completion of the contemplated building. If a residence was built as an afterthought, they would find themselves spending an unnecessarily large amount of money on a palatial structure for the enjoyment of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member was quite right in saying this matter was considered by the Committee of which he had been a Member. The hon. Member, however, would recollect that in the ground plan he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had laid before the Committee the residences of the First Lord and the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty had not been under the same roof as the Offices, but on an adjoining piece of land.

MR. RYLANDS: There was no communication.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the buildings were not actually adjoining each other, but were in close contiguity, and communication would be effected by a subway. In the plan discussed by the Committee, residences on a vacant plot of ground were certainly shown for the First Lord and the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty. He himself was of opinion that these residences should not be immediately under the roof of the new building, but should be detached and on a separate plot of ground. The question as to the erection of these residences was not yet finally determined, and could well be allowed to stand over. Inasmuch as some years must elapse before the new Offices would be erected, and as, during the interval, the First Lord and the First Naval Lord would probably be supplied with residences elsewhere, it might turn out, especially if telephonic apparatus were made more perfect, that it would not be necessary or desirable to build official residences.

MR. GREGORY said, he should like to know whether the judges were finally to decide on the designs to be selected, or whether the Representatives of the people were to have an opportunity of studying them?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that point was not yet decided. He need hardly say that nothing could be done until a Vote of the House had been taken; and that, therefore, whatever was done would come under the review of the House. If the hon. Member would put a Question to him later on as to how far the Government proposed to submit the plans to the House, he would be able to give him a more definite answer.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, there was a new item in this year's Estimate of £10,000 for preliminary expenses, and he should like to know what that meant, seeing that the Government had taken no money for building yet? This was a new item of which he was at a loss to discover the meaning. The time had come when these unexpected charges should be viewed with attention. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works could give a satisfactory explanation; but, at any rate, they should not be called on to vote away a lump sum of this kind without some notion as to what it was for.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE explained that it was intended to give £600 each for the best designs, which would make £6,000. The remaining £4,000 of the item the hon. and gallant Member referred to was to be expended during the present financial year on temporary buildings and offices.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, he thought these 10 £600 premiums had been very properly given; but he doubted whether the £4,000, forming the other part of the item of £10,000, properly came under this Vote.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, that now that the question as to the site on which the new Admiralty and War Office were to be erected had been decided upon, he should like to know what the Government proposed to do with the site which used to belong to the India Office, lying between Delahay Street and Parliament Street, but which had been purchased by the Government? At one time it was thought likely that it would be chosen for Public Offices; but now that the other scheme had been decided upon, he should like to know what it was proposed to do with this piece of ground?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had proposed to give it to the Parks Railway Company; but, inasmuch as the scheme of the Company had been disallowed by Parliament, he did not know what would be done with it. The question would have to be allowed to rest until it was definitely decided how Parliament Street was to be widened, and at whose cost the work was to be carried out. At the present moment the Local Government of London declined to entertain the idea of carrying out the improvement; and whether or not the new Government of the Metropolis—to be established under the Bill now before Parliament—would undertake it he could not say.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: At any rate the Government, I suppose, have no intention of disposing of the land?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: No.

Mr. WARTON said, he was glad attention had been called to the vague item for "preliminary expenses" in connection with the new buildings. Why could not the Treasury say, "Premiums for plans, £6,000," and so on? But, whilst there were 10 premiums, how came it that there were only nine plans?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that nothing would be done with the new building without first submitting the plans to Parliament. The item of £4,000, to which he had referred, was for altering the existing Offices pending the erection of the new buildings.

Mr. WARTON said, that did not answer his question as to why only nine designs had been chosen seeing that there were 10 premiums?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE replied that the judges, after a very careful selection, decided on recommending only nine designs for fresh competition.

Mr. WARTON: Were not 10 entitled to premiums?

Mr. COURTNEY: Provision was made for 10 some months ago; but the judges decided only to recommend nine. The remaining £600, or the tenth

premium, will not be spent, but will be paid back into the Treasury.

Mr. BIGGAR wished to know what would be done with the premises now occupied by the Government in Pall Mall? Had the Government a lease of the War Office buildings, or were they tenants from year to year?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE replied that the premises at present occupied by the War Office belonged to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, who would let them in the ordinary way when the War Department gave them up.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) £11,240, to complete the sum for the Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour) a short time ago complained that the Votes did not show the expenditure in connection with the Services they were intended to cover. It seemed to him (Mr. A. O'Connor) that the present Vote was singularly apposite for the purpose of showing the truth of the complaint of the hon. and gallant Gentleman; because, whilst the total sum voted under this Vote for Furniture amounted to £16,740, as a matter of fact that formed a very small portion of the total sum which went to defray the cost of furniture in the Public Offices. For instance, there was £2,000 voted for furniture for the Royal Palaces, over £4,000 for the Houses of Parliament, £1,500 for the Customs, £3,000 for the Inland Revenue, £3,370 for the Post Office and Telegraph Offices, over £1,000 for the County Courts, and other sums for the Metropolitan Police Courts, the Sheriff Court in Scotland, the Science and Art Department of Edinburgh, &c., making, altogether, £34,000 or £35,000 expended on furniture by the Works Department alone. That did not exhaust the expenditure in connection with the Office of Works. The British Museum supplied its own furniture out of its own Vote, which it administered independently of the Office of Works, as did the Science and Art Department, the Convict Establishment, and the Prisons. The Admiralty and the War Office had their furniture supplied from two sources. For the

Offices in London they looked to the Board of Works; but for all the stations outside London they provided furniture themselves out of their own Votes. In respect of having head-quarters in London with branch establishments in the Provinces, the Admiralty and War Office did not stand alone, because the Revenue Department, the Customs, the Post Office, all alike had head-quarters in London, with branch establishments and stations in the Provinces. But these Departments did not adopt the same plan as was adopted by the Naval and Military Departments, so far as the supply of furniture was concerned, so that there was absolutely nothing like uniformity of system in the Public Service in regard to that supply. There was nothing at all to secure the proper protection of the public purse in this matter. There was nothing to secure that a particular Department supplying furniture to an Office was not actually buying articles of which there were several of the same kind lying unused in another Office. He had very good reason to believe that, even as between Departments which were catered for with respect to furniture by the Board of Works, it had happened, and was happening at that very moment, that new furniture was supplied to one Office in spite of the fact that there were articles of the same kind lying unused in other Offices—articles which had been lying idle for years. He invited the right hon. Gentleman to investigate this matter. If he would do so, he might be able to ascertain where the furniture was lying, and probably he would have his eyes opened to a good many other things. He had brought this question of the needless expenditure of public money on furniture before the House in successive years, but always in vain. He had always been put off with some flimsy excuse as to the dignity of the House, or of the Minister who had to explain the matter; but now the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works must feel that something more was necessary than had been done in connection with this matter during the past few years. During the past few months the curtain had been, to some extent, lifted; and the right hon. Gentleman had been enabled to discover, in connection with one small article alone—namely, linoleum, the kind of administration which had been going on. When the peculation became known to him the right hon. Gentleman made inquiries, which resulted in the dismissal of certain officials. According to an article he had read on the subject three lower clerks were to take the place of the highly-paid officials who had been dismissed, and were to receive small additions to their salaries. The article went on to say that when the inquiry into the operations of these Departments was instituted, there would be a great many revolutions effected. He did not know on what authority this was written; but it bore out a great deal he had read about the Board of Works. It seemed to him very strange that re-organization of the Furniture Department already effected had only gone the length of replacing three highly-paid officials by three lower division clerks with £15 a-piece added to their salaries. That, to his mind, was not the way to avoid peculation and jobbery. The way to prevent that was to employ officials of a superior quality, and to pay them good salaries, so as to put them above temptation. Then, as to the purchase of furniture, there was nothing like open competition if they wished to secure the best articles at the lowest price. At present, he believed, the furniture was supplied by manufacturers who were on the good books of the Board of Works, and these manufacturers, he had no doubt, made a very good thing of it. Furthermore, as to what became of the old furniture, he should like to know whether the official concerned in the condemnation of old furniture as obsolete and useless was also the officer who accounted for its value? If he was anyone who knew anything about the Department, he must be aware that the system was a very faulty one. He (Mr. A. O'Connor) did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman could say, on the spur of the moment, whether the official who condemned was the same as sold the old furniture. He had referred, he thought, to a sufficient number of points to indicate the ground an investigation ought to cover. Probably the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee some satisfactory information as to the results of his late inquiry, the nature of the re-organization he had brought about, and the nature of the precautions he proposed to take in the future to prevent such peculation as had been brought to light and to protect the public purse.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Gentleman had begun by pointing out that the expenditure on furniture was not in the hands of one Department. That was the case; and it was a question whether it was preferable, as a means of checking the furniture supplied to the various Departments, that the cost of all the furniture supplied at the public expense should be classed under one head, or whether, as under the present system, the separate cost of certain Departments, such as the Royal Palaces and the Diplomatic Department, should not be shown at a glance, including the amount expended for furniture on each building. Was it not more likely to conduce to economy in connection with the Royal Palaces and the Diplomatic Buildings that the furniture for them should be voted under the separate heads, so as to show the aggregate cost of each, rather than that it should be voted under one head? On the whole, he thought it better that the House should see what was the total expenditure on the Royal Palaces and the Diplomatic Buildings, including their furniture, rather than that the cost of furniture should be limited to the present Vote. He believed that if all these Services were included in one Vote the country would be called on to pay a larger amount than at present. However, the point was a most important one. The tendency had been rather to concentrate the expenditure under the Vote now under discussion; but he thought they had gone far enough in that direction, and that they should now endeavour, as much as possible, to have it shown under separate heads. The hon. Gentleman said he had called attention to this Vote more than once, and had always done so in vain. That was not the case. It was in consequence of the hon. Member's remarks that he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had not felt satisfied with what was going on, and that the inquiries had been made which had led to the result the hon. Gentleman had alluded to. He trusted, therefore, the hon. Member would not think he had made his remarks in vain. When the hon. Member referred to cases of furniture being supplied for one Department under this Vote when there was furniture of the same description as that supplied lying unused in another Department, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could only say that if the hon. Gentleman would supply him, privately, with the information on which his remarks appeared to be based, he would be much obliged to him. The hon. Gentleman had referred to re-organization of the Department. It was in course of re-organization, and its ultimate condition had not yet been finally determined. One of the Heads of the Department was looking closely into the matter, and had already brought to light certain circumstances which showed that this particular branch of the Department was not in a satisfactory condition. It was hoped that great good would result from the investigation. The hon. Member had said there was no competition for the sale of furniture to the Government. Well, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had, on previous occasions, had to inform the House, on the statements of the Heads of the several Departments, that there was competition in almost every case of the purchase of furniture.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Not open competition.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: No; he did not think he had stated that there was open competition; but there was limited competition in every case. He was sorry to say that the investigations of the official to whom he had adverted had brought out the fact that there was competition to a much less degree than he had been informed of, and had stated to the House. He had now directed that there should be competition in every case; not always open competition, because there were certain kinds of furniture which could not be supplied in that way. He had, however, given instructions that wherever it was possible there should be open competition; and that, under any circumstances, the competition should be more extensive than it had been hitherto.

Mr. SALT said, he was glad to hear that this matter had the right hon. Gentleman's attention. It was one of those things which, in itself, seemed very small compared with the enormous expenditure of this country in other directions; but it was in these matters of detail that they must endeavour to exercise economy. Therefore, he was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had had his attention specially drawn to the subject in that

House. Economy must be pressed on the public Departments in all matters of detail. He, as many other hon. Members were, was most anxious that economy in the expenditure of the country should be brought about, being alarmed at the constant growth of the Civil Service Estimates. He was satisfied that the only way to reduce the Estimates was by exercising the strictest economy in detail. What was necessary for the efficient conduct of the Public Service should not be omitted; but, on the other hand, it was necessary to press on every one connected with the Public Departments, whatever his position—whether it was one of great influence or one of a subordinate character—that the country, through that House, required that some economy should be exercised in regard to the Public Service, and exercised in every detail, however minute, just as it would be exercised in connection with a well-managed private enterprize. He wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to one point in connection with this matter of furniture, and that was that an inventory of the furniture should be prepared stating the places where the furniture was used or stored. Every article should be carefully recorded in it. He did not know whether such an inventory was kept by the Board of Works; but he was quite sure that, looking at the vast amount of detail to be considered in connection with the Department, the Service could not be properly and economically carried on unless some competent person had charge of an inventory and was responsible for entering in it every article either supplied to a Department, or taken from a Department, or transferred from one Department to another, or destroyed as worn out. He could only say he was glad the matter had the careful attention of the right hon. Gentleman, than whom no one could form a better opinion of what was required for the Public Service.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he had not understood, from the interesting speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. O'Connor), that he had argued that there should be a change of system undertaken by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was very important that under the heads "Royal Palaces" and "Diplomatic Buildings" these Services should be shown, and that the amount for furniture should appear in the Vote. What he had understood the hon. Member (Mr. A. O'Connor) to contend was, that if they had any system at all it should be a uniform one; and that if there was any important body of officials connected with the Board of Works to superintend the supply of furniture to the public Departments, there was no reason why they should not undertake to overlook all the furniture supplied to all the Departments. What he had understood the hon. Member to argue for was that there should be a uniform system, and that they should have this Department of the Office of Works conducted in such a business-like way that the right hon. Gentleman should control the whole of the furniture required by the different Departments of the State — that he should not simply supply a certain limited number of Departments, but supply all the Departments requiring furniture.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Board of Works does supply all Departments, except the Admiralty and the War Office.

Mr. RYLANDS: Except the Admiralty and the War Office. Those were great exceptions, and meant the buying of a considerable amount of furniture outside the Board of Works. It appeared to him that, so far as possible, the furniture should be supplied under one Department. The point he wished further to refer to was this—what was required was that there should be such a system of administration of the Furniture Department as would secure two things—first, that furniture should not be bought unless it was absolutely required; and, secondly, that old stores should not be disposed of before they were actually worn out. In order to secure that, it was quite clear that there should be an inventory—that was to say, that the Board of Works, or the Furniture Department, should have a means of knowing, from time to time, what articles of furniture there were in stock in the Departments they supplied with furniture. He did not think there should be any difficulty at all in having such an inventory as that kept. If there was a lot of furniture unused in one Department, whilst furniture of a similar description was required in another Department, there was no reason why the operation of transferring it should not be performed by the Board of Works. He did not gather that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works gave any information to the Committee as to what was done with worn-out furniture—whether an officer of the Board of Works was placed in a position to decide whether or not furniture should be got rid of as worn-out when, in point of fact, there might be a great deal of wear left in it. He must say that, looking at these Votes, it had always struck him that there was a most extraordinary capacity for wearing out furniture on the part of the various public Offices. The expenditure in respect of furniture was increasing in a manner which was scarcely credible. In the Royal Palaces, and in the different Departments of the State, the furniture seemed to waste away in a marvellous manner, and large sums of money were to be voted every year to replace it. It was quite true, as stated by an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Salt), that this was a trifling Vote; yet, when they took into account the charges for furniture in other Votes, the expenditure on furniture was very large. He had no doubt they would be told that a new and improved system had been adopted, with the view of obtaining greater economy and efficiency in the Furniture Department. They might very properly ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works that, when this Vote came before the Committee next year, he would be prepared to lay before them some statement as to the reform he had secured in the administration of the Vote—as to the means he had taken to prevent the throwing aside of furniture before it was valueless, and as to the changes he had made to prevent a recurrence of the frauds which had been already detected.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, no one was better qualified to criticize this Vote than the hon. Gentleman the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), and there was one point the hon. Gentleman had raised which the First Commissioner of Works had not noticed. The hon. Gentleman reminded the Committee that, although a large amount was put down for furniture for Royal Palaces, the Houses of Parliament, Customs, and Post Offices, yet the furniture item for each of those Departments was not specified. It was curious that the Secretary to the Treasury, with his great acuteness, should allow such an omission to take place. Generally speaking, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) took care that whenever an item was charged against any particular Department it was duly enumerated under the Vote for that Department; but in this instance, for some reason or other, he had not followed his usual practice. In the absence of details which ought to have been furnished by the Chief Commissioner of Works and the Secretary to the Treasury, the Auditor General had been obliged to try and report upon the charge for furniture as a whole by bringing together the sums charged under many Votes, but only with partial success, though it had been very properly pointed out that the Auditor General ought to be able to bring the charges incurred by each Department under one head, so as to show the total charge. It was only here and there that any mention was made of furniture; hence it was necessary so to arrange the charges as to make the liabilities under each Department complete for all purposes, or else to make special Votes to cover particular charges, such as furniture, and thereby enable the Auditor General to be able to report to the House whether the Estimates for the different Departments had been exceeded. As to the general question, whether they ought to have the whole of the furniture brought under one head, or left, as the First Commissioner of Works suggested, uncertain, and scattered over many Votes, that was the point; but he (Sir George Balfour) considered it was absurd to have 10 or 12 different Departments supplying themselves with furniture. They ought either to have the furniture brought under one Vote, or, if it were brought under different Votes, to call upon the Auditor General to state the exact amounts expended on furniture in the different Departments.

Mr. WARTON said, he was persuaded the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works desired to reduce expenditure; but what he (Mr. Warton) complained of was, that the right hon. Gentleman did not make up his mind as to the plan he would adopt —whether he meant to have only one Vote for furniture, or to keep up the present mongrel system. One would imagine, upon the first glance at this Vote, that the sum of £16,000 odd represented the charge for furniture for all Departments; but that, however, was by no means the case. He had read the note at the bottom of the page, to which the Secretary to the Treasury so kindly referred him; but he thought that note only showed the inconsistency of the present system—it showed how some Departments were supplied by this Vote, and how some were not. There was one point which had not yet been brought before the Committee. He saw there was an account in respect of their new friends, the Official Receivers. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had left the House; but perhaps one or other of the present occupants of the Treasury Bench would be able to say to what Official Receivers furniture, on account of which the sum of £1,400 was charged, was supplied. It would have been as well, too, if the furniture supplied had been specified. Again, there ought to have been a note to the Vote to carry out the theory of the President of the Board of Trade that these charges on account of Official Receivers were to be recouped from the fees charged in bankruptcy. He (Mr. Warton) hoped a strict account was kept of this furniture, and that sufficient would be got out of the unhappy bankrupts to recoup the State for this expenditure. He would also like to be informed whether furniture was to be supplied to Official Receivers in future, or whether this was the first and last time that this charge would appear in the Votes?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the furniture was required for those residences which had already been provided for in Vote 5. He could not exactly say in what proportion furniture had been supplied to the various Offices.

MR. BIGGAR said, he was of opinion that the Committee ought to be able to see at a glance what was spent by each Department upon furniture. On one point the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had not given a complete reply to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). As he understood, the hon. Gentleman raised the question whether the persons who condemned the old furniture and superintended the sale of it were the same. It was very necessary they should not be the same, because in that case opportunity would not be afforded for peculations.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the point referred to was under consideration. At present the old furniture was condemned by the same person who ordered the new furniture. Whether it would be desirable to make some change in that respect, he would consider.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would explain the mode in which he proposed that his Department should be recouped from bankrupt estates. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), who unfortunately was not at that moment in his place, told them, in connection with the previous Vote, that the expenditure voted on these Estimates would hereafter be repaid from the bankrupt estates' account. He could not quite understand the right hon. Gentleman at the moment, and he had failed to make out since how that could be effected; it seemed to him altogether an innovation in their system of public accounts. The system now in force was that, after Ways and Means had been voted as a reservoir from which to draw, they in Committee of Supply voted certain amounts for certain specific purposes, and, once voted, the amounts were spent. How the Board of Works in this particular case was to be recouped from the bankrupt estates' account, or from the profit arising from it, he did not understand; and as the matter concerned the Department of the right hon. Gentleman, perhaps he would explain how, when the cream had been skimmed off the milk of the bankrupt estates by the President of the Board of Trade, he proposed to get his share. Was it proposed that in future years the interest derived from the bankrupt estates' account should be taken in aid of the Civil Service Votes, just as the Exchequer extra receipts were now taken in aid of the Army and Navy Votes? If that was the plan which was to be adopted, a serious change was in contemplation which it would be well hon. Members should understand before committing themselves to it. If the right hon. Gentleman was not in a position to explain the matter, perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury could do so.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) had evidently misunderstood what the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) stated. What was hoped and expected was that in future years—not in the present year—the receipts from fees and the interest on money lying at the bank would more than pay the costs of the Bankruptcy Court, and would recoup the rental and other charges which had been made in respect of the new bankruptcy machinery.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if in future years there would be stated under each particular Vote the amount which was derived from the bankrupt estates' account, and which was taken as a set-off for the charges under the particular Votes?

Mr. COURTNEY: Certainly not. There would be no such statement; but there would be a Vote taken, *pro formâ* at any rate, under which the matter would be brought under the notice of the Committee. The Vote would be for the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, and every information would be given as to the receipts anticipated.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked whether it was to be understood that in next year's Estimates there would be a more detailed statement of the furniture supplied to the different Departments? He had asked the question over and over again, and he thought the time had now arrived when an answer ought to be given.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he was not prepared to give any pledge to that effect. The matter was considered a good many years ago, and it was thought to be undesirable to enter into details. The matter, however, should be reconsidered.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, the Secretary to the Treasury knew perfectly well that he (Sir George Balfour) was simply urging that which was but fair and reasonable. It was just as easy to give details as to present a lump sum.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £184,116, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR pointed out that this Vote was increased by £100,000, and that the augmentation was in respect of the new buildings for the Telegraph Department. He protested against charging the outlay for new works, thereby increasing the expenditure of the country in a way which deceived the public. He objected to the erection of buildings, and debiting the amount to the current Revenue in the way done for current salaries. He considered that the Post Office and Telegraph Departments ought to have a capital account given to them, all new buildings, and machinery shown as capital outlay, being, on the face of the accounts, a charge for interest on the capital. The Committee were deceiving themselves as to what the Post Office and Telegraph Departments were doing. He had always held that a capital account ought to be supplied to the manufacturing departments of the Arsenal—gunpowder factory, small arms, carriage, and laboratory—so that the exact amount of work done could be seen at a glance. He was of opinion that the same principle could, and ought to be, applied to the Post Office and Telegraph Departments.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, this Vote required some explanation both from the Treasury and the Post Office authorities. It had very greatly increased during the last few years—at all events, since the accession to Office of the present Government; and some hon. Members had maintained, and might maintain again, that although this Government had effected very large decreases in some Departments of the Public Expenditure, it certainly had effected very large increases in other Departments of the Public Expenditure. In 1878, two years before the last Government went out of Office, this Vote amounted to only £151,000. In the year 1879 it amounted to £168,000, and in 1880, when the late Government left Office, it amounted to £164,000, and now this year they were called upon to vote £274,000, and this was practically an increase of £101,000 over the expenditure which the present Government found when they came into Office, and the bulk of the increased expenditure arose in the Department of Post Office Buildings. He did not, in any way, propose to challenge the administration of his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett); but there were departments of the Post Office which the right hon. Gentleman could not himself criticize and examine; and he (Mr. Fowler) was satisfied, from an examination of the accounts of the last two or three years, that a very large amount of public money was unnecessarily expended in the erection and alteration of Post Offices. The expenditure under this head was mounting up year by year—this year it stood at £125,000—until in a very short period something like £1,000,000 would have been expended in this branch of the Public Service. As his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir George Balfour) had just pointed out, there was no capital account kept of the expenditure; neither was the expenditure charged to the Post Office account. It ought to be charged as against the Post Office, not as against the Civil Service Estimates. There was also another fact in regard to which he was sure the Postmaster General would feel some compunction. This year they were surprised, and grievously disappointed, at the non-fulfilment of the pledge which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave last year to reduce the minimum charge for telegrams to 6*d.*; and the ground on which that pledge was broken, or rather on which it was not fulfilled, was that the revenue of the Post Office did not permit of such a change. That was all the more reason why there should be vigorous economy observed in respect to Post Office erections. If hon. Members would turn to page 31 of the account they would see what sums were expended upon Post Offices. For instance, the expenditure upon the General Post Office, West, was £50,000; Bedford Street, £15,000; Bradford, new office, £28,000. He did not find fault with those items, because he had no doubt they were carefully scrutinized; but it was when he came to such items as £5,500 for new office at Folkestone, £3,900 for new office at Kidderminster, £8,000 for enlargement at Leicester, £3,450 for enlargement at Nottingham, £2,000 for enlargement at Peckham, £4,000 for new office and fittings at Richmond, £2,500 for new office at St. Albans, £3,300 for new office at Stroud, £5,000 for new office at Wigan, £3,000 for enlargement at Yarmouth, and £3,200 for new office at Wisbech, that he was satisfied that if the sums were subjected to a vigorous supervision it would be found that the works could be done at considerably less cost. There was a tendency in all Public Departments, especially Departments which were concerned in the erection of buildings, to indulge in large and facile expenditure. He was sorry he was not in the House when the last Vote was taken, in order that he could have raised his protest against the expenditure of the present Government under the head of furniture. Besides, the large expenditure for new works and additions, £53,000 was required for alterations, maintenance, and repairs; and in addition to the Vote of £16,000 for furniture, which the Committee had just disposed of, they were asked to vote £3,300 for furniture for Post Offices. Although £125,000 was required for Post Office Buildings as much as £69,000 was asked for in respect of buildings connected with the Telegraph Service. As a protest against this expenditure upon Post Office Buildings, and in order to give those hon. Members of the House who were in earnest in reference to this expenditure an opportunity of entering their protest against it, he moved that the Vote be reduced by £10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £174,116, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and Sundry Miscellaneous Services."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. WHITLEY said, he was afraid that he was unable to support the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and he did not see how the Committee could be in in a position to form an opinion upon these matters unless they had a Return before them of the expenditure to which the hon. Member had referred. He desired to call attention to the inadequate Post Office accommodation in Liverpool, He had often urged upon the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury the necessity of incurring even a considerable expenditure of money in connection with Liverpool; and he had done so on grounds which, in his opinion, were of very great public importance. To his mind, the most expensive course that could possibly be pursued was in constantly trying to accommodate old buildings to present necessities. That was exactly the course Her Majesty's Government had adopted in regard to Liverpool. For a very long period the attention of the Postmaster General had been called to the exceedingly bad accommodation provided for the people of Liverpool, and to the fact that the Post Office in that city was altogether inadequate for the requirements of the place. He was bound to admit that the right hon. Gentleman the present Postmaster General had always displayed the greatest courtesy and consideration when this question had been brought before him, not only by those who were connected with the Post Office, but by the great mercantile community connected with Liverpool. Indeed, it was thought that they had converted the right hon. Gentleman to a very great extent to their views. Last year the Secretary to the Treasury informed him that the Government intended to make certain alterations in the existing building which they thought would meet the requirements of the case. He (Mr. Whitley) entertained a very different opinion; and he thought it was impossible to turn the old building, now used as a Post Office, into anything that was likely to meet the necessities of the public. The original Estimate of the proposed alteration was something like £5,000. That Estimate had since been revised, and the new one amounted to £16,850; but even when that money was expended he was satisfied that it would fail to provide the accommodation which a great port like Liverpool demanded. No doubt the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would say that the outlay which would be involved in the erection of a new building must be unnecessary, when the Post Office authorities themselves were of opinion that the requirements of the Port of Liverpool would be met by an additional expenditure of £5,000 or £16,000 in attempting to alter the existing building. In his (Mr. Whitley's) opinion, however, it would be much wiser to face the larger expenditure at once, and to give the inhabitants of a great city like Liverpool all that they demanded. He was quite satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works and the Postmaster General knew very well what folly it was to go on altering an old building and spending money year after year in trying to make it adequate to the requirements of the town. He therefore hoped that it would not again be found necessary to bring before the Government the case of Liverpool. The people of Manchester had experienced similar difficulties with regard to Post Office accommodation; but although they had moved in the matter much later than the people of Liverpool they had succeeded in getting a handsome Post Office erected at a cost of £120,000, which he believed would give an adequate return for the outlay. Now, Liverpool was a more important and more populous commercial city than Manchester, and its requirements in the shape of Post Office accommodation were much greater. He therefore ventured to think that it was not worthy of the Government to propose year after year to alter this old building, and not provide that full and complete accommodation which the requirements of the port imperatively demanded. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would go down to Liverpool and inquire into the matter himself. The hon. Gentleman gave a sort of promise last year that he would do so. He wished the hon. Gentleman would redeem that promise. He was satisfied that the hon. Gentleman, after a personal visit to the existing building, and after hearing on all sides what the people of Liverpool thought of it, would be enabled to come back with the conviction that a very strong case indeed was made out for a new Post Office altogether. He had not the slightest doubt whatever that the expenditure, however large it might be, would meet with a very satisfactory return for the outlay.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD disputed the accuracy of the assertions of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley). The hon. Member said that Manchester had obtained a Post Office. Now, it had not obtained a new Post Office at all. There was a new Post Office in the course of erection; but the progress made with it was extremely slow; and he should like to hear from the Postmaster General why it was that the building of the Manchester Post Office had not progressed with greater rapidity? The hon. Member for Liverpool had made another mistake. He had stated that Liverpool was a more important place than Manchester, and that it contained a larger population. He thought the hon. Member ought to have remembered that there were certain boroughs in the neighbourhood of Manchester—of which Salford was one—in regard to which Manchester was, to a certain extent, the post town. In reference to the Motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he should certainly feel inclined to vote with his hon. Friend if he found that the Postmaster General was unable to give a satisfactory explanation of the different items which had been referred to, and especially the item of £50,000 for the erection of an additional storey to the General Post Office, West. That certainly did appear to be a very large sum of money for the erection of an additional storey to a Metropolitan Post Office.

MR. COURTNEY said, that his hon. and gallant Friend behind him (Sir George Balfour) had appealed to him to institute a capital as well as a revenue account on behalf of the Post Office; and it was not impossible that a suggestion of that kind would meet with much favour from his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General; but he must frankly say that the feeling of the Treasury was not likely to be favourable to it. Certainly, such a proposal had hitherto been viewed with the utmost repugnance; and if there had been one thing pressed upon him more than another it was the necessity of meeting every charge of revenue, and of not opening a capital account. If any expenditure were to be included in the capital account, he did not at once see in what way it could be brought before the House. At the present moment the expenditure of every Department of the Public Service was defrayed out of the annual Revenue of the State, and underwent a full examination at the hands of Parliament; and there was ample security that the utmost possible economy would be insisted upon in keeping down the demands of every Department. In regard to the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he might say that every proposal in connection with the Post Office underwent the most careful consideration and examination before it received the sanction of the Treasury. His hon. Friend was labouring under a mistake in supposing that the execution of these works was under the control of the Post Office. It was nothing of the kind. The expenditure was controlled by the Treasury; and, therefore, his hon. Friend committed a mistake in supposing that this expenditure could be made part of the Post Office Vote. The schemes for these alterations and new works were originally recommended by the Post Office authorities, and were inquired into by the Office of Works; and it was to the Office of Works that they must look for any economy that could possibly be effected in making provision for the Post Office requirements. He knew that his hon. Friend was animated by a genuine spirit of zeal for economy as well as efficiency, and he admired and sympathized very much with the feelings of his hon. Friend; but he thought that on this occasion they had led him astray, and induced him to indulge in generalities which were not warranted by the circumstances of the case. As a matter of fact, the Treasury never allowed any proposal that was made to them to take effect without insisting, in the first instance, upon a strict Report in regard to the growth of the work and the growth of the staff of the particular Post Office affected. They insisted upon being supplied with a statement showing the manner in which the work had increased, the number of letters posted, the number of letters received, the number of parcels forwarded, and every item connected with the work of the particular Post Office for which an additional expenditure was asked. The Treasury also required full information in regard to the staff showing the comparative increase of the Post Office since the last Act was taken in reference to it—probably some six or eight years previously. In that way the detail of every case which was pressed upon the Government, whether it was for an addition to an existing Office or the erection of a new Office, was reviewed not only by the Office of Works, but by the Treasury. After examining all the possible sites, making the fullest inquiry as to the cost, and sometimes, although not always, after a personal inspection, the Office of Works sent in Estimates to the Treasury, which Estimates were thoroughly revised and considered, and it was only with the concurrence of the two Departments that the work was sanctioned. Every evidence as to the necessity for the expenditure was taken before the sanction of either Department was given, and resistance to expenditure was always applied in those cases where resistance was deemed necessary. His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had gone through certain items which appeared in the Vote, and asked for an explanation of them. The best answer he could give to his hon. Friend was the answer which had already been given by his hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), who showed that in the case of Liverpool the most powerful appeals which had been made to the Government had been resisted. He could assure his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton that the same resistance was made in every case, unless good and sufficient grounds for incurring the expense were made manifest. He remembered very well, with respect to the case of Yarmouth, that a most careful scrutiny was made as to the possibility of erecting the Post Office required there for a less sum than that which was asked for. As to the additional storey for the General Post Office, West, his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works had made a personal inquiry into the whole matter. The same thing was done in every instance. Over and over again the most careful examination was made with an anxious desire to cut down the expenditure as far as possible; and it was found absolutely impossible to bring it down below the amount which was fixed upon by the Departments concerned. Upon these considerations, he hoped his hon. Friend would see that his zeal for economy had, upon this occasion, led him somewhat beyond what the real facts of the case justified.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he quite agreed with the Secretary to the Treasury that his hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) had given a most admirable illustration of the manner in which the Public Service was charged with an increased expenditure in order to gratify the desire of particular localities, and owing to the pressure put upon the Government by the Representatives of important constituencies. In fact, his hon. Friend was not only Member for a large and important constituency, but he was a man of such persuasive eloquence that he had induced the Post Office authorities to increase the Estimate for the Liverpool Post Office from £5,000 to £17,000, and also to provide an Estimate for another Post Office in the Eastern District of Liverpool, which was to cost £7,700. Consequently, the persuasiveness of his hon. Friend had obtained for the City of Liverpool nearly £20,000 more than the sum originally estimated by the Department to be amply sufficient. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour) did not for a moment deny that, in order to carry on the extensive business of the Post Office, the Government must be prepared to incur a certain amount of expenditure on capital account; and upon this point he thought that his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury had entirely misunderstood the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire. The hon. and gallant Member had not suggested that the Post Office should have the right to open a capital account, and charge it at their own will and pleasure. He could assure his hon. Friend that the hon. and gallant Member never meant that at all.

Mr. COURTNEY: I never accused him of it.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he had understood the Secretary to the Treasury to say that if the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire were adopted, then the Post Office would have the power of making these additions to capital account without any check, and that they would be able to open a capital account without any control. The suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member was this—Her Majesty's Government paraded before the public from year to year that the receipts from the Post Office and Telegraph Department amounted to a very large sum—in point of fact, to many millions a-year. What his hon. and gallant Friend said was that against this there was put a certain amount of expenditure, and the public were led to believe that the difference between the two sums was the profit earned by the Department. All his hon. and gallant Friend's desire was that the public should be so far informed as to know that in order to get this result, so far as the profit of a certain number of millions was concerned, it was necessary to add largely to the capital account every year, and the total sum expended in that way in former years amounted to some millions of money, which, however, did not appear on the face of the accounts. It was the intention of his hon. and gallant Friend to point out that, in matters in regard to which a profit arose, there was very likely to be a certain amount of carelessness in the expenditure. People were apt to say—"The Government can very well afford to spend money on the Post Office and Telegraph Services." It ought, however, to be pointed out that every year the margin between the cost and the profit was getting less—that was to say, that while it was perfectly true that they were doing a large business and receiving a large sum of money for the Post Office and Telegraph Services, they were spending, year by year, a larger sum in proportion, without reference to the capital account, which was entirely separate. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire was of opinion that they ought to treat this account like business men—that they should try to make as much profit on behalf of the public as possible; and that in order to make that profit they should exercise some control over the expenditure of the capital account. That was what a man would do in connection with his own private business; but he did not believe that the same control was exercised by the Government Department. He did not wish his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury to suppose that he doubted his hon. Friend's zeal for economy. He was certain that, to the best of his ability, his hon. Friend had done everything in his power. He entertained the highest opinion, as he was sure all of them did, of the Secretary to the Treasury. He had great and good reason to know, from the position he (Mr. Rylands) occupied upon the Public Accounts Committee, that his hon. Friend and the Treasury did their duty, as far as they were able to do it, in checking the Public Expenditure. He should, however, like to know a little more from his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works as to the course taken by his Department, because it would appear that the system, as it had been explained by the Secretary to the Treasury, was a somewhat involved one. His right hon. Friend the Postmaster General—one of the best Postmasters General who had ever filled the Office—was most anxious—and it was to be said to his honour—to develop the Post Office system, and facilitate in every way the convenience of the public. It was not, therefore, likely that his right hon. Friend would come down to the degrading consideration of pounds, shillings, and pence. Nor did his right hon. Friend do that. His right hon. Friend smiled his approval. He wished, very properly, that his Department should be administered in the best possible way regardless of expense. [Mr. FAWCETT: Oh, dear, no.] At any rate, his right hon. Friend desired that the Department should be administered in the way best calculated to meet the public requirements. Accordingly, he went to the First Commissioner of Works, and stated what he wished to have done. The First Commissioner of Works, he (Mr. Rylands) presumed, consulted some of the officials under him. He hardly knew what that meant. Did the right hon. Gentleman send one of his officials down to Manchester, or Yarmouth, or Liverpool, or Nottingham, or any of the places mentioned by the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler)? Who was it who settled the plans or decided upon the character of the building required? No doubt the local postmaster, in the first instance, had certain plans made, and then an official was sent down from the Board of Works to determine the plans prepared or the suggestions of the local postmaster. What was the next step taken? Was there any competition? If not, what was done to protect the interests of the public? He (Mr. Rylands) knew perfectly well that if he were going to erect a building for purposes of his own, he should like to get it constructed as cheaply as he possibly could, and he would not care about doing very much in the way of ornament for the glorification of the town, or with the view of gratifying the Representative of a large and important constituency. He should like to have some information from the First Commissioner of Works as to what it was he did in order to check and prevent unnecessary expenditure? Was there anything in regard to any officials connected with the Government to impose a check on the expenditure, or was there any inducement, in the shape of commission, which enabled anyone to derive a positive advantage from spending as much money as possible upon these buildings? He should certainly like to know that, because he did not know whether that was so or not. He thought his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General might fairly consider this point—that while he was increasing the business of the Post Office very much indeed, and doing a roaring trade, yet the expense of the business was increasing much more largely in proportion than the amount of the business he was doing. [Mr. FAWCETT: No.] He believed he was correct in stating that if they took the gross receipts and gross charge they would find that the charge was increasing rather more rapidly than the receipts. [Mr. FAWCETT: No; that is not so.] It certainly was the case up to a very recent period, and he thought that hon. Members generally would confirm his recollection. What, however, he wanted to press upon the Postmaster General was this—that while the Post Office did an increased business and knew that it could not be obtained without an increased expenditure, some attempt should be made to prevent the expenditure of the Department from going on in so rapid a ratio or in a more rapid ratio than the returns from the Department. He did not, however, look to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General as altogether responsible for the expenditure. He looked upon him as being the originator of all these schemes for the public advantage; and with regard to the expenditure itself, he looked, first of all, to the First Commissioner of Works, who, he trusted, would be able to give a good account of himself; and, in the next place, to the Treasury. One thing further; he wished to express a hope that his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury would, in the future, be still more hard-hearted than he had been in the past, and that he would turn a deaf ear to the persuasive language of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), and refuse, unless it was absolutely necessary to gratify a natural disposition on the part of various large towns, to have a considerable amount of money spent upon them, in order that such towns might be adorned and beautified at the public expense.

MR. ROUND said, he desired to avail himself of the opportunity of protesting against the expenditure of Her Majesty's Government at the present moment. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had already pointed out that this particular Vote showed an increase of expenditure to the extent of £100,000. That seemed to him to be a very large sum indeed for a single year. If the country were in a prosperous state as regarded trade and agriculture, he would be the last man to object to such an expenditure; and he knew that the Postmaster General would not recommend it to the Treasury if he did not consider it to be absolutely necessary and justifiable; but, knowing what the present state of the country was so far as the agricultural districts were concerned, and judging especially from his own constituency, he felt bound to avail himself of this opportunity in order to object to so large an increase of expenditure upon one particular Vote. If the expenditure was spread over two or three years it would be a different thing; but if they were to have an increase of £100,000 upon one Vote in a single year, how were they to feel secure that next year they might not be asked to consent to a further increase of another £100,000?

MR. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member was under a misapprehension. Instead of there being an increase upon the Vote for the year, there was really a decrease of £53,496 as compared with last year.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the increase of £100,000 which he had referred to was an increase in the Vote for the present year as compared with the expenditure of the last year of the Conservative Government. It was quite true that there was an enormous extra expenditure last year for the Parcel Post, and, therefore, there was a reduction this year; but what he wished to point out was that there was really an increase in the present Vote, as between the expenditure of a Liberal and Conservative Government, of £100,000.

MR. ROUND said, he did not put the matter as one of comparison between the economical administration of a Conservative and a Liberal Government; but at this moment the Committee must be well aware that the agricultural districts were suffering from severe depression; and, as a Member for an agricultural constituency, he protested against the increase in this Vote as shown by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and also against a large expenditure being incurred in one year which ought to have been spread over at least two or three years.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was necessary that he should say a few words in reply to the observations which had been made. He had been asked by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in what relation his Department stood with regard to the Post Office. His hon. Friend was right in saying that the demand for increased accommodation in connection with the Post Office originated with the Postmaster General. His right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, if he desired to make some addition to the Post Office accommodation, applied in the first instance to the Department of the Office of Works. The Office of Works sent down one of their Surveyors to inquire thoroughly into the matter and report upon it; and then, after having ascertained what the cost would be, the Office of Works made an application to the Treasury for the amount that would be necessary to give effect to the wishes of the Post Office. He need scarcely say that the Office of Works was not interested in increasing the expenditure; on the contrary, they desired to do everything in their power to keep down the public expenditure. The Committee must recollect that the business of the Post Office was constantly growing, and that it would require a continual expenditure of money to meet its increased requirements. He thought it was stated by his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Financial Statement, that the increased receipts from the Post Office now amounted to £2,000,000 a-year. So large an additional Revenue must necessarily demand the alteration of existing Offices and the construction of new ones. It was only natural to expect that constant demands would be made upon the Government for additional expenditure. He would give as an illustration the case of Liverpool, which had been opportunely brought before the Committee by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Whitley). Now, the people of Liverpool had made loud complaints of the existing Post Office, and the postal authorities in Liverpool had themselves made certain demands upon the Office of Works, in order to provide improved accommodation. The Surveyor of the Office of Works was sent down to Liverpool, and inspected the existing Post Office. Further than that, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) went down himself not long afterwards; and he came to the conclusion that, although the building at Liverpool was not what might altogether be desired, and was not such a building as would be erected now at the present moment, yet, on the whole, it would be better to alter that existing building than to undertake the enormous expenditure which was pressed upon the Government by the people of Liverpool and by the hon. Member for that City (Mr. Whitley)—an expenditure that would amount to more than £300,000. It certainly seemed that it would be better to expend a few thousand pounds in altering the present Offices rather than to undertake the enormous expenditure that would be necessary in order to procure a new site at great cost for the erection of a new building. In regard to the extension of the General Post Office, West, constant representations had been made as to the necessity of providing increased Post Office accommodation for the West End of London. It was proposed that they should remove the whole of the telegraph work from the existing buildings in the Post Office, and erect a new building in another part of the City of London. He had examined into the matter carefully, in concurrence with the Surveyor of his Department, and he had come to the conclusion that it would be far better to add to the existing Post Office, if it were possible; and, on making inquiry, he found that it was possible to add a new storey to that building. No doubt, £50,000 appeared to be a large sum of money to be expended in adding a new storey to an existing building; but it must be recollected that the building itself covered nearly an acre of land, and hon. Members must also bear in mind what the expense of obtaining a new site in the City would have been, taking into account the value of land where the Post Office now stood.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked where the Post Office, West, was?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Post Office, West, immediately adjoined the General Post Office, and under the arrangement which had been made it had been found possible to provide accommodation for the Telegraph Office without erecting a new building. He thought that was a far more economical arrangement than any other that could be devised, and he was perfectly prepared to justify it in every possible way. He believed that the actual cost of the erection of the new storey would be nothing like £50,000. As a matter of fact, it would not cost more than £30,000 or £35,000; but it had been considered possible that the work might interfere with the light and air enjoyed by the owners of the adjoining property, and therefore an estimate of £50,000 was originally made, so as to cover all liabilities in that respect. Even if they should be called upon to expend, in reference to the claims which might be made upon them for light and air, the full sum of £50,000, he contended that it would be a far more economical arrangement than to purchase from the City of London a new area in which to provide the necessary accommodation. Therefore he had had no hesitation whatever in recommending the enlargement of the existing Post Office, and that enlargement was now being carried out. He felt bound to say—and he had no doubt that his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General would agree with him in the statement—that it was impossible to look for any largely decreased expenditure in future in connection with the Post Office accommodation of London. After enlarging the present building the accommodation afforded at the Post Office, West, would not be sufficient for the Post Office requirements. As a matter of fact, they were spending now no less a sum than £13,000 a-year in London for the rent of outside buildings, many of them inconveniently situated, so that the staff were not able to be properly supervised; and in his opinion it would be absolutely necessary in a short time to provide increased accommodation in some buildings more immediately adjoining the Post Office.

Mr. WHITLEY asked if he correctly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the sum expended in this way was £13,000 a-year?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE replied in the affirmative. That sum was expended in rents in the City of London for buildings spread about outside the Post Office in making provision for clerks who ought to be brought together under one roof. Before long it would be absolutely necessary—and as a matter of fact it was under consideration now—to spend a much larger sum of money than that which was asked for by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Whitley) for Liverpool in order to provide accommodation immediately adjoining the present Post Office in London for the staff, for whom at present no provision was made in the existing buildings, and for the increased staff which it would be necessary to employ in the course of a few years.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he could not understand the figure mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, as the item in the Vote itself was only £4,700.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the sum of £13,000 which he referred to came under some other head, and did not appear in the present Vote. Probably it would be found in the Post Office Vote in the shape of an item for rents under that Vote. At any rate, as a matter of fact, the Government were at that moment spending £13,000 a-year in that way. His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had alluded to several other items of expenditure, and had mentioned Folkestone, Richmond, and St. Alban's. Those cases were illustrations of the claims made upon the Post Office for new buildings; and he was bound to say that when a town reached any importance it was better that the Post Office should have a building for itself rather than hire or lease a building and pay rent, especially when it was almost impossible to obtain a building altogether suited to the Post Office requirements. Nothing could be more inconvenient for the Post Office purposes than such an arrangement as that, involving, as it did, all kinds of difficulties in the way of arranging with owners; and altogether it was far better that a Post Office should be supplied by the Government in towns which had reached a certain position of importance. Now, the town of Richmond was certainly not a small one, and £4,000 was by no means a large sum to pay for the erection of a new Post Office in such a town. Then again, in Folkestone it was proposed to erect a new Office at a cost of £4,500, and another in St. Alban's at a cost of £2,500. He did not think that those sums were excessive. All that he could say was that the plans had been carefully considered by the Surveyor of his Department, and that the matter had been fully gone into by the Office of Works. Application was then made to the Treasury, who also inquired into the matter, but from a totally different point of view. It was only when the concurrence of the two Departments had been secured that the sanction of the Government was given to the expenditure. His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had pointed out that the Vote had increased by £100,000 since the year 1880; but his hon. Friend should recollect that since then they had established the Parcel Post. A considerable portion of the expense of establishing the Parcel Post was provided for in the Estimates of last year; but, to a certain extent, the Estimates this year were increased by the same cause, and there was a continuation in the present Vote of the expenditure incurred last year in that respect. He was unable to state the exact amount; but he believed it to be somewhere about £50,000, and consequently the cause which led to the increase of expenditure last year — namely, the establishment of the Parcel Post — would still operate in the present year. Nor did he think there would be much diminution in future years in respect of this Vote. There were constant applications pressed upon the Government from different parts of the country which it was impossible to refuse. It would be seen in the present Vote that there was an item of £28,000 for the Bradford Post Office. That was a matter which he believed had been under consideration for many years. The Bradford people had complained very much of the delay which had taken place; but, at last, the Government had bought a site in the middle of the town which met with the full approval of the Bradford people, and they intended this year to commence building upon it. He dared say that the inhabitants of Liverpool would express some surprise that it had been decided to erect a new building at Bradford, whereas it was only proposed to alter the existing building at Liverpool. All he could say was that every consideration had been given to every claim, and that no decision had been come to without taking the fullest opinion as to the necessity, and without a sincere desire to meet all the requirements of the case.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the right hon. Gentleman to give some explanation in regard to the delay in the completion of the Manchester Post Office.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the new Office at Manchester was already partly completed, and he believed the completed portion was already occupied. The remaining portion would be completed as rapidly as possible.

MR. GREGORY said, he had listened attentively to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works; and he confessed that the proposed arrangement with regard to the Post Office buildings did not appear to him altogether satisfactory; £50,000 was a very large sum to be expended upon an old building by way of adding to it another storey. No doubt the present building covered a considerable area, as the right hon. Gentleman stated —something like an acre of ground. And there was no doubt that, on the face of it, it appeared cheaper to add a storey to the present building than to erect a new building upon a fresh site; but the right hon. Gentleman admitted, in the same breath, that it would be necessary to obtain additional space for other new buildings for the Post Office, so that he had it in reserve to provide ground for an additional building. He (Mr. Gregory) thought, however, it would be much better to face the difficulty at the outset. The Chief Commissioner of Works spoke of additional space in another part of London for the building which he contemplated; and he thought, from his knowledge of the present price of land in the Metropolis, that the right hon. Gentleman could not have a better opportunity than the present for getting the land which he required. In the City particularly there had been over-speculation in building, and the consequence was that a great deal of land was in the market for disposal. He ventured to say that it would be much better, and fairer, to ask Parliament to vote a certain sum, and, with that money in hand, gradually to acquire the land necessary for additional Post Office accommodation. Parliament would, no doubt, readily grant the amount asked for; and there was such confidence in the right hon. Gentleman who at present filled the Office of Postmaster General that there was no need why they should hesitate to place the disposal of it in his hands. He believed that, with the assistance of Sir Henry Hunt, the land, which he felt satisfied was now to be had on easy and favourable terms, would prove a profitable investment. Of course, he did not suggest that the Government should go openly into the market, but that they should proceed cautiously, as any man of business would do, by their agent; and in that way they would be able to carry out a much better arrangement than that of the always unsatisfactory and expensive plan of making additions to old buildings. With respect to the general question raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour), he believed there was a good deal in the suggestion that a capital account should be established for the Post Office and Telegraph Departments, and that, instead of debiting the Revenue of each year with the expenditure incurred, such Revenue should not be chargeable with the cost of structural and other permanent expenditure. If a capital account were established, expenditure for permanent objects could be met by means of loans drawn from such account, and a fair rate of interest paid out of the Revenue of the year on the money so borrowed.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was glad to see the Postmaster General in his place, and knowing how ready he was at all times to give information as to the Department over which he presided, he ventured to ask him for a short statement with reference to the working of the Parcel Post. He believed that the feeling in the public mind was that it had, up to the present, cost a great deal of money, and that the profits were not sufficient to cover the expenditure which had taken place—that at present there was a loss, and that it was problematical when there would be a gain. He would like to know how far the increased accommodation, alterations, and enlargements, beginning at page 31 of the Estimate, were to be ascribed to the necessities and requirements of the Parcel Post, because there was only one amount of £2,000 specifically placed to that Department, as for maintenance and repairs of Parcel Offices in London and the country. The points on which he desired information were, first, as to the proportion of the expenditure in question necessitated by the Parcel Post; secondly, as to the annual expense of carrying out that system; thirdly, as to what the result had been to the public; fourthly, what was the extent of the loss up to the present time; and, finally, as to the period which it was expected would elapse before there would be a profit from the new Department.

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, several remarks have been made in the course of this discussion which, as they relate to the Departments represented by the First Commissioner of Works and the Secretary to the Treasury, it is scarcely necessary that I should refer to. But I should like to make this general observation, that anyone acquainted with the rapidly increasing business of the Post Office will perceive that it is a Department which must make constant demands for the increase of the plant and machinery necessary for carrying on that work. I do not wish to weary the Committee with statistics, and I did not know this afternoon that a general debate would be raised upon this Estimate; but there are one or two statistics fresh in my memory, and which I think will illustrate the extraordinary development of the Departments connected with the Post Office, and those statistics lead to the conclusion that if you can only succeed in bringing within reach of the mass of the people facilities of which they can avail themselves, it is scarcely possible even for the most fervid imagination to conceive the extent to which those facilities would be availed of. I may mention one fact connected with the introduction of the system of cheap Money Orders, known as Postal Orders, and I am anxious to do so because I can describe the success of that arrangement without taking any credit therefrom to myself. When the present Government came into Office, I found a Bill at the Post Office for carrying out that system, the credit of which is therefore due to my Predecessor, the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners). I remember asking one of the most experienced officials in that Department of the Public Service what he thought would be the number of Postal Orders issued; and the late Mr. Chetwynd, the gentleman to whom I refer, said that the number would probably be 50,000 a-week. At first the number was almost exactly what he predicted; but no sooner did the people discover that they had the means of sending small sums of money to their friends—sums as small as 1*s.* at the charge of a halfpenny—than they availed themselves of the system to the extent that, instead of the estimated issue of 50,000 a-week, the number rose to between 260,000 and 280,000; the somewhat sanguine estimate, as it was considered, of 50,000 a-week being exceeded by more than 500 per cent. I will give the Committee another example. Of course, I have nothing whatever to do with the success which, within the last 10 years, has attended the system of Post Office Savings Bank deposits; but these have within the last 10 years increased by £20,000,000. Within the last four years they have increased by £10,000,000, while the number of depositors has increased by 1,000,000; and I put it to commercial Gentlemen in this House that if you are carrying on a banking business which, within four years, increases its deposits by £10,000,000, and the number of its customers by 1,000,000, you will require a large extension of machinery for the purpose of carrying on that business. Now, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has gone through the list of Post Offices throughout the country, and asks, why do you build here and why do you build there? Let me tell the hon. Member what are the kind of representations made to us. We get a letter, perhaps from the Mayor of a town, and he says that "so inadequate is the Post Office accommodation for the business which we are now doing, that with my own eyes I have seen a crowd of people waiting for an hour in the rain to put their small deposits into the Post Office Savings' Bank;" and then he appeals to me as to whether "that is the state of things which should be allowed to continue in a Department yielding a profit of some £2,500,000 annually to the Revenue of the country?" I ask my hon. Friend, as a man of business, whether it is possible to resist such an appeal as that; whether the public of this country would approve it, if it were resisted? I give this as one fact simply, but in every direction the work of the Post Office has increased. No doubt the expenditure has increased largely also; but if you take a considerable period, not a period of one, two, or three years, because the comparison of a short period may be disturbed by some exceptionally large charge—such, for instance, as the purchase of a large building—but if you take a considerable period of time it will be found that the annual profit of the Post Office has increased with greater rapidity than its gross expenditure. My right hon. Friend the Chief Commissioner of Works has alluded to the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Financial Statement this year, brought forward some striking figures with regard to the increase in the Civil Service Expenditure within the last ten years, and that he said of that increase more than £2,300,000 were due to increased expenditure in connection with the Postal and Telegraphic Services. But I can show that this increase of expenditure does not indicate a less effectual control over the expenditure generally; it simply indicates the necessary and unavoidable expenditure incurred in meeting the growing business of the Department, as will be seen when I say that although the expenditure has increased by £2,300,000 in the period named, we are actually making a profit of £700,000 or £800,000 a-year more than we were 10 years ago. With regard to the Parcel Post Expenditure referred to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), I do not wish to conceal anything; and I have very little to add to what I stated on this subject when the Supplementary Estimates were under discussion. The Parcel Post does not now pay, and I do not see how it should do so in the first year of its existence. We have no capital account, and consequently for the first six months the whole of the charges necessary to bring the new service into operation had to be thrown into current expenditure and borne by Revenue. Those first charges, as is pointed out in this Estimate, have not as it were expended their force up to the present time. I will not be rash enough to fix the exact period which will elapse before there is a balance between expenditure and revenue with regard to the Parcel Post, the Postal Services of the country being so inextricably entwined that it is impossible to make a correct separate estimate of the Parcel Post Expenditure; but I believe that the time will soon arrive when there will be a balance, and in addition to that I believe that the expenditure on account of the Parcel Post, which it is almost impossible to calculate now, will assist in the development of other branches of Postal Revenue. And now I will explain this in a way that will interest the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, by an example drawn from Ireland. During the winter there was an advertisement that some remarkably good knitted socks were made in Donegal; some were ordered, and they were sent by post, the charge being 3*d*. A Postal Order was bought to pay for them, forwarded in a letter, and a receipt was sent for the amount. In this way, although we only received 3*d*. from the Parcel Post, there was an additional sum of 4*d*. from other sources, which went to the general Revenue of the country. In this way things obtained from Donegal were brought at as small a cost for carriage as if sent for from a neighbouring village. I think this shows that if we were to attempt to strike a balance between the Parcel Post Expenditure and Revenue, we might fail to arrive at a true idea of the actual results, because it would not be possible to take an account of the way in which this and other postal facilities may stimulate the postal and other revenues of the country.

Mr. CAUSTON asked if the large increase of £13,781 over the Estimate of last year included the necessary expenditure in connection with the 6*d*. telegrams, because, if not, he feared that next year there would probably be a difficulty in respect of the buildings required to carry out that change. He hoped they would have an assurance that the sum referred to included the amount that would be required on that account. He was, of course, aware that it was not competent to a private Member to move an increase of a Vote; but he was sure that in case of need it could be very well increased in the public interest.

Mr. FAWCETT: I may say, in reply to the hon. Member who has just sat down, that the item of £53,000 for the General Post Office is, to a great extent, due to the increased accomodation which will be required when the 6*d*. telegrams are introduced. The growing business of the Office could not possibly be met without the addition of another storey to the present building.

Mr. GRAY said, he had understood that there was no difficulty in the way of introducing 6*d*. telegrams this year, except the objection on the part of the Treasury to the expenditure that it would entail. It was demonstrated before the Select Committee that the Telegraph Department was not doing at the time one-third of the work which the existing staff with the plant at their disposal could perform. Nothing whatever had been said about another storey being required at the Post Office in connection with the Telegraphic Service. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman showed in the clearest possible way that the Parcel Post, instead of taking from the Revenue of the Post Office Department, added to it and they knew by the statements of the right hon. Gentleman to the House that the reduction of the cost of telegrams from 3*s*. or 4*s*. to 1*s*. had had the same effect upon the Revenue. He was certain that if the right hon. Gentleman had been left to himself and to his own resources, without any supervision on the part of the Treasury, he would have decided to give the contemplated concession at once to the public, instead of postponing it on the paltry plea that the Department which commanded a profit of £2,000,000 a-year could not risk the loss of a few thousands. He had been struck by the adaptability of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman to a question which he (Mr. Gray) had drawn attention to a short time ago—namely, the way in which the Post Office Department had acted in the case of telephones. As that question was to a certain extent applicable to the present Vote, he ventured to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that his arguments went a little further than the question as to the Parcel Post, and that, as had been proved by the experience of other countries, the facilities afforded by telephonic communication would add to the Revenue derived from the Postal and Telegraphic Services. He ventured to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be better if his policy of serving the public by increasing their facilities by means of the Parcel Post and reduced charges for telegrams were applied to a business which did not so immediately come under the control of his Department, but which was so connected with the system of public communication that it must necessarily serve, instead of injuring, the Postal Revenues. But the policy of the Department with reference to telephones had reversed the advantages which the right hon. Gentleman so eloquently described as resulting from the Parcel Post. The Post Office had obtained partial possession of telephones by a method which he said was very nearly akin to a process of legal chicanery.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Vote before the Committee was not that on which the question raised by the hon. Member should be discussed.

MR. GRAY wished to renew the discussion he had initiated some time ago on the subject of telephones.

THE CHAIRMAN remarked upon the great inconvenience of having repeated discussions, at inopportune moments, on the same subject. The hon. Member had gone very fully into this question of telephones the other day. Now, any observations on that subject would be quite irrelevant to the Vote before the Committee.

MR. GRAY said, he bowed to the Chairman's decision. He should like to know to what extent that decision precluded him from discussing the question of telephones? He would not, directly or indirectly, set himself up against the ruling of the Chairman, even if he had the power; but, as a matter of Order, he wished to know whether he was entitled to discuss the question of the use of the telephone by the Post Office, the telephone being used in the building the Vote for which was now under discussion?

THE CHAIRMAN: There is a matter of fact involved in that. I have already pointed out that it is to the convenience of the Committee that the question of telephones should only be discussed on the Post Office Vote. The present Vote is for buildings, fuel, and some miscellaneous items; and if the hon. Gentleman on this discusses all the subjects which were discussed the other night on the Post Office Vote, and which can be discussed again at another stage, it will be very inconvenient to the Committee. I am of opinion that his remarks on the subject of telephones are not strictly relevant to the Vote before the Committee.

MR. GRAY: Though quite unable to follow you, Sir, I at once bow to your ruling.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the Treasury had very cleverly drawn a red herring across the scent of his Motion. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General on the manner in which he had defended the extravagance of the Department on the ground of promoting efficiency. That was the ordinary ground on which extravagance was defended, hon. Gentlemen who complained of the extravagance always being dealt with as wishing to detract from the efficiency of the Department. He was not desirous of impugning the great service the Post Office rendered to the public; and it would be his last wish to reflect, in the slightest degree, upon the admirable manner in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett) discharged his duties. He must say, however, that, in his opinion, it was not necessary, in order to secure all the advantages which the public enjoyed, and to provide the buildings which the Public Service required, that so much money should be spent. The Vote last year and the Vote this year for Post Office and Telegraph Buildings alone represented a sum of upwards of £420,000. He did not mean to say that there was a single building mentioned in the Vote which was unnecessary; but he did mean to say, notwithstanding the explanation of his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works, that the buildings ought to have been, and could have been, put up at much less expense. Let him call attention again to the items for new Post Offices—and do not let it be supposed that he objected to any one of them. But a Post Office was not like an iron-works or a cotton mill, or a variety of other buildings put up by manufacturers, which varied according to the amount of business transacted in them. A Post Office was put up for the transmission of letters, telegrams, and parcels; and there could not be a very great difference in the amount of this kind of work to be done in towns of nearly the same size. There was no legitimate room for the enormous discrepancy between the cost of the buildings in different towns as shown in the Estimate. The Committee would see under the Vote that the Post Offices were to cost, in Boston, £2,500; Cambridge, £9,500; Exeter, £13,500; Folkestone, £5,500; Glasgow, £57,785; Manchester, £108,000; Guildford, £3,500; Halifax, £9,500; Kidderminster, £4,000; St. Alban's, £2,500; Watford, £4,000; Wigan, £5,000; and York, £7,800. The figures showed that in some of these places there was a liberal hand at work which wanted considerably checking and restraining. He did not think the Postmaster General would be astonished if the Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which public money was being expended for these purposes. Having regard to the fact that it was proposed to spend £423,000 in two years on Post Office buildings, and taking into account that the public were to be deprived of 6*d.* telegrams on the ground that the Post Office could not afford it, as a distinct protest against the rate of expenditure now going on in the Department, he should press his Amendment to a Division.

Mr. CAUSTON said, he should like to have some evidence that the expenditure proposed in the Estimate was extravagant before he voted with the hon. Member. The hon. Member said that certain sums of money were to be spent in the towns he had named; but he had not given any evidence that the expenditure was extravagant. He (Mr. Causton) did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General himself, even, was acquainted with the details of the expenditure. He was anxious to support the hon. Member in his endeavour to decrease expenditure; but he thought he had a right to have some details as to the extravagance of the items before he could object to them. So far as he knew, the money ordinarily spent in connection with the Post Office was highly beneficial to the public and the commercial community.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that even a cursory examination of this Vote would show that a great deal of the money asked for under it would never be spent, and was not really wanted. Tens of thousands of pounds had been voted over and over again for some of the places referred to by the hon. Member (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and had never been drawn or needed. If they turned to page 33 of the Estimates they would see from the total that £420,000 was asked for; but that, although since the 30th of September, 1883, £362,000 was obtained in Votes and re-Votes, only a third of that had been spent, and that between the 1st of October, 1883, and the 31st of March of this year, only a further sum of £40,000 was spent, making a total of £160,000. They found that sort of thing taking place every year in which they examined these Estimates. He had found it going on in the 10 or 15 years during which he himself had examined the Estimates; therefore, he assumed that the large sums asked for this year would never be spent. If the Post Office really wanted the sums they asked for, why did they not obtain them and spend them? Why did they obtain the money and return it to the Exchequer, only to ask for it to be re-voted another year? The Post Office knew that it was asking for a great deal more money than it was likely to spend. What was the reason? The fact was, the Department liked to draw money in this loose fashion, because, if they did not, they would be confined to the expenditure of a particular sum for a particular service in a particular place. They knew that if they had a margin they could, without saying anything about it, appropriate £5,000 or £10,000 from time to time for services that had never been thought of before, but which they took it into their heads to arrange for during the financial year after the Estimates were passed. The House of Commons could have no effective control over these matters under such an arrangement, and the only way in which they could secure that control was by taking care not to vote more money than was actually wanted.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was stated at the bottom of page 33 that £26,000 had been deducted from the Vote, in respect of works which might not be carried out during the year. The Department he represented did not suppose that all the works would be carried out. There were a large number of places involved, and it was quite impossible to carry all the works out. Very often, when these sums were voted, delays took place in the acquisition of sites, and it was found out of the question to go on with the operations which they had expected to be able to commence. The consequence was that year after year there was a large amount of money voted which could not be spent. It was usual to deduct, at the end of the account, the money not spent. The Government were extremely anxious to cut down these expenses as far as possible, and every item had been examined with minuteness. He was sure they had now arrived nearer to perfection in the matter than they had done for years.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he sympathized with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) in his efforts to reduce expenditure, when it could be done judiciously; but he could not follow the hon. Member in his harsh condemnation of the expenditure of the Post Office. The Post Office gave the country a larger amount of service for the money spent on it than any other Department—at any rate, that was his opinion. They were chary in making their contributions to the Post Office, and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General was chary in making his demands. There was a feeling on the part of Municipalities of large towns in favour of improving the architecture of the public buildings; and in cases with which he was acquainted it had been with the greatest possible difficulty that the local authorities had been able to induce the Department to consent to the expenditure of a few hundreds of pounds in order to make the Post Office buildings uniform with the streets. Considering the services the Post Office rendered to the community, and that in great Public Departments like this they should not scrape down every 1*s.*, he hoped the hon. Member for Wolverhampton would not be too hard, and push his Amendment to a Division.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he hoped it would not be supposed that those who criticized the Vote wished to depreciate the value of the services of the Post Office, or of the Postmaster General, as the head of the Department. What they contended was that these large Votes were asked for as an expression of confidence in the Department, and nothing else. It was said that the more money that was spent in the Post Office the greater was the service the public got in return; but if that were a sound argument the amount of money voted to the Post Office might be unlimited. Whether the Parcel Post was, or was not, likely in the end to prove remunerative to the Department they could not say; and they would, therefore, like to have some statement from the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General as to what the results of the Parcel Post so far had been, and the possibilities as to the future. They would like to have that statement, because in the enormous expenditure they were now discussing there was no account of that particular service. In any large private commercial enterprize there would be sure to be some calculation as to what the returns were likely to be; and he was certainly of opinion that before they went further they were entitled to ask, within reasonable bounds, for some definite estimate of the probabilities in the future of the Parcel Post.

Mr. FAWCETT said, he was extremely sorry he was not in a position to give anything like a detailed estimate with regard to the working of the Parcel Post system. He was unable to do it for the simple reason—as he had already explained—that they had come to the conclusion that for the work of the Parcel Post to be economically performed it would be necessary, as far as possible, to fuse it with that of the General Post. And when that was done, it would be just as impossible to give an estimate of the cost of the Parcel Post as it would be to give an estimate of the cost of the Newspaper Post. He would give one example, in reference to a large town—namely, Bristol. It was complained that in that town letters from the North often arrived too late to be sent out in the first delivery. Frequent complaints were made by the merchants of Bristol of great loss in consequence. He had made an estimate of the cost of establishing a special delivery of letters from the North of England in that town, and had come to the conclusion that he would not be justified in sanctioning it, though he refused the request made to him with great reluctance. When, however, the Parcel Post had been in operation some months, he had found it possible to have the delivery of parcels combined with the delivery of Northern letters, and in that way had given the general postal accommodation that had long been desired by the people of Bristol. That being the case, it was almost impossible to say how much ought to be put down to the Parcel Post, and how much to the general improvement of the Service—just as in London, for instance, it would be impossible to say how much should be put down for letters, and how much for newspapers. In connection with the improvement of the postal arrangements of the country, he was not able to give a precise estimate of the cost of the Parcel Post; but he believed that the Parcel Post expenditure would not exceed the revenue when they had got rid of the first charges, and that the operation of the system would result in collateral and incidental advantage to the general service of the country. He was not in a position to say more at present.

Mr. MOLLOY wished to know what was the position of the question as to overhead telegraph wires, and how far the system of underground wires would be adopted?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said he was afraid that question could not be discussed under the present Vote.

Mr. MOLLOY: It comes under Post Office Buildings, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: The question seems to me like the one I referred to a short time ago. It seems to me to belong to the Post Office Vote, which will come under discussion later on.

Mr. MOLLOY: I think you will find nothing will come under discussion later on with regard to the Telegraph Service. This is the only opportunity there will be to raise the question. The other Vote will be for the *personnel*.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a Post Office Vote in another Class.

Mr. MOLLOY: You will find that is a Vote for the *personnel*, and has nothing to do with the *matériel*.

Mr. RAMSAY said, he thought that as all the money specified in the Estimate would not be wanted, the Government might consent to a reduction. By submitting this unnecessarily large item, and so challenging criticism, they were taking up the time of the Committee needlessly.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(6.) £20,125, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,549, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings."

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that Item B of the Vote amounted to £6,549, and it was to one of the small details of that item he wished to call attention—namely, to the sum of £85 for the rent of the Wandsworth Police Court, and to the sum of £40 for the Hammersmith Police Court. These two Police Courts were worked together by a couple of magistrates, who sat on alternate days, from 10 o'clock until 1 o'clock at Hammersmith, and then in the afternoon at Wandsworth. The arrangement was exceedingly inconvenient, both for Hammersmith and for Wandsworth, but especially for Wandsworth. It very often resulted in an unfair, and sometimes cruel, detention of a large number of poor persons who were summoned in the latter district. A very large number of poor people were sometimes summoned to Wandsworth Police Court for trumpery offences against the School Board regulations; and until very recently these people had to stand—often in tens and twenties—for a long time in the rain, until the magistrate came at some uncertain hour from the other side of the water, his work at Hammersmith having, perhaps, detained him longer than he had anticipated it would. Recently some kind of shelter outside had been afforded the people; but the Court itself was simply a disgrace to the country. It was one of the lowest, most murky, and ill-lighted rooms that could be used for the purpose; and it was hard to understand how any Government or Administration, having the least respect for itself or for the name of justice, could allow such a hole to be used to administer justice in. The magistrate was obliged to sit with his elbow against the window in order to get sufficient light to do his work, while his other elbow was obliged to rest almost on the hob of the fire-place. He (Mr. A. O'Connor) did not think the room was more than 7 or 7½ feet in height, and there was no convenience either for solicitor, or counsel, or witnesses, and the clerk to the magistrate had hardly room to sit down. He referred to this matter some time ago; and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) informed him, in reply, that it was the intention of the Government to provide in some London Government Bill for this and other matters. Why should they have to wait for the passing of this marvellous Bill? He was afraid matters of this kind would be in a very sorry plight before the Municipality of London had anything to do with them. Wandsworth Police Court was, as he had stated, simply a disgrace to the country; and it was no reasonable or serious answer to say it would be all right when the London Municipal Government was placed on a proper footing. This was an Imperial question, and it ought to be dealt with in a decent and respectable manner. The very surroundings and condition of the Court were sufficient to breed contempt for the administration of justice.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he did not propose to go into the question which the hon. Gentleman had raised, though, no doubt, there was great force in what the hon. Member had said; but he wished to raise a much larger question, which concerned the Vote as a whole. The Vote proposed to throw upon the Consolidated Fund the charge for Metropolitan Police Courts; and of that Vote he proposed a reduction of £3,478, that being the estimated amount of the extra receipts payable during the past year. He should have proposed a much larger reduction, but that there appeared to be only a balance of something like £3,500 remaining to be voted. The Committee would, no doubt, be told that this must stand over until the London Government Bill was passed, an excuse that had been put forward every year since 1880 with reference to this imposition upon the National Exchequer of a charge that should be borne by London, for it was part of the local administration of London. He was not very sanguine that the London Government Bill would pass this year; but whether it was passed or not, he submitted to the Committee that as Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham, Glasgow, and other towns defrayed the expenses of their own Police Courts, so London should pay for the Metropolitan Police Courts out of its own rates. He need not go into the arguments; they were perfectly familiar to the Committee. The Secretary to the Treasury would say he desired it as much as he (Mr. Fowler) did, but that the Treasury were waiting for the London Government Bill. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would refer to the Paper circulated among Members just before the holidays, not signed by the Secretary, but by one of the Under Secretaries of the Home Department. It was one of the most extraordinary Papers ever published, inasmuch as it was in the form of an imaginary balance sheet between the Exchequer and the proposed Municipality. He did not know whether the Secretary to the Treasury would father that document; but if he attempted to do so he would meet with the strongest opposition in the House. It was a most scandalous attempt to impose upon the National Exchequer charges which ought to belong to London alone. But, for the present, all the Committee had to deal with was whether London should pay for its own Police Courts as other towns did, or whether every other town in England should be taxed for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Metropolitan Police Courts. On that he hoped the Committee would express a distinct opinion. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £3,478.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £71, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. WARTON said, he did not intend to enter into the weighty question which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), but to confine himself to what had come under his own observation. Every year since he had been in Parliament, he had told the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works what he had just heard from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor)—namely, that Wandsworth Police Court was in a perfectly disgraceful condition. He had invited the right hon. Gentleman to visit the Court, because he was persuaded that if the right hon. Gentleman did visit it, he would be so disgusted that even he, in common decency, would admit that it was a perfect disgrace to British justice that such a shabby and contemptible room should be used as an English Police Court. He (Mr. Warton) could hardly find words to express his intense abhorrence of the use of such a place. The description given by the hon. Member for Queen's County was quite inadequate to give a notion of what a wretched place the Court was. He had attended the Court—he had practised there. The staircase was wretched and shabby, not more than 3½ feet in width, and the Court itself was low and frightfully small; indeed, it was perfectly dangerous to health and to life to remain an hour in the atmosphere found there. Having some respect for English justice, he should be positively ashamed if a foreigner were to come over and visit such a Court. The room was small, dirty, dark, wretched, and shabby in every respect; it was not fit for a servant's bedroom.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, Wandsworth Police Court was certainly not all one desired; but he had no doubt one of the first duties of the new London Municipality would be to deal with it. He had done his best to meet the views of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) by dealing with the matter in the London Government Bill; when that Bill passed, this Vote would be unnecessary. In the meantime, he hoped his hon. Friend would not think it worth while to divide, because the effect of carrying his Motion would be to leave the police magistrates in the Metropolis without any Courts at all.

Mr. RYLANDS said, they had again and again protested against these charges; and he recollected many years ago, in a former Parliament, dividing the Committee upon it, and the Teller with him was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth). He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman was not in his place to tell again against these charges being put in the Estimates. He saw the Home Secretary had just returned to the House. They all wished the right hon. and learned Gentleman success in his Bill for the reform of Municipal London; but, in the meantime, there were these charges, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman was perfectly aware ought not to be made on the Public Exchequer at all. The best way to get rid of them, and to strengthen the hands of the Home Secretary, was to divide against the Vote. He believed that if hon. Members would join his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and by a large majority reject this Vote, they would do a great deal to assist the right hon. and learned Gentleman in passing the London Government Bill. Let it be understood that they would not continue to pay these sums of money. He had no doubt the hon. Gentleman the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) were quite right in saying that some of the Metropolitan Courts were a disgrace to British justice. Some of them, he understood, were very unsuitable buildings in which to administer justice; but the localities ought to pay for improved buildings. Why should his (Mr. Rylands's) constituents, who paid for their own Courts, pay for his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) to have a nice Court to practise in? The localities ought to defray the expenses of their own Courts, and he maintained that the Committee were justified in resisting these charges. He recommended the Committee to join the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) in rejecting these charges. If they did reject the Vote, he was confident his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary would find some way or other of meeting the difficulty, and of saving the Exchequer from unjust charges.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands) had been kind enough to appeal to him in the matter; but he, as Home Secretary, could not dispense altogether with Acts of Parliament. The Home Secretary had two functions—the one was to see that justice was administered, and the other to see that there were the means of administering it. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that these charges ought to be local charges on the Metropolis. The Government had accepted that principle, and had included the charges in the London Government Bill. In the meantime they must continue the present system. If the Vote were rejected that night he could not put the charges on the localities except by Act of Parliament; and his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) knew perfectly well what little chance there was of passing a Bill that Session to put these particular charges on the ratepayers of London. His hon. Friend knew perfectly well that practically that could not be done; therefore to ask him (Sir William Harcourt) to be responsible for the administration of justice, and to take the means away from him, was the *reductio ad absurdum* of the situation. They could not leave 5,000,000 of people without any Courts in which to administer justice; yet that would be the consequence of carrying the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. The hon. Gentleman was a very practical man; and, therefore, he (Sir William Harcourt) was sure the hon. Member would not press his Motion to a Division. The adoption of the proposal would result in the most preposterous and ridiculous state of things; and, therefore, he hoped his hon. Friend would be content with the assurance that the Government accepted the principle of the Motion, and would endeavour to give effect to it in the London Government Bill by transferring these charges from the Imperial funds to the Metropolis.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 18; Noes 50: Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 104.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(8.) £6,516, to complete the sum for the Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it was a great inconvenience that there was no Sheriff's Court House in Fife. He would like to know whether, in the event of the local authorities being prepared to pay their moiety towards a Court House, Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to meet them in the usual way?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that if a representation was made by the county authorities it would be duly considered. Until a representation was made it would be premature for him to give any pledge on the subject.

Vote *agreed to*.

(9.) £16,969, to complete the sum for New Courts of Justice and Offices.

MR. GREGORY said, that this Estimate showed an excess over the original one of something like £500,000 for the expenses of the New Courts of Justice. He did not mean to say that the expenditure had not been legitimately incurred; but one day or other the very large question would arise, on whom the liability was to rest—upon the country or the suitors? He did not propose to raise that question on the present occasion; but he must enter his protest against any further imposition for the New Courts of Justice on the suitors. The fees levied upon suitors were already very high—in fact, the suitors had done their duty in the way of contributions towards the New Courts; and he should contend, when any attempt was made to impose additional taxation for the purpose of paying for the New Courts, that the expenditure, having been incurred by the Treasury, should be met by the Treasury out of the public Revenue of the country, and not by the suitors, who had had no voice or control over the expenditure. That, however, was a subject he should reserve until the Bill which was now pending for the purpose of imposing the expenditure on the suitor came before the House. With respect to the New Courts themselves, there were one or two points he would like to advert to. Unfortunately the construction of the Courts had not been so satisfactory as could have been desired, nor had the result attained been such as might reasonably have been anticipated from the great outlay. While wishing to do full justice to Mr. Street for his design, he could not help thinking that the passages were too dark, and not very readily accessible, and that the Central Hall was practically useless for judicial purposes. There were certain passages leading out of the Hall it was true; but they were very long and intricate, and led to rooms provided for the jurors in waiting. It was, however, rather difficult to find the rooms, and when they were obtained they were not such as to conduce to the comfort of the persons for whom they were intended. The passages were very badly illuminated. At one time he understood that the electric light was to be used in the building; and he believed it was absolutely necessary there should be some such illumination if the passages and corridors were to be made properly accessible. Again, the access to one wing of the building from the other was by no means adequate, because it was necessary to go out into the open air to gain that access. That was a thing which might be remedied by a little alteration in the construction of the building; and he suggested three points for the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) who had charge of the public buildings. In the first place, he suggested that the passages should be lighted better, if not by the electric light, by gas. Personally, he preferred the electric light, and he hoped it would be adopted. Secondly, he suggested that better means of access should be afforded to all quarters of the building; and, thirdly, it had occurred to him that access might be given at the end of the Central Hall to the corridors by means of a flight of steps, in lieu of the balcony which at present existed there; and, again, recesses might be constructed in the Hall which could be used by counsel as places in which to communicate with their clients. At present counsel had to communicate with their clients in the corridors, which were very dark and frequently very crowded, and in which it was very difficult to meet, but still more difficult to consult with any person with whom a counsel wished to have intimate communication. Old Westminster Hall was used as a meeting place for counsel and client. It was true there was no facilities for sitting down; but still it was largely used as a meeting place. He believed it was originally intended that the Central Hall at the New Palace of Justice should be used for the purpose of meeting, and he could not see why it could not be adapted for such a purpose. At present it was a mere waste. It was of noble construction no doubt; but for all practical purposes the money which had been expended upon it had been thrown away. He trusted these matters would receive the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), because he considered that the building could be improved to a very considerable extent.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked if it was to be understood by the Committee that this was the final Vote in respect of this costly building?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that this was the final Vote; but there were claims on the part of the builder which might possibly have to be met. He believed the builder had been rather overpaid; but still that gentleman had taken legal proceedings against the Government. With regard to the matter raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gregory), he must agree with him that the Central Hall had at present no obvious connection with the rest of the building. It was, no doubt, intended by the architect that the Hall should be used by counsel in the same way as Westminster Hall was used by them. The difference between the two cases appeared to be this—that the Courts were now upon a different floor to the great Hall, and it was not convenient for barristers to come down from the Courts to use the Hall for the purpose of consultation. The result was that the Hall was generally empty. Whether it could be converted to any use in the manner suggested by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gregory)—namely, by making a staircase leading up to the upper Gallery where the balcony now was, was a question which he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could not at present form an opinion upon; but he would communicate with the Lord Chancellor and discuss the matter with him. He was under the impression that the passages were lighted by the electric light. They might not be sufficiently lighted, and therefore he would make inquiries. With regard to the other points raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gregory), he should, of course, be guided very much by the opinion of the Lord Chancellor.

Vote *agreed to.*

(10.) £162,500, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he could give the Committee any account of the progress which the Survey was making? While wishing to know how the Irish Survey was progressing, he was peculiarly interested in the completion of the Scotch part of the work.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Vote was very much increased two years ago, and also last year, with a view to the total completion of the Survey by the year 1890. By that time he hoped the work would be completed. He could not off-hand give the hon. Member the details about Scotland; but the Report for the current year had already been laid before the House, and the hon. Gentleman would see from it the particular progress made in each county.

MR. MOLLOY asked if the right hon. Gentleman could give them any information with regard to the Irish Survey?

MR. E. STANHOPE inquired what progress was being made in the preparation of the maps?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the publication of the maps would follow at some distance from the completion of the Survey. The preparation of the maps, however, had lately been greatly accelerated by an invention of Colonel Cooke, who had also effected great economies in the conduct of the work. It was quite impossible for him to state at present at what stage the Survey stood in Ireland.

MR. WARTON said, that on page 42 there was what appeared a most extraordinary item. Under the head of "Contingencies," medical bills this year amounted to £1,100, and last year they amounted to £1,000. He would like to know on what principle medical bills were charged? He supposed the different officers had proper salaries; and why, therefore, should the State be called upon to pay their doctors' bills?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, a very large number of non-commissioned men in the Army were employed in the Survey. They were detached from their ordinary staff, and therefore it was absolutely necessary that medical advice should be provided for them.

Vote *agreed to.*

(11.) £10,429, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked what was proposed to be done with regard to the South Kensington Museum? At present there was a very unsightly block of buildings fronting the Knightsbridge Road. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would state whether the Government had any plan in contemplation for completing the Museum.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that, no doubt, at some time or other it would be necessary to complete the Museum by erecting a new wing in the front of the Knightsbridge Road; but at present it was not thought necessary to extend the buildings.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to an item in the Vote for a so-called fresco by Sir Frederick Leighton. The right hon. Gentleman would recollect that this item was made the subject of considerable discussion last year, when a Division of the Committee was taken with regard to it. The first thing that was proved to the satisfaction of every competent person was that this projected picture was not a fresco at all. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be taken by surprise when the matter was brought to his notice; and he did not appear to have a thorough acquaintance with the subject. The hon. Member for East Cumberland (Mr. George Howard), who was a practical artist, and, therefore, better able to deal with the subject than he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), had stated, in the course of the discussion last year, that the picture was not a fresco in the true sense, because it was not executed as frescoes usually were executed. It having been established that the picture was not a fresco at all, that it was not intended to be painted in the manner of frescoes, it seemed rather singular that it should be called a fresco. Now, during the discussion last year, he repeatedly asked the Government how it happened that the order to paint this picture was given to Sir Frederick Leighton; because the records, which were accessible to Members of the Committee, gave no information on the subject. The intention of giving this order to Sir Frederick Leighton never appeared to have been submitted to the Houses of Parliament. He hoped that during the last 12 months the right hon. Gentleman had informed himself on the subject, and that he would be able to state to the Committee the circumstances under which the order for the picture was given. The first objection that was taken—and he thought very properly taken—to the proposed expenditure, was that the frescoes hitherto executed in public buildings—

in this building and in other buildings in London—had practically been failures; that they had almost all disappeared. That difficulty was got over by the Committee being informed that this was not a fresco at all, but a picture which was to be executed in a manner different to that in which frescoes were painted. For the satisfaction of the Committee, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman, who was responsible to the House for the Science and Art Department, should say how this order was ever given to Sir Frederick Leighton; and, in the next place, should say what progress had been made with the work; because, as he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) understood, no progress, up to the present moment, had been made with the picture.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman was quite right in saying there was a very long discussion last year on this subject, and that there was some doubt expressed in the House that this picture was not a fresco in the true sense of the term. The hon. Member for East Cumberland (Mr. George Howard) expressed that opinion; but his (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) recollection was that the majority of Members were of opinion that it was a fresco, although not painted in the ordinary manner. Sir Frederick Leighton himself granted that it was not painted as frescoes usually were, yet it was properly described as a fresco painting. Last year the Committee voted £1,000, a third part of the payment for the picture, after a long discussion, and by a considerable majority, and the order was then given for its execution. The work had been commenced, one-third of it had been completed, so that it was obviously impossible that the order could be withdrawn. He hoped, therefore, the Committee would grant the sum asked for.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought that by the decision of the Committee last year they were committed to the purchase of this picture; but he was sorry to hear it had been found necessary to pay money on account of the painting. He understood that £1,000 was paid in the last financial year, and that a second £1,000 was put down for this financial year. He feared that now they were committed to the "Arts of War"—["Arts of Peace!"]—oh! the "Arts of Peace," by the present Government, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite came into power they would think it necessary to carry out the original intention of having two of these frescoes.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: We have the "Arts of War."

Mr. RYLANDS considered that that was a good reason why they could not object to the second picture. If they had got one of the frescoes they could not well refuse to have the second. He imagined from what the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works said that this was the first picture.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the first fresco—that depicting the "Arts of War"—was paid for by the last Government, and the second picture was now in progress. Towards the payment for it £1,000 was paid last year, and it was now proposed to vote the second £1,000.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had no knowledge of wet frescoes or of dry frescoes; but he thought that before they indulged in artistic gimcracks they ought to spend a little money in completing the front of South Kensington Museum. As a resident of South Kensington, he expressed the strong hope that the Government would soon see their way to remove the eyesore presented by the present buildings fronting Knightsbridge Road.

Dr. FARQUHARSON said, the first picture had been quite satisfactory, and they ought to be extremely glad to get another by so eminent an artist as Sir Frederick Leighton at so cheap a rate. There was no doubt that if Sir Frederick Leighton were to put the same time he was expending on this picture into the ordinary pictorial market he would get two or three times the money. He was glad to hear that the picture was to be placed on the wall in a form in which it would be tolerably durable. Ample evidence had been adduced to show that the method which would be tried in this case had been adopted with the greatest success on the Continent. There was every reason to believe that this picture would be just as durable as some of the pictures in that House had been perishable.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he had never thought that the House of Commons was the proper place to discuss questions of taste—he never discussed them himself, because they were quite out of the purview of the House.

But they might discuss questions of fact. Now, a fresco, in the very nature of the term, could not be a dry painting; it was necessarily a wet painting. What, however, he wished particularly to point out now was that the Government had not answered the first question he put to them. Two Members of the Government had risen in their places; but neither of them had said who it was that gave the commission for the picture. All of them who were familiar with South Kensington Museum knew that under the late Government an order was given to Sir Frederick Leighton for the painting on the wall called "The Arts of War." It was not for him to say whether it was a good or a bad picture —that was a matter of taste. But the order for that picture was given, and the work was executed. Now, he wanted to know from the Government, who gave the order, under what circumstances the order was given to Sir Frederick Leighton for the second picture? He, in his place in Parliament, had a right to ask that question, and the Government ought to give a distinct answer. He believed that when the reduction of the Vote was proposed last year the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had not informed himself on the point; indeed, the right hon. Gentleman as much as said so. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) assumed that in the course of the last 12 months the right hon. Gentleman had obtained the necessary information; and he hoped, therefore, it would be given to the Committee.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had already said that the money was voted last year, and that he gave the order. No order was given until after the money was voted. He ascertained from Sir Frederick Leighton, before submitting the Vote last year, that he was prepared to execute the picture. He agreed with his hon. Friend (Dr. Farquharson) that if Sir Frederick Leighton chose to take his work into the ordinary market he could get a great deal more for it than he was getting from the Government. But Sir Frederick Leighton considered that having executed the one work he was bound in honour to execute the second.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he had been informed that Sir Frederick Leighton prepared cartoons and studies for this picture long before the Vote was submitted to Parliament. He would like to know whether his information was correct or not? If it was correct it was quite clear that Sir Frederick Leighton knew that the order would be given to him by the Government. He did not wish, as he had already said, to discuss questions of taste, or to discuss whether it was right or not to give the order to Sir Frederick Leighton. What he would like to know was, whether an order was given under which cartoons and studies of the picture were prepared?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the designs for the two pictures were ordered by the late Government, who paid £1,000 for them. One fresco was ordered by the late Government, and paid for by them. The other was ordered by the present Government after the Vote of £1,000 was taken last year, and it was fortunate it was so, because otherwise they would have lost the services of Sir Frederick Leighton, which were worth a great deal more than £1,000. He was surprised that so excellent an authority on Art as the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) should be indifferent to such works.

Mr. RYLANDS said, that to him the explanation of the Government was entirely satisfactory. The Committee having voted £1,000 last year on account of the frescoes, the designs for which had already been paid for, it seemed to him useless to discuss the question any further; and he begged to apologize to the Committee for having joined in drawing attention to it.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he made no imputation and expressed no opinion whatever on the question of taste or Art in connection with the subject. His question related simply to the form of proceeding; and he desired to know whether the picture was ordered by the present Government or not? He understood when the first £1,000 were paid that the amount included the cartoon for the second picture. He had no fault to find with Sir Frederick Leighton, nor did he wish to be supposed to imply that he gave his services at more than a moderate rate of remuneration; but it was desirable, for the satisfaction of all parties interested, that there should have been an inquiry into the circumstances of the case. He understood, from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that the late Government made a contract with Sir Frederick Leighton for the "Arts of Peace," and that the present Government made a contract with him for the "Arts of War," and that, as he had already remarked, the first payment included not only the price of the first picture, but the cartoons also.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he could not pledge himself as to whether the £3,000 included the price of the cartoons. His impression was that they had been paid for. He knew that Sir Frederick Leighton was commissioned by the late Government to execute two designs, and that when the present Government came into Office they were told that if they did not at once order the second picture they would never get it finished at all.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he had some recollection that the same point had been raised last year on the Estimates, when the Committee were assured that the work, which was to be executed on a new principle, was only an experiment. He thought now, as he did then, that £3,000 was rather a large sum to experiment with, and that the experiment should have been tried upon a much smaller scale, and that the work should have been exposed for two or three years to see whether or not it would stand the London atmosphere. But it appeared that the "Arts of Peace" was not yet finished, although a considerable sum had been paid. He would like to know the name of the official who gave a certificate that £1,000 worth of work had been done?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could say no more than that there was a certificate to that effect.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it was but a short time ago, and surely the right hon. Gentleman could recollect the name of the official who gave the certificate.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had the assurance of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that a certificate had been given.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, under the circumstances, it was, perhaps, not worth while to pursue that subject further. There was clearly something about the transaction that would not bear investigation, or the Government would have been willing to enlighten the Committee. The Committee were told last year that there was an implied contract with Sir Frederick Leighton with reference to the picture in question; and, on the faith of that, £1,000 were voted on account of the work to be done. There was a strong suspicion in his mind that the person who gave the certificate was the Vice President of the Council of Education.

Vote *agreed to.*

(12.) £4,711, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.

(13.) £1,400, to complete the sum for Natural History Museum.

(14.) £6,347, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

(15.) £124,740, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(16.) £5,000, to complete the sum for Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(17.) £195,000, to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and Main Roads, England and Wales.

(18.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £29,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, in Aid of the Cost of Maintenance of Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland during the year ended Whitsuntide 1884."

Mr. RAMSAY said, he wished to know on what principle this Vote was to be allocated to Scotland? He observed that the grant this year was £35,000, as against £25,000 last year. The Committee was no doubt aware of the cause of this. It was that instead of paying a Grant in Aid towards the maintenance of the whole of the roads in Scotland, the distribution was conducted on such a principle that a large proportion of Scotland was altogether struck out from the benefit of the grant. That applied especially to those counties where turnpikes never existed. In this way the wealthy districts got the grant, and the poorer counties, although they were more heavily burdened, were altogether excluded from participating in it. He would be glad to have some explanation as to the mode in which the grant was to be distributed this year, and in what way those counties which were formerly excluded were to be re-imbursed for their past outlay. He felt that it could not be maintained that injustice should be done to any section of the community under the name of economy. But the counties he referred to had been subjected to injustice; they were, in the first instance, called upon to furnish proofs of expenditure, and when they did so, they were told they were not to have the grant. He believed that to be an injustice which the House would not sanction; and he thought the Treasury would hardly feel justified in withholding from those counties the grant to which they were entitled with the rest of Scotland. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate could give an explanation of what had taken place, and what was intended in reference to the future allocation of the grant, the Committee would be glad to hear it; because the people in the counties interested, and who still expected to get their share of the grant, would take care to keep the matter in remembrance, and make future application for that measure of justice to which they were fairly entitled.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it might be in the recollection of the Committee that the Grant in Aid of the expenses of maintaining main roads was first made for the year 1881-2; and the terms upon which the grant was proposed and voted in that year did not cover the case of such roads as his hon. Friend had referred to. In that year, consequently, the contribution was given in the form of one-fourth of the cost of maintenance of the roads disturnpiked since the year 1860. A good deal of dissatisfaction had been felt at that limited mode of giving the benefit of the grant; and his hon. Friend who had just spoken had been largely instrumental in bringing the subject before the House. Accordingly, in the next year, 1882-3, not only was one-fourth given of the cost of material and labour employed in the maintenance of the roads extending to 10 years prior to 1860—that was going back to 1850—but there was also a contribution as nearly analogous as circumstances would permit, in respect of those counties to which his hon. Friend referred, in which there were no disturnpiked roads, because there had never been any turnpikes there. So far, therefore, as regarded last year, he did not think his hon. Friend had cause for complaint. He was afraid it was quite impossible, in the application of an annual grant of this kind, to go back from one year to another and redress inequalities that had arisen; but as the Government last year had taken into account the case of the counties to which his hon. Friend referred, he trusted that upon that point he would be satisfied. As regarded the current financial year 1883-4, there was a certain difference in the position of affairs as compared with previous years, because now all the roads in Scotland had been disturnpiked, and there was a more equal basis for distributing the grant than existed in previous years; and the proposal was to allocate this sum of £35,000 as nearly as could be upon the basis of working out a rule of three sum which might be thus stated—As the total cost of all roads in all the counties and districts of burghs was to £35,000, so was the sum expended in each county or district of burghs to the amount of the contribution. That appeared to him to be a most just mode of procedure with reference to the allocation of the grant.

MR. RAMSAY said, the Lord Advocate had given no satisfactory explanation of the way in which those counties were to be re-imbursed for the share of the grant which ought to have fallen to them, but which they had not received. He thought the Government should state clearly whether they intended to rob those counties, by depriving them of their just claim for their share of the grant.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he thought he had explained that it was a past matter, which it was not possible to enter into; it was not possible to do so last year, and was still less so now. It must be borne in mind that the grant was originally given as a contribution in aid of those which had been disturnpiked. It was not a case of the exclusion of any counties which were originally within the letter of the grant; but a case of the extension of the grounds of the original grant, was to include the counties to which his hon. Friend had referred.

MR. RAMSAY said, he would remind the Committee that this was just an instance in which the interests of the people of Scotland were entirely ignored. He hoped that when a Minister who should be considered responsible in all distinctively Scottish affairs came to be appointed this circumstance would be remembered—that a portion of the people of Scotland had been deprived of a grant given by Parliament for their relief, and were now sought to be deprived of it on the technical ground that they were not now dealing with the year 1881-2, but with the year 1884-5. The Lord Advocate had admitted that the claim was a just one, and justice ought to be done.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it appeared to him that it was a rather strange and bald assertion on the part of the hon. Member who had just sat down to say that the just claims of Scotland were entirely ignored. This was a Vote for £35,000 in relief of local burdens in Scotland, whereas there was no similar Vote for Ireland. England obtained assistance in this respect to the extent of £215,000, and the Vote of £25,000 of last year for Grants in Aid to Scotland was now to be raised to £35,000, whereas Ireland did not receive a single penny. It seemed to him that it was the claim of the Irish taxpayer for the relief of local burdens that was ignored. Although the wealth of England and Scotland had been increasing by leaps and bounds of late years, the means of Ireland had been decreasing through the land going out of cultivation; and it was under those circumstances that the Irish Representatives were called upon to assent to taxation for the benefit of England and Scotland without getting any corresponding benefit for Ireland. He failed to see the justice of that arrangement from any point of view, and should, therefore, move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £10,000, the amount now asked for in excess of the Vote of last year.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £19,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, in Aid of the Cost of Maintenance of Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland during the year ended Whitsuntide 1884."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. GRAY said, that when the Vote on Account was discussed some time ago some Irish Members raised an objection to the items for England and Scotland in the form of compensation for disturnpiked roads, and the Government stated that arrangements of a similar character were made, or were being made, for Ireland. Something to that effect was certainly said, for he had it clearly on his mind, and could not be mistaken. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) had been invited to explain what he meant; and if he would now be kind enough to offer an explanation as to what he had wished to convey when he had referred to something in the nature of a corresponding allowance being made for Ireland, he (Mr. Gray) might, perhaps, be able to support the Vote. The hon. Gentleman had suggested something about a temporary arrangement; but even though this money grant were a temporary affair Ireland had a right to urge her claim to a share in it.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan) had raised this question a little while since; and, in reply to him, he (Mr. Courtney) had stated that the arrangement was a temporary one, adopted only in anticipation of and until the Local Government Bill was brought in for England and Scotland, when it would be withdrawn, and a new one entered into on the resettlement of local taxation. He had not stated that any similar arrangement was in contemplation, or was going to be adopted in regard to Ireland. If he had gone further, he should have said they would have had to consider many circumstances in drawing a comparison between the proper treatment of England and Scotland on the one hand, and of Ireland on the other. It had, for instance, often been suggested that the House Tax might be given over to local authorities; but if this plan were attempted to be adopted in the Three Kingdoms, they would find that in Ireland there was no House Tax as there was in England and Scotland. There was a tax a portion of which, in Ireland, was allocated to local wants in relief of local cess, which was not the case in England and Scotland—namely, the Dog Tax. [Mr. Arthur O'Connor: How much of it?] About a third, he thought; but, as he said, there was no corresponding allocation in England or Scotland. The Government would have to consider questions like these in settling the problem of local taxation; and that was all he had intended to say on a former occasion to the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had given some attention to this subject. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had mentioned the House Tax. Well, it was a strange thing, but, nevertheless, a fact, that that was not paid by the same set of people who paid the county cess, which went to the county roads in Ireland. That argument of the hon. Gentleman, therefore, did not apply. If they raised the whole question of the incidence of taxation they would raise the point of the duty on special articles consumed in Ireland. Take the question of alcoholic beverages, for instance. Ireland was a whisky-drinking country, whereas England was a beer-drinking country. Whisky was taxed much more heavily than beer, so that the Irish had to pay a much larger sum for their favourite beverage, in the way of taxation, than the English. This subsidy was one for the disturnpiking of turnpike roads, and to relieve local burdens in respect of keeping roads in order. Well, there had been turnpikes in Ireland, just as there had been in England and Scotland; and when they were abolished the expense of keeping the roads in order had to be borne by the rating in the different localities. Ireland, therefore, in this respect was situated just as England was. He had no power at that moment to move a Vote in relief of this local taxation to Ireland; but it was within their right, and he believed it to be their duty, not only to take the action suggested by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), but to take away the whole of the subsidy to Scotland, and, when the Vote for England was proposed, to divide the Committee against that also. It seemed to him absolutely preposterous that England and Scotland should have relief for this class of burden, while all assistance was refused to Ireland. The arguments of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury were not of the slightest weight. He did not think it possible for any argument to be advanced by any Member of the Government which would justify the exemption of Ireland from relief of this kind, whilst it was given to England and Scotland.

MR. GRAY said, he had certainly understood from the hon. Gentleman that an allowance of some kind, as compensation for disturnpiked roads, was to be given to Ireland. The hon. Gentleman told them now that this was a temporary arrangement, pending the passing of the County Government Bill; and when the introduction of some such Bill as that was foreshadowed there was a distinct promise given of the introduction of a measure of the kind for Ireland. At any rate, so he believed. A Bill for Ireland was mentioned when last the subject was raised. If this Vote for Scotland was to be continued until there was a County Government Bill there was no knowing how long it might not continue. Ireland stood in the same position as England and Scotland with regard to this legislation, if, indeed, she had not priority. The hon. Gentleman reminded them that they had no House Tax in Ireland. Well, that was true; but they had the blood tax in that country, which they had not in England or Scotland. He failed, however, to comprehend why they should vote out of the common fund contributed to by the taxpayers of the three countries sums for the purpose of maintaining the local roads in England and Scotland, whilst no such contribution was made for the same purpose to Ireland. He certainly saw no prospect of the County Government Bill becoming law this year, and he did not believe it would be passed next year. Next year, indeed, it would be seen whether there was really any prospect of the hon. Gentleman and his Friends introducing it at all. But, whilst they were waiting for such a measure, he thought there ought to be no distinction between England and Scotland and Ireland in regard to these subsidies to local rates. If his hon. Friend went to a Division he should certainly support him.

MR. BIGGAR wished to know how it was that there was such a large increase in the Vote this year? Last year it was £25,000; this year it was £35,000.

MR. HIBBERT said, the increase in the Vote this year was owing to the greater number of Scotch roads which had been disturnpiked during the last 12 months.

MR. BIGGAR said, it seemed, therefore, that directly roads were disturnpiked in Scotland compensation was given at once; whereas, although roads had been disturnpiked in Ireland years ago, nothing had been given to that country in respect of them.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 7; Noes 50: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 105.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £138,568, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations."

Mr. MOLLOY said, the Committee had now been working on these Votes six hours, and he thought it was time Progress was reported.

Mr. COURTNEY appealed to the Committee to allow more Votes to be aken. The hour was a reasonable one for the continuation of the Committee (12.25 A.M.).

Mr. MOLLOY said, the Committee had now come to a very important Vote, which it would take a considerable time to discuss. The Votes to come really were of a very important character—nothing like those they had been discussing. He had said they had been six hours working at the Estimates; but, as a matter of fact, it was seven hours, and the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) must admit that the Government had obtained a much larger amount of money than they could have reasonably expected at the commencement of the Sitting.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he did not think there would be much discussion on the next Vote. However, he would propose to postpone this Vote on the understanding that the other Votes were disposed of.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should be disposed to urge on his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) to accept that offer, were it not that the last Vote in this Class was for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings. If the hon. Gentleman would postpone that also, no doubt all difficulty would be removed. There were many hon. Members interested in the Votes it was proposed to postpone who were not at present in their places.

Mr. GRAY suggested that the Votes for "Royal University, Ireland, Buildings," and for "Science and Art Buildings, Dublin," should also be postponed.

Mr. WARTON said, a great deal of money had been voted away; and as hon. Members had been there many hours, he thought it quite time that Progress should be reported.

Mr. MOLLOY said, he would withdraw his Motion if the hon. Gentleman would consent to withdraw the present Vote, and that for Consular and Diplomatic Buildings.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the last-named Vote had been expected to come on.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked that the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. Thomasson), who was interested in the Vote, was not in his place.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH objected to picking and choosing amongst the Votes. He suggested that they should go on until they came to Votes containing debateable matter.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he thought that if the proposal of his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) were accepted there would be a great saving of time. If it were not they would only find themselves, a little later on, discussing as to whether or not they should report Progress; and the final result would be that the Government would have to give way.

Question put.

Mr. WARTON: Progress, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: No Motion to report Progress has been made.

Mr. MOLLOY: I made such a Motion, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member referred to such a Motion several times during the course of his remarks; but he did not make the Motion.

Mr. MOLLOY: Then I will make it now, Mr. Chairman.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

Mr. COURTNEY said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Molloy) would see his way to withdraw the Motion. He would consent to the postponement of Vote 22, and also of the Diplomatic Vote, if any controversy arose.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that all his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) wished to do was to avoid a second wrangle. They might just as well determine now whether the

Votes should be postponed as do it afterwards. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had protested against proceeding with Vote 22; and he (Mr. Biggar) thought the Government were unreasonable in wishing to take the Vote now, especially when this was the first day after the holidays, and when considerable progress in Supply had been made during the Sitting.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(19.) £14,650, to complete the sum for Royal University, Ireland, Buildings.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) would explain how it was that with an Estimate of £17,000 for additional buildings and enclosures, with a revised Estimate of £19,200, and with £10,000 voted and revoted, nothing had been done in the way of "additional buildings and enclosures," and how it was that when so much had been voted and revoted so little had been done in the way of fitting and furnishing?

MR. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member must be aware that the University was not yet in full working order, and that, therefore, additional buildings and enclosures had not been wanting.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, his complaint was that the additional buildings were not in progress. Certain plans were devised and were approved of, and estimates were prepared and assented to. On account of the additional buildings and enclosures which were included in the original plan £10,000 was voted last year; but not one single 1*d.* of that £10,000 had yet been spent. What he wanted to know was the cause of the delay.

MR. COURTNEY said, the money had not been spent because it was not required. It was supposed it would be required.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Vote *agreed to.*

(20.) £4,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.

MR. GIBSON said, there was great uneasiness in Ireland as to the delay in the erection of these buildings. He knew that plans were in contemplation—in fact, the successful competitor had been told that he had succeeded. The plans of this gentleman had been accepted; but nothing whatever had been done to carry out the plans. It was not at all satisfactory, when this matter had been before the Irish public for some years, when the matter was put up for competition, and when plans were accepted and approved of on all sides, to find that nothing had been done to carry the plans out. He would like to know, from those who were responsible for this Vote, why nothing had been done, and when the work was going to be commenced? It was all very well to have beautiful plans prepared and accepted; but it would be more satisfactory to find that something was going to be done in earnest to give the Irish people at last Science and Art Buildings.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR supported the appeal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman for information. The original Estimate for the purchase of site and erection of New Science and Art Buildings, National Library, &c., was £100,000; but the revised Estimate was £132,000. There had been voted and revoted £21,500; but in spite of these repeated Votes of the House of Commons only £5,294 had been spent. That was £16,000 less than had already been voted, and yet they found that no more than £5,000 was asked for this service during the current year; that was not one-third of the unexpended balance which had been voted over and over again. Could the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) tell the Committee how the matter of the purchase of the site stood, what amount of work was expected to be done during the present financial year, and why, if they could do any work at all in connection with the buildings, they could not do the whole?

MR. COURTNEY said, he should have thought that hon. Members who were acquainted with Ireland were aware of the difficulties in this matter. They knew how the first competition had failed, and how a new competition had been called for, and the whole work had had to be done over again. That simple fact explained the circumstance that sums of money had been voted and not expended. It was necessary they should start *de novo.* They had done so, and a Bill had been passed sanctioning an enlarged scheme. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was, no doubt, right in saying there had been some indication of preference in respect of the recent competition. Plans had been in a sense approved; but it was necessary they should be examined carefully to see whether they could be executed for the amount estimated. If it was found they could be, as he presumed they would be, the plans would be adopted. There would not, however, be much done this year in the way of building, and that was the reason why so small a sum was put down. The plans were still under examination.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) would say whether this £5,000 was intended to cover any expenses in connection with building at all, or whether it was merely to cover the price of the extra ground for the site?

Mr. COURTNEY said, he thought there would be a small surplus which would go towards the preparation of the site. He did not imagine that any part of the sum would go towards building.

Mr. GIBSON said, the explanation of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) was to some extent satisfactory; but it was not very definite. The plans had been practically accepted for some months; indeed, it had been announced in Ireland that they had been accepted. They might, of course, be open to further examination; but in substance this had been a closed matter for some months, and, as far as Dublin and Ireland were concerned, it was regarded that no steps whatever had been taken to carry the plans out. He would like some assurance from the Treasury that they not only meant business, but speedy business. There had been a delay of years in this matter, and it was hoped that in the next few months some earnest effort would be made to proceed with the erection of Science and Art Buildings.

Mr. COURTNEY: We mean to spend this money.

Vote *agreed to.*

(21.) £8,460, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

Mr. Courtney

(22.) £36,416, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

Mr. BOURKE called the attention of the Committee to the very great increase of this Vote. When the late Government left Office, the Vote amounted to £21,900, but it now amounted to £46,416; that was to say, it was a great deal more than double what it was in the time of the late Government. If the Members of the Committee would run their eyes down the various items on page 73, they would see that there was only one item that had not been increased. For instance, the charge in 1881 for China and Japan Legation and Consular Buildings was £6,237, now it was £9,439; China rents then was £2,000, now it was £2,181. He would not weary the Committee by running through all the items; but it was nevertheless the fact that in all but one case there had been a very material increase. The increase in respect to the Berlin Embassy was very large indeed—it amounted to no less a sum than £16,000. He hoped that some explanation would be given with regard to that increase; and he hoped also that explanation would be given with respect to all the other items which made the Vote more than double what it was three or four years ago.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the main increase of the Vote was the £16,000 for the Berlin Embassy. The simple fact was this. The rent paid for the Berlin Embassy was £3,000 a-year, and the lease was approaching its termination. The question arose whether it was better to renew the lease or to get a new Embassy. The difficulty about taking the lease of a building at Berlin was this—that they could not get an absolute secure tenure under lease. It appeared that according to the law of Germany, if the owner of property sold the property, the then lease of the premises was broken. Therefore it was that absolute security could not be obtained by lease, and under those circumstances the Government were strongly advised that it would be a prudent course to purchase a site. That could be effected with the sum of £50,000. It certainly would not be a bad transaction on the part of the Government, because, although they would pay a sum of money down, they would save on the Estimates a rent of no less than £3,000 a-year. The Government had come to the conclusion that it would be wise, instead of renewing the lease of the present Embassy, to obtain a new site, and £16,000 was the charge which would come within the present year. As to the other items of the Vote, he had not in his mind the amounts charged in the time of the late Government, and therefore could not make a comparison between them. The chief increase, however, was in the China and Japan Vote, and that had been due to the opening of the new Treaty ports in China, which involved the purchase of new sites for Consular buildings. There were six Treaty ports.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he could not off-hand give a full list of the Treaty ports; but, as his right hon. Friend (Mr. Bourke) was aware, they had been recently increased, and some had not yet been fully opened. So far as he was aware, the principal increase in the Vote was owing to the increase of certain Consular establishments. He thought his right hon. Friend would find a list of the Treaty ports in the documents before the House.

MR. BOURKE asked if there had been any new Treaty ports opened since 1881?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he believed he was right in stating that some had been opened since 1881; but he did not wish to place all the increase of the Vote upon the opening of the ports. There had been an increase of Consular establishments, and that was a matter quite irrespective of Treaty ports.

MR. BOURKE said, that Consular establishments existed in 1881; but the Vote had increased since the late Government left Office from £21,000 to £46,000. The explanation which the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had given with respect to Berlin was very satisfactory. He (Mr. Bourke) thought it was very true policy on the part of the Foreign Office to purchase Embassies wherever they could. But there was yet a balance of increase. Every single item in the Estimate, from China down to the various cemeteries, had increased, and certainly for an economical Government that was an extraordinary circumstance.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had already stated he had not the Estimates of 1881 with him, and therefore could not make a comparison. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bourke) had said the Vote was more than double. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had accounted for £16,000 in respect of the Berlin Embassy, and another £4,000 was due to the Consular buildings at the new Treaty ports.

MR. BOURKE: Five of those ports existed in 1881.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: But the expenditure had not been incurred. The ports were opened, but in 1881 the expenditure on account of them had not been incurred.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, there was an increase with regard to Vienna. He supposed there were no Treaty ports there?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that that increase was owing to the recent change of Ambassador.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the noble Lord would explain why £400 was charged for Legation buildings at Teheran? As he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) understood, a building at Teheran was presented to the British Government for their Diplomatic Corps. Under those circumstances, how came it that any rent was paid at all?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the £400 was charged for the maintenance of the buildings.

MR. BOURKE understood the noble Lord to say, in respect to Vienna, that some additional expenditure was incurred in consequence of the change of Ambassador. That was all very well in respect to the salary of the Ambassador, but that did not come under this Vote. The increase in the item was something like £2,000. How did this increase in regard to buildings at Vienna occur?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that £2,500 had been spent in refurnishing.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that under the head of China and Japan, of which they had heard so much, he found that of £4,600 voted last year not half was spent. Accordingly, they had a re-Vote of that amount this year. What was the object of the Treasury in asking for these large sums every year if they were not to be spent? The same thing occurred in every Vote, and it was made exceedingly difficult to compare the effective Expenditure in one year with the Estimates they had to decide upon. Of course, it was very easy to compare the Expenditure in the two past years, because they had the Appropriation Accounts of both years; but it was impossible to compare the Estimates of the current year with the Expenditure in past years by reason of these repeated re-Votes. Why was it that the money voted for China and Japan was not spent?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, £2,000 was voted for the purchase of the sites for Consular buildings at the five new Treaty ports. It was found impossible to complete the transaction in the financial year, therefore the money had not been spent. They were most anxious to complete the purchase of the sites, but were unable to do so. They had every reason, however, to believe that during the present financial year it would be possible to complete the purchase. He understood there was a certain limit of time in the Treaty with China, during which the sites could be obtained.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock;

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.—[Bill 124.]

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 16th May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 (Power to appoint revising barrister).

Mr. WARTON proposed to insert, after "time," in page 1, line 9—

> "Whenever satisfied that the Recorder of Dublin is unable from unavoidable absence or illness to discharge his duties with regard to the registration of Parliamentary voters and the revision of the list of jurors."

The object of the Amendment was to provide that a Commissioner should only be appointed when it was absolutely necessary. It was quite clear that the Recorder of Dublin had ample time to discharge his duties; but in case it should happen he had not time, the Amendment provided for the temporary appointment of a person to assist him. The Amendment would have the effect of showing what the real mind of the Government was upon the point.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, line 9, after the word "time," to insert—"Whenever satisfied that the Recorder of Dublin is unable from unavoidable absence or illness to discharge his duties with regard to the registration of Parliamentary voters and the revision of the list of jurors."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. TREVELYAN said, the Government were quite unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, which, if carried, would practically go to prove that the Bill was useless. The contention of the Bill was that the Recorder was at a particular part of the year very greatly overworked. This was not a new story. The Government had been charged, in very plain terms, with having brought in this Bill for political purposes; but he confessed that till the Bill was brought before the House he had not the slightest conception it had the least political bearing. It had been stated that this question was first started during the time the late Government were in Office, and his (Mr. Trevelyan's) object was to prove that that was the fact. The matter was brought before Lord Chancellor Ball, who wrote a letter—a public letter—the gist of which was, that if the duty of revising the list of voters took the Recorder——

Mr. GIBSON asked if the letter referred to were an official letter?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, it was.

Mr. GIBSON: Is it on the file?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, it was on the file. It was written in consequence of another letter, dated the 20th of January, from the Recorder of Dublin, and the gist of the communication made by Lord Chancellor Ball was that if the duty of revision took 20 days, he thought that that was too much for the Recorder, as it seemed to him that it occurred at an inconvenient time of year; but he postponed the further consideration of the question, in order that he might have before him the results of further experience. Since then there had been further experience; and the result of that experience of last year had been that the discharge of the duties was found to occupy the time of the Recorder for a period of 23 working days, instead of 20 or 21, which was the time Lord Chancellor Ball had named as entailing too severe a demand on the Recorder. Hon. Members were probably unaware of the fact that the period during which the work of revising the lists was carried on was a very short one indeed. The work of revision had to be performed between the 9th of September and the 25th of October, and it could not begin before the 9th of September. The regular work of the Recorder took that officer until the end of August, and was begun on the 1st of October, so that the burden of the revision work entirely deprived him of any chance of a summer vacation. Last year the Recorder portioned out his time, in the hope of getting the revision work done in 12 working days; but when he really came to the task, he found that it occupied him 23 days. He ought to begin on the 7th of September to record precedents, and he ought on the 1st of October to begin his judicial work, so that this was running the matter very fine. The Recorder had laid his case before his (Mr. Trevelyan's) right hon. Friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Forster), and so impressed was the right hon. Gentleman with the strength of that case, that the right hon. Gentleman communicated with the Treasury, and obtained their approval to a Bill of the same nature as that which he (Mr. Trevelyan) now had the honour of submitting. That Bill, however, fell through, as many other Bills had done, owing to want of time in which it could be passed; and the consequence was that the case was brought before him (Mr. Trevelyan) and the Under Secretary in the course of last winter. He could only say that he had approached the subject without the least conception that there was anything beyond a desire on the part of the Recorder to be relieved of some difficult work which came upon him at a time when it was exceedingly difficult to perform it. The Irish Government were satisfied that the Recorder had made out a case; and in the belief that he had too much to do at that special period of the year they applied to the Treasury, in order to obtain a renewal of its sanction to the arrangement proposed in the Bill before the House. His (Mr. Trevelyan's) belief still was that this arrangement was one that was due to the Recorder, that it was one which could work nothing but good to the public, and one, also, that was not prompted by any political motive, and would not be the means of giving a political advantage to any Party. As to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, it was one that would, if carried, cut away all the ground on which the Bill was based. At the present moment if the Revising Barrister was ill, or in case of his unavoidable absence, he could, under the Statute, obtain a substitute; and if the Amendment were carried, there would be no use in passing this Bill at all. Believing the Bill, which in reality was a very small matter, although its effect had been very much exaggerated in debate, to be, on the whole, a good Bill, he would ask the Committee to accept the clause as it stood, and refuse to pass the Amendment.

MR. GIBSON said, that when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary talked about the Bill having been very much exaggerated in debate in that House, he seemed to lose sight of the fact that his own speech had contained the first syllable of debate upon it, with the exception of what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). It was true that a good many Notices of opposition to the Bill had been put down by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), who had a keen eye for anything in the shape of a job; but, owing to some cause or other, the original blocks to the Bill had got off the Paper, the second reading had passed without notice, and on a day when it was not expected, the debate which should have taken place upon going into Committee having collapsed, the Speaker was got out of the Chair and the Chairman of Committees into it, the result being that the Bill was now in the stage of Progress, the first speech that had really been made on the Bill having just been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. At the late hour they had just reached, and in the then constitution of the Committee, he did not think he could offer any great amount of opposition to the Bill; but he thought he should be able to demonstrate, in the short space of five minutes, that this measure constituted what was in reality very like a job. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had sought to rest the proposal on the authority of the late

Government; but the fact was that the late Government had never seriously touched the question. He (Mr. Gibson) was in Office under the late Administration as Attorney General, and could state positively that he was never a party to such a proposal; and not only was this the case, but with his sanction no such Bill would ever have been brought into that House. Therefore, to suggest that the late Government were answerable for this measure was to make a suggestion as to which he need not detain the Committee for another moment. What, he asked, were the facts? The Recorder of Dublin was paid a salary of £2,500 a-year, while, with the additions that had been made to his duties, his time was only occupied during 160 days out of the 365 which made up the year, so that this left the Recorder 205 days during which he did not sit. If, however, he were to take the work performed by the Recorder of Dublin, and compare it with that which was done by the County Court Judges in this country, it would at once be seen how absurd it was on the part of the Government to say it was necessary to bring in a measure of relief in the case of a man whose work only extended over 160 days, and who got very good pay for it. He would instance the case of the late Recorder of Belfast, a most respected and honoured Judge, who had only died last week, greatly to the regret of everyone who had the honour and privilege of his acquaintance. That gentleman, who was 77 years of age, was old enough to be the father of the present Recorder of Dublin, and, at the time of his death, was in receipt of a salary of £2,000 a-year. Well, what was the amount of work he had to do as compared with that performed by the Recorder of Dublin? As Recorder of Belfast he sat nearly as often as the Recorder of Dublin; but what, on the other hand, was his revising work? And here it should be remembered that this was a Bill which asked, not that any public service was to be curtailed at a corresponding reduction of pay, but that the Recorder of Dublin was to be relieved of a portion of his present duty at the expense of the State. This, indeed, was the whole case; and although the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had tried to attach responsibility to the late Government, he had been unable to point to any Bill brought in by that Government, or to any other document that could be relied on in support of that position.

Mr. TREVELYAN: There was the letter of Lord Chancellor Ball.

Mr. GIBSON said, he had not the least hesitation in stating that when the eminent and distinguished person who wrote that letter heard that it was regarded as conveying a statement that the Government with which he was connected was party to any such proposal as that contained in the present measure, a very sharp reply would come from him, and the effect of that reply would be that the late Government never proposed anything of the kind. Well, what did the Lord Lieutenant's proposition amount to? Why, that a man who was only occupied during 160 working days would like to be relieved of a portion of the duty which occupied only 23 working days, and would like to be relieved of this while at the same time retaining his full salary of £2,500 a-year, which, it should not be forgotten, was an increase on the former stipend. Originally, the Recorder of Dublin only received £2,000 a-year; but a few years ago the salary was raised to £2,500 a-year, on account partly of the very increase of duty from which it was now not only proposed to relieve him, but to relieve him at his full stipend—this proposal being made by a Government that was pledged to economy. Such was the present position of the Recorder of Dublin. What, he would ask, was the duty of that officer in regard to the Revising Sessions, the work of which, the Committee had been told, took up 23 working days? What was the extent of the list he had to revise which it took 23 days to go through, and of which it was proposed by this Bill that the Recorder should be relieved, not only now, but for all future time, so that any Recorder who might be appointed hereafter would be disgusted to find any alteration or modification of his position introduced by the Government under which he would not be allowed to retain his full salary, although relieved of a portion of his duties? The present Recorder had only to revise an elective list of 5,000 persons; and yet it was proposed by this

Bill that a person in receipt of £2,500 a-year, part of which was an increase of salary made on condition that he was to perform revision duty, should be relieved of that particular part of his work at the expense of the State, although the whole of the work thrown on the Recorder during the entire year only occupied 160 days. Surely this was not a very strong case; in fact, it seemed to him to be a case open to a very substantial amount of observation; and if the matter were under discussion in a full House, and in the presence of those on the Government side who usually acted as checks in favour of economy, it would not stand five minutes' investigation. As he had already said, let them compare the case of the Recorder of Dublin with that of the Recorder of Belfast. The Recorder of Belfast discharged all the duties of a County Court Judge in the great town of Belfast as well as in the great county of Antrim; and, whereas the Recorder of Dublin only revised a list of 5,000 electors, the Recorder of Belfast had to revise a list in the county of Antrim containing over 12,000 names, while, in addition to this, he had also the revision of the electoral roll of the borough of Belfast, which contained 21,000 names. Beyond all this, there were two other boroughs in the county of which he had also to revise the lists—namely, the borough of Carrickfergus, with 1,420 electors, and the borough of Lisburn, with 1,885 electors. In other words, he had lists containing something under 40,000 names to revise, as against 5,000 names on the lists to be gone through by the Recorder of Dublin, the Recorder of Belfast receiving £500 a-year less salary, and neither asking for assistance from the State, nor getting the promise of any; while the Recorder of Dublin, on the other hand, got £500 a-year more than the Recorder of Belfast, and, although only having to revise a list of 5,000 names, requested assistance from the State, which immediately rushed in and gave him the benefit of a Bill, proposing to relieve him of his revision duties, and leaving that officer with his present salary—the highest received by any similar official in Ireland—not only during his tenure of office, but continuing the same arrangement for all future time. He might, if he had time, range through the whole list of County Court Judges in Ireland, and show a similar condition of things to that which he had already pointed out in the comparison made between the Recorders of Dublin and Belfast. The Recorder of Cork received a salary of £2,000 a-year, and revised the lists for the greater portion of the county of Cork—one of the largest counties in Ireland—as well as for the city of Cork, which was one of the largest boroughs in Ireland. He also dealt with the lists of two subsidiary boroughs. The Bill, nevertheless, left the Recorder of Cork without any relief. With regard to the Recorder of Dublin, personally, he had no wish to say one word, except that he knew him to be a most excellent and able lawyer, and that he was a friend of his own. He had known that gentleman during the greater part of his (Mr. Gibson's) professional life, and could say that, in his opinion, there was no more high-minded, upright, or honourable man to be found throughout the whole of Ireland. Indeed, he would go further, and say that if he had the honour and privilege of being in the position occupied by that gentleman, he should, in all probability, do exactly what he had done. There were very few who would not like to retain their present emoluments, and, if possible, increase them, while, at the same time, side by side with this state of things in regard to income, they would be glad to see their duties diminished. This, after all, was only human nature, and human nature would be human nature even in the case of the best Irishmen that ever lived. These few observations had been conceived in a candid spirit, and without the slightest want of respect or regard for his valued friend the Recorder of Dublin. He could not help being struck by the painful emotions expressed by the countenance of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), which indicated, at the moment he (Mr. Gibson) was speaking, something in the nature of agony and anguish. He should not be at all surprised to find that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was working out some mode of escape from the subsequent stages of the Bill. He did not, of course, know whether this really was the case; but he had no doubt that, by the few statements he had ventured to make, he had brought conviction clearly home to the mind of the hon. Gentleman. It might be the case that the hon. Gentleman had been convinced before; at any rate, it was not for him (Mr. Gibson) to assume to be the discoverer of what might reside within the mind of the Secretary to the Treasury; nevertheless, he gave the hon. Gentleman credit for having ingenuity and wit enough, if he would only set about it, to circumvent a transaction which had very correctly been denominated "a job" by his hon. and learned Friend who had moved the Amendment.

Mr. GRAY said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had with perfect accuracy described the Recorder of Dublin as a most excellent gentleman. No one who had the pleasure of the Recorder's acquaintance would dispute that fact; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman, although he had spoken of the Recorder of Dublin as one whom he had known for a long period, had not said anything with reference to the capacity of the learned gentleman in the transaction of his official duties. In not having discussed that question the right hon. and learned Gentleman had shown his customary prudence. There were exceptions to every rule, and he thought the Recorder of Dublin might be regarded as one of those exceptions. He should not like to say anything that would give pain to the Recorder of Dublin, who was a gentleman for whom he entertained all due respect. Neither would he discuss the question as to whether a man of ordinary capacity, occupying the position of a high legal functionary, had his time sufficiently employed by discharging duties which filled up 160 working days; but he did happen to know that among the people of Dublin there was, with reference to the manner in which the duties were at present performed by the Recorder of that city, a wide-spread feeling of discontent at the great delay which occurred, and the consequent trouble and worry experienced by those who had occasion to attend his Court. The Recorder was in the habit of entering into long and discursive dissertations upon questions which had in reality very little to do with the business before him, and in this way the suitors in his Court were so wearied by the amount of trouble and inconvenience they were put to, and the loss of time they incurred, that many of those who would otherwise be glad to seek the Recorder's Court for the recovery of small debts, which was the simple function of that Court, were constantly, to his (Mr. Gray's) own knowledge, as well as that of every man in Dublin, obliged either to abandon their claims, or to take a compromise, rather than subject themselves to the dilatory process which attended the enforcement of their demands. It had been somewhat amusing to witness the extreme anxiety of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin at the prospect of the passage of this Bill, and the extreme tenacity with which he had defended the public purse. He (Mr. Gray) was driven to the conclusion that the right hon. and learned Gentleman believed there was something in the Bill beyond what applied to the mere discharge of the business devolving on the Recorder of Dublin. It might be that one of the results of the measure, should it be passed, would be that the duties appertaining to the revision of the list of voters would be better and more efficiently and properly discharged than was the case at present; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not suggested nor hinted that whoever might be appointed to perform these duties—and he (Mr. Gray) had no idea who would have the appointment—would not discharge the duties in a satisfactory manner. One of the questions they ought now to consider was whether the Recorder was able to discharge the duties in a satisfactory manner. He (Mr. Gray) asserted that that officer did not so discharge them. Although the right hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to have carried conviction to his own mind, it did not seem to him (Mr. Gray) that he had touched the real argument of the Chief Secretary in regard to this question. If they were to ask the Recorder to discharge the duties of the Revision Court during a period not covered by his 160 working days, he could agree with the suggestion that to require that officer to work for 23 days more would not be unreasonable; but the point made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was that the Recorder had to perform the duties of revision during a portion of the period in which he was required to discharge the duties of the Recorder's Court. He did not think that any hon. Member who had an intimate knowledge of Dublin affairs would contradict him in the statement he had made, that widespread discontent existed among the traders of that city owing to the delay and inconvenience experienced by those who had to transact business in the Recorder's Court. If the Recorder were to be relieved of the duties of the Revision Court which he now had to discharge during the period he was occupied in performing his ordinary work as Recorder, it would be a great boon to the traders of Dublin, because the Recorder of that city had to transact business which in England was transacted in the Small Debts Courts. They had not yet got in Dublin the Small Debts Court, which was one of the things the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had promised to take into consideration, at the time he had recognized the necessity of a better system of small debts collection in Dublin, though it would seem that he was determined that that promise should not be redeemed. It was admitted on all sides that the means of obtaining payment of small debts in Dublin at the present moment were very unsatisfactory to the trading community. The decisions of the Recorder frequently failed to give satisfaction to either party, although, as he had already stated, he fully recognized the fact that personally the Recorder was a most excellent gentleman. The appointment of Law Adviser at the Castle was the usual and natural step to that of Solicitor General and Attorney General for Ireland. The Recorder of Dublin, however, had been quietly shelved because the Government could not so appoint him. It was a fact that he was a most painstaking and competent Recorder, the duties of which office were quite enough to occupy his attention, and it would be a great relief to the trading community in Dublin if he were required to confine himself to those particular functions which he discharged to the satisfaction of the public.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, there appeared to be a desire on the part of the Committee to hear from the Secretary to the Treasury what explanation he had to offer of what appeared to be a personal matter. It would seem that this gentleman, finding himself unable to discharge the duties of Revising Barrister for Dublin and also of the Recordership required an Act of Parliament to relieve him from the discharge of his statutory duties. One would have supposed that the Treasury would have told him to surrender £200 a year of his salary for the purpose of paying someone else to do the work. He thought it was incumbent on the Secretary to the Treasury to say that that arrangement had the sanction of the Treasury, and that they saw no other way out of the difficulty.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought there was something suspicious in the circumstance that the Conservative Party appeared as defenders of economy. He ventured to say that the ground of economy put forward by the right hon. Gentleman was a mere pretext.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members not being present,

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair:—House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Southampton County (Southern Division), *v.* Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu Scott, Manor of Northstead, in the county of York.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [June 5] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) (City and County of Bristol, and others) * [239]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) (Bournemouth, and others) * [240]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) (Accrington, and others) * [241].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Dundalk Waterworks) * [223]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (the Labourers Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * [219]; Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) * [226]; Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) * [229]; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [186].

QUESTIONS.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—FOOD ADULTERATION.

Mr. DUCKHAM asked Mr. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he can now inform the House the result of his inquiry (as promised on the 31st of March and again on the 1st of May) into the correctness of the following Report of the Committee of the New York Senate respecting the Adulteration of Dairy Products, as published in *The Standard* of the 24th of March—

> "Of thirty samples of butter two-thirds were only remotely traceable to milk. The refuse fat of pigs and bullocks was the chief and most savoury ingredient, but often spoiled greases were used which had been deoderised by nitric acid and sulphuric acid, of a strength sufficient to rot a workman's cowhide boots, to cause the finger-nails to fall off, and induce various lingering diseases. The material was also found to contain ingredients fatal to infants. The doctors upon oath declared that the consumption of this compound had a distinct bearing upon the death rate. The Committee advises the total prohibition of the manufacture of oleomargarine;"

whether it is correct that the Senate of New York has recently passed a Bill prohibiting the manufacture, sale, or importation of oleomargarine; and, whether, seeing that an enormous quantity of oleomargarine and cheese is brought into this Country from the United States, whether he will cause an inquiry to be instituted into the correctness of those reports, in order that the public in this Country may be assured that such deleterious food may not be sold to them?

Mr. DODSON: I have made inquiries into this subject, and their result indicates that various compounds, some of them containing very obnoxious ingredients, have been manufactured and sold as butter in the State of New York. The Legislature of the State considered the matter so serious that it has quite recently passed an Act prohibiting the manufacture or sale of adulterated butter or cheese. If the hon. Member will move for the Correspondence I shall be happy to give it.

Mr. DUCKHAM: Then, Sir, I beg to move for the Correspondence.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I wish to ask whether any action was taken by the Board of Trade? When I called attention to this subject three years ago, the President of the Board of Trade stated that directions would be given to the Inspectors under the Food Adulteration Act to inquire into the importation of adulterated butter and butter compounds. I wish to know whether any steps were taken in pursuance of that assurance, and what results were obtained?

Mr. DODSON: That Question ought to be addressed to the President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. BIGGAR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that large quantities of butter are daily imported from France and Holland of the same description as that referred to in the hon. Member's Question; and is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to take steps to prohibit this adulterated stuff entering this country?

Mr. DODSON: I am not aware that butter of the quality referred to by the hon. Member is imported from France and Holland. I have no power in regard to the sale of butter in this country.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—WEXFORD GAOL—CASE OF EDWARD MALONE.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Small) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that upon the occasion of Edward Malone, lately a prisoner in Wexford Gaol under the Prevention of Crimes Act, being brought before the governor of the gaol, charged by a warder with not having teased a sufficient quantity of oakum, the governor, referring to the offence for which Malone was imprisoned, said—

> "With your shouting and your land leagueing you were sent here to be punished, and I will punish you;"

and thereupon sentenced him to two days on bread and water, a punishment which was subsequently disapproved of and remitted by the medical officer of the gaol; and, whether it is a violation of the duty of the governor to be influenced by the nature of the offence of which a prisoner has been convicted?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Governor of the prison states that he has no recollection of using the words alleged; but that he frequently warns prisoners who are brought before him for idleness that if they are punished it will be through their own fault. In the case of Malone, he was reported five times for idleness, and on each occasion let off with a caution. For the sixth offence he was ordered bread and water for two days; but, as required by the regulations, was first brought before the doctor who reports that, finding him not very robust he excused him from hard labour, and he was not punished at all. The Governor of the prison denies that either he or any officer of the prison is influenced in the treatment of prisoners by any consideration as to the nature of the offence. It would certainly be a violation of duty if they were so influenced.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—CASE OF THOMAS SINNOTT.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. SMALL) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has yet received any information from the Land Commission as to the reason why Sub-Commissioners Mr. Rice and Mr. Barry did not inspect the farm of Thomas Sinnott, at Duncormack, before fixing a judicial rent on it?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission, consisting of Messrs. Rice and Barry, fixed the judicial rent of Thomas Sinnott, after hearing evidence, without visiting the holding, being of opinion that a personal inspection of the lands was not necessary to enable them to arrive at a just decision.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—NATIVE HOSTILITIES.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any confirmation of the telegram from South Africa, to the effect that Mr. Osborn, the British Resident, has been defeated by Dabulamanzi, assisted by Boer riflemen, and that Captain Mansel has been killed?

MR. COURTNEY: In the absence of my hon. Friend (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) I will answer the Question. This rumour appears to be unfounded. A telegram has been received giving later news of Mr. Osborn's movements inconsistent with this rumour.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RUMOURED ADVANCE OF THE MAHDI TO KHARTOUM.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received any confirmation of the statement that the Mahdi has advanced to Khartoum, and that his adherents are in possession of Abu Hamed and of the wells at Murad; what is the position of Berber at the present time; and, whether any recent intelligence has been received from Sir William Hewett?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The rumour that the Mahdi has gone to Khartoum has reached Her Majesty's Government; but they have no confirmation of it. The rebels are said to be in force at Abu Hamad; but though they are still to the east of Murad, Major Kitchener has reason to believe that the desert will soon be clear of them, and he proposes to go there himself. This news is dated yesterday. Berber is said to be still invested; but the accounts vary, some representing it as closely besieged, others giving an opposite account. The news of Admiral Hewett is satisfactory. A message from him was received at Massowah on the 26th ultimo, dated the 18th from Adowa, the capital of the King of Abyssinia. The mission had been well received, but the King's arrival had been delayed owing to his illness. He was expected about the 20th. The Admiral thought the negotiations with him would be successful, and that he will be able to arrange with him for the relief of Kassala.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Am I to understand the noble Lord to say that what he has read from Major Kitchener is of more recent date than what appeared in the morning papers of yesterday, with regard to which he required Notice? Is that statement correct? That portion of Major Kitchener's Report, of which the noble Lord, strange to say, was ignorant, was to the effect that the Mahdi was reported to have gone to Khartoum or its neighbourhood, and that the fall of that place was shortly expected. Did Major Kitchener, in the Report now referred to by the noble Lord, corroborate or qualify that statement?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The account I have just read was received later. It arrived at the Foreign Office at the same moment as the right hon. Gentleman was putting a Question on this subject yesterday. I have, therefore, no doubt it was of later date, but I have not the telegram here.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The noble Lord will, perhaps, remember that we have had no authentic communication with Berber for a long time, and I would ask him whether, from his reply, we are to understand that the Governor of Berber and a portion of the garrison are still holding out?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Certainly. The accounts which we have at the Foreign Office would lead us to suppose that they are holding out.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Is the Murad mentioned in the Question the Murad 400 miles north of Korosko?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; the hon. Member correctly describes it. I understand it to be a place situated between Abu Hamad and Korosko, and about half-way from each.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he would state to the House what is the date of the last communication received from General Gordon; have the Government received tidings that any messenger has succeeded in carrying their despatch of 23rd April to Khartoum; and, what is the date of the last despatch sent to General Gordon?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The date of the last communication from General Gordon, as I have already stated, was April 10. On the 22nd of May, Mr. Egerton telegraphed that the Mudir of Dongola thought a messenger to Gordon had entered Khartoum, but could not leave it. The date of the last despatch to General Gordon from Cairo is May 21st.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: Have Her Majesty's Government any information as to the report that General Gordon has left Khartoum?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No; the report which appeared in the papers this morning has not been received at the Foreign Office.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: I have not received any answer to the Question I have put—Whether Major Kitchener in his later Report qualifies in any way the statement made in the previous Report that the fall of Khartoum is shortly expected?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In the telegram to which the right hon. Gentleman refers there is no allusion to the subject at all. The right hon. Gentleman alluded yesterday and to-day to the report which he has read in the papers, purporting to give an account which had arrived at Cairo from Major Kitchener. I cannot undertake, without verifying each one of the statements which, according to the right hon. Gentleman, is contained in the telegram, to assume the accuracy of every statement contained in the report. If the right hon. Gentleman wishes for information upon any specific point, I shall be perfectly willing to give the information if he will put a Question on the Paper, and call my attention to the specific points.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: Events pass so rapidly that it is absurd to give Notice. But what I want to know is whether the so-called Report of Major Kitchener which appeared in yesterday's papers is authentic?

Mr. GIBSON: With reference to the answer to my Question, I understood the noble Lord to say that he had no means of knowing whether the Government despatch of the 23rd of April had reached Khartoum beyond the statement, not of a very clear character, contained in the despatch of the 22nd of May. Are we to understand that the date of the last despatch sent by the Government to General Gordon was the 21st of May?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: What I said was that the day on which it was sent was the 21st of May, and that is the important question. Naturally it would be a matter of calculating days, not from the date of the actual despatch, but from the day the messenger started.

Mr. GIBSON: I assume that the despatch of the Government on the 21st of May was the first despatch sent after the 23rd of April. Is that so, or was there any intervening despatch; and can the noble Lord say whether the despatch sent on the 21st of May qualified or altered in any way the previous despatch of the 23rd of April; and, if so, in what particulars? Will the noble Lord be in a position to state on Monday what was the effect of the despatch of the 21st of May?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Part of the Question I am quite willing to answer now; in fact, I have answered it already. I stated, two days before the House rose, that a further message had been sent to General Gordon; but I cannot undertake to give a reply as to its purport and contents without communicating with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

MR. GIBSON: I beg to give Notice that I shall put a Question on the Paper for Monday in reference to this subject.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I do not wish the noble Lord to misunderstand me, or the noble Lord to be misunderstood by the House. What I desire to know is, whether the Government have ascertained that the document which appeared in yesterday's papers, purporting to be an extract from a Report made by Major Kitchener in his official capacity, is a correct version or not; and I would further ask whether the Report, of which that purports to be a condensation, has reached the Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I quite understand the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, and I only wish to explain that my reason for not answering it, except upon Notice, is that the report which has appeared in the papers touches upon such a very great number of questions, and I think I should only be running the risk of misleading the House if I was to enter upon a reply to those questions in a general way, instead of on particular points upon which the right hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members might be interested.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I admit the reasonableness of that, and I confine myself to asking the noble Lord—"Yes or No," has the Report reached the Government, an extract from which appeared in yesterday's newspapers?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already stated that a Report from Major Kitchener has reached the Government. I did not understand that the right hon. Gentleman was under any doubt upon that subject, or else I would at once have made it clear.

MR. J. LOWTHER: The noble Lord misunderstands me. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am perfectly in Order. What I wish to know is, whether the report which appeared in the newspapers tallied, in its main features, with the Report which had reached the Government; in other words, whether the report sent by Reuter's Agency is practically accurate?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I really cannot answer that Question, except upon Notice, because the right hon. Gentleman is asking me to state off-hand, what I think it would be a rash thing to state, as to whether a certain report which has appeared in the newspapers tallies in its main particulars with the Report to which I have alluded. Naturally, I should like to give full and accurate information when I speak upon this subject, and I cannot undertake to answer the Question of the right hon. Gentleman off-hand.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I wish to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information as to the latest news from Suakin, and whether it is true, as reported in the newspapers, that an attack upon Suakin is imminent within the next few days? I should also like to know what troops are there, and whether a detachment of Marines has been despatched to Suakin? Considering the anxiety of many persons who have friends in that place at present, I must offer this as an excuse for asking the Question without Notice.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The accounts received by the Government in regard to Suakin do substantially tally with what has appeared in the newspapers, which may be taken as representing what has occurred there. The attacks do not seem to be of a very serious character, and they have been apparently easily repulsed by the Egyptian troops without assistance of any other kind whatever.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: The news in to-day's papers seems to point to a more formidable attack as imminent. Have Marines been despatched?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think the Question with regard to the Marines should be put to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty. The Question as to a further attack upon Suakin may be answered thus. There is apparently a probability of a renewal of the same kind of attacks which have already taken place. It is, of course, quite impossible to say what exact force may be used in the attack, because these are matters upon which the Foreign Office is not sufficiently informed.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: It would be satisfactory to the House if the Secretary of State for War would state what is the strength of the garrison at Souakin, and whether any troops have been despatched there?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I cannot give an answer to that Question without Notice. The garrison at Suakin now consists of Egyptian troops and a force of Marines.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: With English officers?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Marines, of course, have English officers.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: And the Egyptian troops?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: And the Egyptian troops.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—PAYMENT OF WAGES.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will consent to give a Return of the number of half sovereigns weekly paid in wages at Her Majesty's dockyards and Government establishments both at home and abroad, as well as of the number of half sovereigns paid in wages to the Army, Navy, and Marines on Foreign stations?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I doubt whether it would be possible to obtain the information sought by the hon. Gentleman, and, at best, only a rough estimate could be made; but I will make inquiries.

IRISH LAND COURT (APPEALS)—SITTINGS AT LIFFORD.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that in the Land Court at Lifford Irish-speaking applicants recently had their cases adjourned for want of an interpreter; and, whether the Government propose to allow this delay of justice to the subject to result in increased costs to the parties?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that at a recent sitting of their Court at Lifford for the hearing of appeals, there was an unavoidable adjournment of some case or cases for one day in order to procure the services of an interpreter. The interpreter usually employed in Court was not there when the cases were called on, and it was necessary to send to a considerable distance for him.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the Court was not responsible for the delay?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that it was one of those contingencies which was not foreseen; and I am very sorry that it happened.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "NISERO."

Mr. STOREY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he had any further news respecting the men of the *Nisero*, and whether any steps had been taken towards their release?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No further information has been received since the House separated; but the negotiations have been proceeding, and I propose on Monday to lay further Correspondence on the subject on the Table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL.—[Bill 186.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [26th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. J. G. Hubbard.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he was of opinion that this Bill was a most modest demand on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to a very great question, for all that he asked to be empowered to do was to issue certain Stocks for the purpose of making bargains with the holders of Three per Cents. It was, he thought, abundantly clear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not pay off these Three per Cent Stocks without another Act of Parliament. He wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) to the Act of 1870. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech referred to a variety of topics of ancient history; but the real question they had to consider was the state of the law at present, and not the state of the law a long time ago. It appeared to him to be so plain that Three per Cents Stock were redeemable by Act of Parliament that he was at a loss to understand how the right hon. Gentleman opposite could be so puzzled on this matter. [MR. HUBBARD: No, no.] The right hon. Gentleman interpreted the Act of Parliament in a most extraordinary manner. It provided that "all the Annuities mentioned in the Schedule are to be redeemable at the times mentioned in the Schedule," and it stated that they were to be redeemable after the passing of the Act. He could not understand, therefore, the difficulty as to the question of redemption.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD called the hon. Member's attention to the fact that there was a provision for one year's notice, and it was on that provision that the whole contention rested.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he had never said that the Stock should be paid off without notice. The Funds were made redeemable by Act of Parliament in certain ways which were mentioned. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman opposite when he said the redemption of the Stock would be unpopular. That was a different question altogether; but when he said it was illegal and not according to Act of Parliament, he confessed that either his own head or that of the right hon. Gentleman must be screwed on the wrong way. Whether the plan now proposed was a prudent one was altogether another question, but it was obvious that they could not object to the Bill because it treated the Funds as a redeemable Stock. He was quite aware that in many quarters the proposition was unpopular. It was unpopular with trustees because it would give them trouble; it was also unpopular with those who received incomes from the Funds because it would reduce their incomes, and likewise with many people who feared that in future they would get less for their savings. But he denied that that was a reason why the House should not endeavour to reduce the interest on the Debt if they possibly could. As the protectors of the taxpayer it was their duty to take care of him and to get money at a cheaper rate if they could. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hubbard) had said something about the hardship which that would involve. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say to the fundholder—"If you do not take this offer I may have to pay you your money;" but if the man received his £100, that could scarcely be considered any hardship, though it might possibly be awkward for him. The number of the fundholders as compared with the whole nation was small. He had a Return of the number of accounts in the Bank of England, and he found that in the whole of the Three per Cents there were only 180,000 accounts. Of course, many of these were joint accounts in which more than one person might be interested; but it was a remarkable fact that out of those 180,000 accounts nearly 150,000 were under £100 a-year. Another curious thing was, that there were only 216 accounts over £4,000 a-year. Those figures were not an absolute indication of the number of persons interested, because the Paymaster General of the Court of Chancery had one account, the Savings Banks had one account, and there was one account for charitable trusts; but it must be admitted that the taxpayers were the multitude and the fundholders a comparatively small number of persons. The other day he was surprised to hear a man of great experience in finance say he objected to that reduction because it did not matter much what interest was payable on the Funds; that the taxpayers and the fundholders were all one family and one nation; so that if the taxpayer paid more the fundholder received it, and it did not much matter. That was so extraordinary and so absurd an argument that he hardly knew how to meet it. It amounted to this—that even if they paid 5 per cent it was of no consequence, because they were all one family. Ever since the Debt had existed there had been repeated reductions made in the interest; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer now only proposed to continue that process. So much for the principle of the measure; but when he came to the details, the difficulty connected with the matter was far greater. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to create two Stocks —a Two-and-Three-Quarter and a Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock—and he proposed in both cases to make an offer that involved an increase of the capital of the Debt. Now, he was much puzzled to know why they should increase the capital of the Debt. It would be a far simpler business to issue a Two-and-Three-quarter per Cent Stock at par, which, if the right hon. Gentleman was right in his calculations, would float. The right hon. Gentleman said that if irredeemable the Three per Cent Stock would be worth 111; the present price of the Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock was 93, and the middle point between them was 102. According to the right hon. Gentleman's own showing, a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock would be worth 102 at this moment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told them the other day that the saving on a Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, giving £108 of Stock to the fundholder, or £100 of Three per Cents, would be £1,337,000, after allowing £500,000 a year for a Sinking Fund to cover the additional £8 in 51 years. He did not think it was quite fair to take the Sinking Fund for 50 years to test the operation. The saving from a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock, issued at par without any Sinking Fund, would be £1,530,000 at once. What would be the result at the end of 20 years if the Sinking Fund was made for 20 years to cover the 8 per cent—or £49,000,000 of fresh Stock—upon the £612,000,000? Supposing they took all the Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock at 108, it would require a Sinking Fund as large as the whole annual saving to cover the 8 per cent premium in 20 years. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would have absolutely done nothing, and would gain nothing, unless he made his Sinking Fund extend to 50 years. And he failed to see why it should be for 50 years. If they issued a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock at par the saving would in 20 years be more than £30,000,000. It would, he thought, be far better to issue a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock at par without any Sinking Fund. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he could not issue such Stock at par, but must hold out some further advantage, he would consider what the right hon. Gentleman said with the utmost respect; but he submitted that it would be far simpler or intelligible and more profitable to the present generation of taxpayers to issue a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock at par. The objections to increasing the capital of the Debt had been well stated in a pamphlet which Mr. Hamilton published in 1818, and which was republished by Lord Overstone, in which the whole doctrine of a Sinking Fund was combated, and the position of the National Debt was described. Mr. Hamilton had used these remarkable words—

> "If the money were never to be paid, it would be proper to borrow in the manner in which money could be raised at the least interest, as the capital in that case would be merely nominal. But under such a view the lenders would not accept of less interest in one fund than another. . . . The only inducement which the lenders can have for preferring a 3 per cent capital yielding a less interest is the prospect of ultimate gain by the rise of the funds. This he expects will more than recompense the present loss he sustains by accepting any inferior interest. If he be right in his expectation the public is a loser; and the lender in this case is more likely to conjecture right than the financier. On the whole, we are of opinion that the capital funded should never exceed the sum raised."

He would vote for the second reading of this Bill, because he thought that the principle of it was a sound one; but as to the details of it he doubted whether it was a wise or right thing to increase capital. How would this affect the operation of last year? Last year they had entered upon an elaborate scheme for cancelling a large amount of the Debt, and he supposed that the result would be that the conclusion of that operation would be deferred, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not be able to get through it at anything like the rate which he had expected. He did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained this in his speech. Another point upon which he felt a little troubled was the question of small holders of Stock. A man died and left an annuity to be paid to an old servant; the whole estate was divided, and nothing was left but this annuity going on for some years. Then down came the Chancellor of the Exchequer and practically imposed a heavy Income Tax upon this annuity. Such cases of annuities were very common. Another case was where a definite amount of Stock was left in the hands of trustees with directions to pay the income. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would, perhaps, say that the trustee could change the investment if he liked, because under recent Acts of Parliament a trustee might sell out and buy certain other Stock. He would have liked, however, to have seen the power of trustees made more clear, so that everyone might know that they could obtain some other investment. He differed, therefore, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to some of the details of his proposal, although he thought that a great deal of dust had been thrown in their eyes about the hardships and difficulties that would result from the action of this Bill. He thought that greater licence should be given to trustees who held small amounts of Stock for others. The fact that they were proposing to borrow at under 3 per cent showed how high the credit of the country had become; but he thought that the mode of doing so was certainly a matter of great importance, and he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give some consideration to the points which he had suggested.

Mr. SALT said, he thought that this was not a question in which the term "on this side of the House" or "that side" should be heard, because the national credit and the national finance were matters of equal importance to all Members, whether on the Government or the Opposition side of the House. Whatever criticism, therefore, he wished to offer on the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be offered in the most friendly spirit. He had considered very carefully to what length he could travel along with the right hon. Gentleman in his proposals. In the first place, he cordially agreed with him; and he thought that everyone who was interested in finance must agree that when it was possible to largely reduce the interest on the Debt it should be done. On that point there could not be two opinions. The questions which they had to consider with the utmost attention were the time, the opportunity, and the method of doing it. He fully agreed also with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he had the power to redeem the Debt. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hubbard) had never said there was not power by Act of Parliament to redeem the Debt; but the point at issue was what that power exactly was. Statutory power to redeem the Debt was very fully pointed out by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) as existing in the Schedule of the Act of 1870. What, however, had struck him (Mr. Salt) very forcibly in the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to which he thought attention had not been called, was the enormous magnitude of the financial operation which the right hon. Gentleman was proposing. He did not believe that anyone had yet grasped the prodigious idea of the right hon. Gentleman to deliberately transfer the whole of the Three per Cents into a Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he did not expect in the first instance to convert the whole of the £600,000,000 with which he proposed to deal, but that he did propose to do it by a course of operations. He also said that the profit to be derived by the State would be £1,800,000, or, allowing for Terminable Annuities, £1,310,000 a-year; and, lastly, the right hon. Gentleman said that if there was any reluctance to exchange to Two-and-a-Half per Cent or Two-and-Three-Quarters, he had some means by which he could—he would not say compel—but encourage them to do so. Therefore, he was correct in endeavouring to impress on the mind of the House and of the country that this was to be a financial operation of the greatest magnitude that the world had ever seen. Then how was this vast operation to be carried out? If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in a position to say—"I am ready to carry this out by one single operation; I will give you either New Stock or cash," all very well; but it was not so. This tremendous operation was not a simple and clean operation of which they knew the beginning and could see the end. They could see the beginning very well; but he defied anybody to say what the ending would be, and that seemed to be the really weak point of the proposal. The Chancellor of the Exchequer offered to the various holders of Three per Cent Stocks an exchange either of Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cent Stock at 102, or Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock at 108. A calculation had been made that if a holder of Three per Cents took the Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cent Stock he would get in future instead of 3 per cent £2 16*s.* 1*d.* per cent, while if he took the Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock he would receive £2 14*s.* per cent. He could not see what the inducement was to take £2 16*s.* 1*d.* or £2 14*s.* for 3 per cent. There might be a reason, but it did not appear on the surface. The next part of the operation was founded on the expectation that this course would be followed by a very great rise in the value of Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, and that those who did not accept the first offer of £2 16*s.* or £2 14*s.* per cent per annum would hereafter be offered something less. But here came the question—they were dealing not with the present but the future, and assuming that the price of these Stocks would be maintained in the future. In 1866 the price of Three per Cent Stock was as low as 84⅝, and its highest price during that year was 90⅝; and it was by no means impossible that in 1886, though he trusted it might not be the case, the Funds might fall as low as they did in 1866. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, was, therefore, founding his scheme, not merely on the past, but on the future, and in relying upon the fact that in two years' time the Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock would stand at par, he was making an assumption which might turn out unfounded, and he ought to explain how he would deal with the case which would arise if the Stock fell to 80. In his (Mr. Salt's) opinion, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman violated the first principle of great financial operations, inasmuch as it not only dealt with the present, but it speculated as to the future. There had been great financial operations in the past, and it appeared to him they might well form a precedent for the operation the Chancellor of the Exchequer was now proposing. The new Three per Cent Stock it was well known originated in this way. In 1822 the Navy Five per Cents were converted into Stock, which was called New Four per Cents; in 1830 the New Four per Cents were converted into Three-and-a-Half per Cents; at that time the holders of Stock were offered either £70 of Stock at 5 per cent, or £100 of Stock at 3½ per cent. In 1844 the same Stock was again dealt with, the holders were offered either a New Three-and-a-Quarter per Cent Stock or to be paid off at par, and Stock to the amount of £103,000 was paid off. Now, that was a complete and distinct operation, and it saved the country in interest something like £600,000 per annum. The question of the power of redemption had occupied considerable attention. The power of the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose upon the scheme of the Act of 1870, which he (Mr. Salt) need not read. Under the Schedule there were four things to be done, and, of course, in saying this, he was speaking of Consols and Reduced; because the New Three per Cents stood upon a different footing, and might be redeemed at any time. According to the Schedule of 1870, 12 months' notice must be given of redemption; secondly, the redemption must be made in sums of not less than £500,000 at a time; thirdly, an Act of Parliament must be passed in order to regulate the method in which the payment was to be made; and, fourthly, all the arrears of Annuities must be paid off. When those conditions had been properly and fully satisfied, the Capital Stock in regard to which the transactions had taken place ceased to exist as part of the National Debt. The introduction of the Proviso respecting repayment in sums of not less than £500,000 was an historical curiosity. The reason, as it appeared to him, why this £500,000 was put in as a limitation in the Act of George I. was that they should not harass the stockholders until sufficient money was ready to make substantial repayment. That was his explanation. But how did it bear on the question now? It was perfectly true that the Act of George I. had been repealed. It was repealed by a subsequent Act; but in the Schedule of the Act of 1870 there was a clear and distinct reference, at all events, to the principle of that Act; and if they were to take legal opinion, he thought it would be found that they must construe the Act of 1870 with reference to previous Acts, including the Act of George I. This fact bore very much on the present question, because they ought to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when dealing with a matter of such enormous magnitude, concerning not only the interests of individuals, but also the national funds and credit, to bear in mind the importance of understanding the tenour of the Acts of Parliament relating to the subject. He hoped he had not discussed the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman in any unfriendly spirit; he should have been glad to accept them from first to last; but he was bound to say that he regarded with the greatest anxiety—even some alarm—a proposal of such magnitude, which would not depend on the arrangements of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, but on future chances of financial prosperity. There were also to be considered some matters of detail; Often in business details were of the highest importance. Now, he wanted to know why Two and Three-Quarters per Cent Stock was created at all. There must be some reason, and they ought to have the reason. There was a very serious objection to it. The whole tenour of our financial system during the past 50 years had been wisely, prudently, and economically tending in the direction of simplicity. Why should that simplicity be destroyed by the creation of two Stocks when one would suffice? He did not quite see the advantage, but he saw the danger of Two and Three-Quarter per Cent Stocks. However carefully the operation might be carried out, it might be a failure. The matter was, at any rate, one on which the House had a right to ask for explanation. One of the great causes of the value of Consols was that in this country, which was the great financial centre of the world, there should be an immense amount of Stock in which everybody could deal, and to which they could always trust, for purposes of purchase and sale, so that operations of magnitude might be carried on without any difficulty. In considering the effect of this proposal, they must be careful not to create too many little Stocks, and thus reduce the amount of the great leading Stock, so as to make it lose its character of magnitude and negotiability. Again, they must, as prudent men, face the question—what was to be done in certain eventualities, such as would arise when the Three per Cents were totally converted to Two and a-Half? What was to be done with the savings banks under these circumstances? The savings banks' investments amounted in the whole to about £80,000,000, of which £44,000,000 belonged to the old savings banks, and £36,000,000 to those of the Post Office. In many cases, the old savings banks allowed 2½ per cent, others 2¾, and others 3 per cent. These banks were bound to invest. How were the old savings banks to be dealt with when they could not invest in the Three per Cents, but must invest in the Two and a-Half per Cents, and so would have no margin for expenses? As far as the Post Office Savings Banks were concerned, he was of opinion that the position of the depositors in those banks would be quite peculiar, in that they would have a great advantage over persons who invested in the funds outside, for the reason that persons depositing, say, £200 in the Post Office Savings Bank must, on withdrawing their deposits, be paid at par, no matter what the price of Consols might be; but the investor outside accepted the price current at the time of the transaction. The case, therefore, would be that the Government, besides paying 2½ per cent, would be giving a number of advantages afforded by the facilities offered by the Post Office. He was anxious to know whether the interest on the Post Office deposits was to be reduced, and also where the money was to come from for the management of the Post Office Savings Banks? Information ought also to be given as to how the whole system of Government Assurances and Annuities was to be dealt with. The whole of the present calculation must, of necessity, be altered when the Three per Cents were reduced to Two and a-Half. Again, this alteration must, of necessity, affect the scheme of Terminable Annuities, which had been introduced for the purpose of reducing the Debt. Again, how were the investments in the Three per Cent Stock, held largely by the great Corporations and the Charity Trusts, to be dealt with? In these cases the interest had been calculated to meet particular annuities and allowances agreed upon from year to year. He did not say this was an insuperable difficulty; but he failed to see how they were to deal with these cases in which large sums were invested by Corporations holding funds not on their own account, but for the benefit of many poor and deserving people throughout the Kingdom? And, lastly, he came to the case of that much-injured and harassed individual, the ordinary trustee. This last-named functionary bought Stock, knowing that under certain conditions it was liable to be reduced in value; but there were also circumstances with reference to his transactions, mainly owing to wills and marriage settlements, in which he deserved some sort of relief. What would be the position of the trustees, or of those holding and dealing with the estate when, instead of getting 3 per cent, on which their calculations were made, they received one-sixth less? He did not say the Chancellor of the Exchequer was doing wrong; but he put the case forward as one which showed the difficulties under which trustees would labour. He approved of much of the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but there were connected with it essential questions of time and opportunity, and, while he knew what the present was, he did not know what the future might be. He was aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that this year a permanent Three per Cent Stock would be worth 111 in the market, and that, therefore, he ought to make some attempt to reduce the interest upon the redeemable Debt. That was perfectly true; but that argument was good for this year, and for this year only. Financial affairs were uncertain, political affairs were critical; and he defied the most sanguine Minister, with the greatest knowledge in the world, to say that next year, or even next month, those Three per Cents would stand at the prices they now held. It was on these grounds that he questioned the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he could not but regard with terror and alarm great financial operations which, while relying upon the prosperity of the present, speculated on the fortunes of the future.

Mr. MAGNIAC said, he did not share the apprehensions of the last speaker with regard to the conversion of the Three per Cent Stock. The proposed operation was intended to be self-acting. If it should succeed, it would be well for the country; if it should not, the country would be none the worse. The cause of the Bill was that the value of money had fallen. People need not fear that the measure itself would make it difficult for savings banks to pay their depositors and would reduce their incomes, the fact being that the reduction of their incomes would be due to external causes which constituted in themselves the reasons for the Bill. He should be sorry to hear any arguments adduced with a view of diminishing the responsibility of the Government with regard to the reduction of the National Debt. It was their duty to reduce that Debt whenever they possibly could, care being, of course, taken to deal fairly by the lender. The only argument which ought to be used for or against any reduction of the Debt was whether the condition of the Money Market warranted it. If the value of money was less than they were paying, let them proceed with a measure of this kind; if more, let them put the Bill on the shelf and say no more about it. There were three ways of dealing with this question of conversion—compulsorily, voluntarily, and voluntarily with compulsion behind. In his opinion, the last mode of dealing with the question was the worst. Compulsion in matters like the present presented a difficult problem for solution. It might, he thought, be taken to be legal. At the same time, it might not be expedient, and perhaps not even possible. In 1853 the operation for the conversion failed, because external circumstances were not in its favour. The value of money had been high, and fell suddenly. The Chancellor of the Exchequer argued that the circumstances of the present day were very different from the circumstances of that time. Consols had now been above par for four years, whereas then they had only been at par for a very short time. That was true; but were the circumstances so very different now as to admit of the operation being carried through successfully? The operation must be carried out either with money borrowed at the market rate, or with Stock given at that rate. That rate was indicated by the price of Consols—2 per cent above par, equal to 1*s.* 2*d.* in the rate of interest. That was the advantage the public possessed at the present moment. It might reasonably be thought that an operation based upon so small a change as that was not a very safe one. The practical application of the scheme for compulsory conversion was what the House must consider. The best authority on the subject was the

Prime Minister. In 1853 the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the voluntary conversion of the great Three per Cents, saying—

> "I mean voluntary in the strictest sense, for no other conversion can be thought of."

The right hon. Gentleman also said—

> "In approaching the great phalanx of the Three per Cents defended by its amount, its rate of interest, and 12 months' notice, we must direct our steps with the utmost caution."

Those words of the right hon. Gentleman pointed clearly to a preference for a voluntary instead of a compulsory conversion. It had been said that the proposed operation would be perfectly simple. That he doubted. The subject to be dealt with was £600,000,000 of Stock, in lots of £500,000 each. How could a change involving 1,200 operations of £500,000 each be simple? The Government could never rely solely upon a paper operation; they must have a sufficient sum in money to meet all possible claims. Suppose an operation was advertised on the Exchange and a number of holders were ready to exchange their Stocks, some convulsion on the Continent or elsewhere might occur; and then the holders might, and no doubt would, withhold their Stock or demand their money. Money which was used for the purpose contemplated was for the moment practically dead, and the result must be a considerable disturbance and derangement in the market. He was slightly incredulous that an operation involving £600,000,000 of Stock could be either a simple or easy one. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in moving the second reading of the Bill, made use of an expression which, he confessed, somewhat alarmed him. He said that he did not feel called upon to disclose his plan. Now, if there was one thing more than another to be deprecated in finance it was concealment. If anything was hidden, somebody would be sure to find it out. By perfect openness and publishing to the world what they intended they would retain the confidence of their creditors, and get better terms. He believed that the phrase to which he had alluded had caused very considerable alarm, and that the right hon. Gentleman could not do better in the interest of the country and of his own scheme than to give such an idea of his plan as would relieve people's minds from the fear that some *coup d'état* of the funds was in contemplation. The words of the Prime Minister, that in dealing with public credit we must direct our steps with the utmost caution, were here very applicable, and, if the occasion had arisen, he would have added with the utmost plain dealing. There could be no earthly use in hiding what was to be done. The country had in prospect an operation which might benefit the taxpayer very considerably, but which, in some quarters, would be very naturally opposed. What, however, would be still more and generally resented would be the depreciation of its own securities in order to gain a momentary advantage. Anything done to depreciate the value of Consols in order to carry out the scheme would have the worst possible effect, and frustrate the object of the Bill. His hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) had very forcibly pointed out the serious consequences the operation would have in increasing the National Debt. His right hon. Friend pleaded in extenuation that last year we had written off £70,000,000 of Debt. But writing off a debt was not paying it off. Whole classes in the country who had a difficulty in making both ends meet would be still further squeezed. For some years they had borne with extraordinary courage and equanimity heavy burdens to pay off the Debt, because they felt that the country could not be strong so long as the Debt remained at its present figure. What would their feelings be when they learnt that by a stroke of the pen £48,000,000 had been added to the National Debt? He believed it would cause considerable dissatisfaction, and the supporters of the reduction of the Debt in that House also would feel very much weakened. The principle of the Bill—speaking of the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, and putting aside the Three and Three-Quarters per Cent Stock as out of the running—was that on every £100 the taxpayer was to save 6*s*. per cent. Of that 6*s*. he was to reap the advantage of 4*s*. 4*d*., for he was to pay 1*s*. 8*d*. towards a Sinking Fund. That was to be the payment by the taxpayer for the 4*s*. 4*d*. he was to gain. Then, Terminable Annuities were to be created which were to be redeemable out of the growing produce of the Consolidated Fund—that was to say, a lump sum was to be paid representing the capital of the Annuity. But the growing produce of the Consolidated Fund was already appropriated to the redemption of the Debt, and the effect would be to saddle upon posterity for 50 years the relief to the present taxpayer. The scheme of the Bill, he could not help thinking, was based upon a fallacy. It was to save £5,000 on each £1,000,000, less the interest on the extra Debt, £2,000, and the payment into the Sinking Fund, leaving a net saving of £2,200 a-year. The whole plan rested on the assumption that this Debt would last 50 years. If it did not last 50 years the profit to the country would be in a corresponding proportion reduced. If they made a rough calculation, they would find that for each £1,000,000 affected by this Bill, unless it lasted unextinguished for 35 years, the country would suffer a loss; and unless it lasted for some years over 35 they would derive no profit whatever. He was, therefore, of opinion that the discount at which the New Stock was to be issued was too large; that the consequent addition to the capital of the National Debt was excessive; and that the bargain in this respect was not a favourable one for the country. He hoped that upon the second reading of the Bill there would be practical unanimity, and that when it reached Committee some parts of it would be modified.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, his hon. Friend who had just sat down had, in his very able speech, drawn a distinction between three forms in which the proposal for the transfer of Stock could be carried out; either voluntarily, compulsorily, or voluntarily with compulsion, and as he had stated that the inducement offered to holders of Stock was very small, and also had expressed his objection to anything like compulsion, it was difficult to see how his hon. Friend thought that the scheme could possibly succeed; and, indeed, he had gathered from his speech that he did not think it would succeed. Moreover, he appeared anxious to take away from the Chancellor of the Exchequer the means by which it could succeed, because he had pressed him to lessen the inducements by decreasing the rate of discount offered by the right hon. Gentleman. Nor were the other speeches very encouraging to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He saw the force of many of the arguments of his hon. Friend (Mr. Magniac); but it appeared to him that if he was correct, the passing of the Bill would simply be *brutum fulmen.* The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) called attention to the hardships which would be inflicted upon various classes of the community by the reduction of the interest on the National Debt; but he was bound to say that he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Magniac) had completely answered that objection by pointing out that if all these interests were to suffer, they would suffer, not from the reduction of interest, but because of the general decrease in the value of money. Upon that point he thought the hon. Member's argument was practically conclusive. But the main argument raised by the hon. Member against the scheme was that which dealt with the question of the increase of the Debt by £48,000,000. He was bound to say that there was a fallacy running through the speech of his hon. Friend, and also through the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard); and that was that the £48,000,000 were to be created and paid off at par, and that the liability was undertaken by this country for the payment of the principal of that sum. If in the future they were able to undertake another operation, and again lower the interest, that, to his mind, was the only contingency under which they should have to pay for the additional capital. He did not think they need be alarmed at this additional Debt in the sense in which it had been put before them by some right hon. and hon. Gentlemen, because it was not the capital which they could ever be called upon to pay off. It would only have to be paid off under the favourable circumstances of money being so cheap that they should again be able to lighten the burden put upon the taxpayer. If this view were correct, then the whole of the argument as to the reduction of the Sinking Fund from the gain to the taxpayer was a fallacy, and there remained over a clear gain to the taxpayer of the interest which he saved. The only reduction which it seemed to him must compulsorily be made from the taxpayer was the additional interest on the

£48,000,000 created. Therefore, the matter presented itself to him in this broad form—Could the Chancellor of the Exchequer offer any less advantageous terms to the public with the probability that they would be accepted? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman could offer less favourable terms than those contained in the Bill. The question then arose, was the Chancellor of the Exchequer justified in offering those terms to the public? It appeared to him that they were bound to carry out a reduction of interest if they could do so; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer proved that there was a fair chance of the public accepting his terms, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would stand by them, and not allow a favourable opportunity to pass without making this great experiment, for an experiment this Bill must be. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) objected to the proposal because it was experimental; but the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) had disposed of that objection, and the hon. Member for Stafford did not point out a single danger that would accrue to the State from the failure of the experiment. There might be inconvenience and a slight disturbance of the funds; but nothing that would cause any kind of alarm, apprehension, or public calamity. In fact, they knew what the result of failure would be, because, unfortunately, there had been failures before; similar transactions had been attempted and did not succeed; but, beyond the resulting inconvenience, he did not know that anyone had suffered. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would go forward with the measure, and would receive the support of both sides of the House in carrying it through, and that the bugbear of having to pay off 48 additional millions, would be disposed of to a great extent, if not by the explanations he had attempted to give, at all events, by the further explanations which would be offered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said that he agreed with the view taken by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) as to the increase of the National Debt by £48,000,000, there being a reduction of interest on the whole. Sufficient attention had, however, not been paid to the effect that the reduction of the interest would have on the country. It was admitted that there were 180,000 fundholders; and, including Chancery trusts, the number might be 200,000. Many of these were heads of families, so that the number of persons interested was probably not fewer than 1,000,000. The House had been told that £1,300,000 would be saved annually to the taxpayer by this process; but even if that were so, it represented less, he believed, than a farthing per week upon the whole population of the country, while the interest of the fundholders would be reduced by 10 per cent. Two classes of persons, the thrifty and the helpless, would be seriously affected in order that we might reduce the interest on the National Debt, and that at the time when the National Expenditure was at the highest point. The proposed reduction would fall most heavily upon trust funds, and upon the monies of widows and orphans. If the Government was really economical, the country might regard with equanimity the reduction of the interest on the National Debt; but by reducing the interest instead of the expenditure the Government were beginning at the wrong end. The Government ought to show some signs of economy in their general expenditure before they began reducing the interest on the National Debt.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, there seemed to be unanimity in the opinion that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was right in endeavouring to reduce the interest on the National Debt, and the objections based on difficulties of detail had been answered. Some spoke as if this were only a fundholder's question; but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer succeeded in reducing the interest on a considerable portion of the Debt from 3 to 2½ per cent, there would be a corresponding, or even a larger, reduction in the rates of interest payable for money borrowed on mortgage in land and houses. This would tend to promote railway extension; and thus, by increasing enterprize and employment, would confer the greatest benefit on the country. As to the alleged hardships to charities, probably they would not be compelled to convert their Stock, and would continue to receive 3 per cent as now.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought no one would dispute the proposition that, in so far as the Bill represented the principle of the desire and attempt to reduce the interest and burden of the National Debt by means of voluntary exchange, it would meet with unanimous approbation in the House. It was unnecessary to add anything to the exhaustive speeches on both sides of the House, which had dealt with the beneficial effect which such a conversion would bring about. He wished, however, to speak of the fundholder, and while he did not mean to put him forward as an object of special pity, he thought his case had not yet been sufficiently considered. He was sorry to hear the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) make a comparison between the number of fundholders and the number of taxpayers. Even if the former were only units as compared with millions, it was not only the duty, but the interest, of the Government and of the country that they should be treated with justice and equity. Any dealings with the fundholders would affect the general credit of the country. It was, therefore, only right to expect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should do all that had been suggested by the hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. Magniac), and explain very clearly, and in a way that could not be misunderstood, the whole intention and mind and object of the Government in introducing this scheme. He was certain that the House did not desire that the fundholder should be either cajoled or bullied into surrendering what he would rather retain. The right hon. Gentleman would advance the most important part of the Bill—namely, the process of voluntary conversion into Two and a-Half per Cent, if he were to cast aside all these mysterious allusions to something which might happen hereafter, and explain to the House the precise stages by which he proposed to put the Act into complete operation. Unless he did that, they would have a great deal of confusion, uncertainty, and heart-burning pervading large masses of the public. It was not fair that the Government should, as it were, play with loaded dice in that manner. Yet that was somewhat of the position which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of necessity, occupied. As the Controller of the National Debt, he had the manipulation of enormous portions of the Debt which he could use as a fundholder to the advantage of his scheme. That seemed to be an exercise of double functions on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which would always be watched, naturally and properly, with great jealousy by the House and the public. The savings banks were said to be the holders of £80,000,000 of Stock, and to that had to be added the funds in the Court of Chancery. Who had the control of these latter funds? No less a person than the Lord Chancellor, who, as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was a Member of the Government. It was, therefore, incumbent on them, acting in a double capacity, that a more free and open statement should be made on the subject than had as yet been made. A familiar case in which hardships might arise was that of an annuitant under a will of, say, £100, whose claims were usually settled by the trustees or executors out of a fund invested in Consols. Disputes might easily arise in such cases. He trusted, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would clear himself from all possible imputations which might arise in that manner.

Mr. GREGORY said, that large sums of Consols were held in trust under which the tenant for life received the interest for his life, while the capital went to those who were entitled in remainder. The interests of the two respective parties were not identical, and he did not think conversion would in those cases be voluntarily accepted. On the other hand, large amounts of Stock were held by public Companies and Corporations as a voluntary act, and without the operation of the present Bill the conversion of Consols into Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock had been going on; but he did not think it would be accelerated by the present Bill. Again, it was important to remember that owing to the much larger powers of investment now granted to trustees there would not be so large a portion of trust property in Consols as was formerly the case. Trustees were now authorized to invest in Railway Debentures, Metropolitan Stock, and other investments. The consequence of this was that parties might be more inclined to be paid off with a view to investment in securities of this nature. There was another matter dealt with by the Bill which required careful consideration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had obtained practical jurisdiction of the £50,000,000

Stock in the hands of the Paymaster General. In the case of a large proportion of that Stock the dividends were accumulating for the benefit of infants and others under disabilities, who would have no voice in respect of conversion. He presumed the Lord Chancellor would exercise proper supervision in such cases, and have regard to the persons beneficially interested. But he was a Member of the Government for the time being, and it was necessary that his action in the matter should be carefully watched, as he would necessarily be open to the suggestions of his Colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For his own part, he protested against any such power of directing conversions being vested in the Lord Chancellor, who would thus have double and mutually adverse functions to exercise. Speaking generally, they had only half of the scheme before them, and knew nothing of the way in which it was to be carried out. In his opinion, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not obtain the benefit he contemplated from the scheme. And there would be more difficulty in the conversions of Stock than the right hon. Gentleman anticipated.

Mr. WARTON said, he did not profess thoroughly to understand the Bill. With reference to what fell from the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), he might mention that many savings banks which were conducted for the benefit of the thrifty poor gave interest at the rate of 7*d.* in the pound, or £2 18*s.* 4*d.* per cent, and the slender difference between that and 3 per cent defrayed the expenses of the banks. Last year the Government slipped into a big Bill a little clause which would have had the effect of reducing considerably the interest paid to friendly societies. The hon. Member for Preston and he (Mr. Warton) objected to that provision, which the Government ultimately withdrew; but they now proposed to do what was then intended, for no answer had yet been given by the Government to the hon. Member for Stafford's question. As a condition precedent to any conversion of Stock, a notice ought to be posted at the Royal Exchange a year before such conversion took place. The Bill apparently limited the conversion to £500,000 at a time; but from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech it seemed that there was to be no limit to the operation of the measure. He was surprised at the right hon. Gentleman telling the House that there was some mode of compulsion which he could use. He thought that in all matters of finance there ought to be the utmost candour on the part of the Government, and therefore he would ask him to state boldly what kind of compulsion he would use. There ought to be no hocus pocus about the matter, and he might remark that there was nothing which frightened people so much as the unknown.

Mr. R. B. MARTIN said, hon. Members ought to see what could be done in the way of decreasing the burden of the National Debt and its pressure on the taxpayers. There was no reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not divulge more of his plans than he had done. He could not see that there were any difficulties in the way of the right hon. Gentleman carrying out the scheme he had put forward. Confidence would be inspired if the right hon. Gentleman gave an assurance, at the earliest opportunity, that he had the power and the intention to carry out the scheme. He entertained no doubt that in a very short time the Two and a-Half per Cents would take the place of Consols in popular estimation. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get his new Two and a-Half per Cents established as a popular Stock he would considerably raise the price of it in proportion to the Three per Cents which would be still left in existence, and he would steady the price of the Stock, an important matter in any conversion operations.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he thought the time had arrived when he ought to reply, although not at too great length, to the remarks that had fallen from hon. Members in the course of the discussion. He was glad to find that those remarks had not exhibited anything like Party feeling. Still, it was to him a matter of regret that in some respects the nature of his proposals had been misunderstood by several hon. Members opposite. He had, however, to thank several other hon. Members for the pains they had taken to set them right upon the points at issue. At the same time, he should not seek to take refuge behind the plea that some of the arguments which had been put forward had been answered, although he would not have more to do on the present occasion than to meet the articles of criticism which had not been met by others. It was, however, not unlikely that he should fail to meet every argument that had been put forward in the course of a three hours' debate. He would first deal with two small questions which had been just raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). The hon. and learned Gentleman had asked, in the first place, why the Bill did not provide for the affixing in the Royal Exchange of a notice announcing the proposed conversion? The answer was a simple one. They did not in this Bill deal with any compulsory powers, and therefore it would be unnecessary to introduce any formal notice. The hon. and learned Gentleman then asked him why it was he had referred in his account of the former payments in sums of £500,000 to none later than 1751? The reason was that for nearly a century Consols were at a discount, and could be purchased in the open market, instead of being compulsorily paid off. He hoped he had satisfied the hon. and learned Gentleman by this short explanation, and would now pass on to deal with earlier speeches. The right hon. Member for the City (Mr. Hubbard) had certainly been very hard upon the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it was the worst Bill he had ever seen, and that its title, "to give facilities for the conversion of Three per Cent Stock into Stock of a lower denomination," was enough to shock him. For his own part, he thought the title harmless enough; but the right hon. Gentleman went on to ask — What Finance Minister could congratulate himself upon such a scheme? The right hon. Gentleman said that last year a proposal had been brought in for the redemption of the National Debt which was satisfactory in every respect; but the proposal made this year was one of which he was ashamed. Last year, however, the right hon. Gentleman had described the scheme proposed by the National Debt Bill as impracticable, unworkable, and essentially wrong in principle, and said that it would bear most harshly and unjustly on the taxpayer. He, therefore, hoped that next year the right hon. Gentleman would take a more favourable view of the present measure. But not only did the right hon. Gentleman say, in respect to the proposal now made, that it was one of which he ought to be thoroughly ashamed, but he added that his 24 colleagues on the Board of the Bank of England considered it thoroughly detestable.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD explained that he had only assumed his colleagues on the Board of Directors regarded the measure as he did.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he considered the right hon. Gentleman had no right to make any such assumption. That was a very easy way of tacking on to his own opinion that of others—that is to say, gratuitously to assume that they agreed with them, and then to quote their authority. Certainly he had last year read with some consternation the right hon. Gentleman's disapprobation of the scheme of reduction he then proposed, and he was now surprised to find that it was his intention all the time to approve of it. Speaking on the 7th of August last year, he said the scheme was impossible and unworkable.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, he was at the time referring to a proposal which had been made by the Prime Minister.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) replied, that he was the person named at the time, and he hoped that by this time next year the right hon. Gentleman would be converted to a more tolerant view of what was now proposed, and that after the Recess he would come round to be a warm supporter of it. Before parting with the right hon. Gentleman, he had to complain that he had misrepresented what he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had said. He certainly never said the proposal met with a favourable reception in the City. He had looked through all the reports of his speeches, and through his own notes of them, and was unable to find any such expression. What he did say was—

> "I have been able to consider suggestions which have been made in different places, and particularly in the City, as to several parts of the measure. I attach importance to the criticisms which have been passed in the City, where, of course, public opinion is directed most sharply to questions of this kind."

Passing on, he had to thank the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) for his friendly criticism of the scheme. The hon. Gentleman, however, asked why he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) did not propose to the holders of Three per Cent Stock to accept at par a Two and Three-Quarters Stock so as to avoid any Sinking Fund, as he thought it imprudent to increase the capital amount of the Debt. The fact was that such a plan would not work. He had made inquiries on the point, and he was satisfied that had the Government gone to the public with such a proposal it would not have been accepted. His hon. Friend had also referred to the old controversy, whether it was as a question of finance better to raise money in low interest Stocks at a discount, or in high interest Stocks at par or at a premium. That was an important controversy, and had from time to time engaged the attention of the ablest political economists; but it had no reference to any process of conversion, but only to the best method of adding to Debt when large additional amounts were required, say, at a time of war. With reference to the effect of this measure upon the operations sanctioned by the Act of last year, he might say that the two schemes were perfectly distinct, and that the effect of the present proposal, if any, upon the previous scheme would be beneficial. The hon. Gentleman then asked how this Bill would affect small holders of Stock and trustees; and also whether it would not be desirable, under certain circumstances, to extend the facilities of investment by trustees in other than Government Stocks? He agreed that when it should become a question of compulsorily paying off the Debt at par this matter might have to be considered. He had next to refer to the speech of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), to which he had listened with great interest. The hon. Gentleman stated that the operations of this scheme were not fully appreciated by the public, and doubted if even the Chancellor of the Exchequer had sufficiently considered what two years hence would be the state of the Two and a-Half per Cent Stock. The hon. Member had asked why should anyone under the operation of this Bill take £2 14*s*., or £2 16*s*., instead of £3 interest upon his £100 Stock? The answer was that the person who exercised the option would do so because his nominal capital would be increased, and because the £2 10*s*. Stock would be the Stock of the future. The hon. Member had said that they were wrong in the foundation of their scheme; but his hon. Friend who had spoken behind him had explained that the operation could hurt nobody, and was a good one in itself with the Funds in their present position. He had said, and would repeat it, that, in his opinion, it was the duty of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he found the value of money was at a point at which the interest paid by the public could be reduced, to take advantage of it. His hon. Friend had also gone into the history of certain Stocks, and had given to the House a very elaborate history of the New Three per Cents; but, in doing so, the hon. Gentleman had omitted a material part of that operation in forgetting to mention that in that operation the nominal capital was greatly increased. In referring to the powers of redemption, the hon. Gentleman had asked how it came to be the case that those powers were not made more simple, and he had gone back to the Act of 3 *Geo.* I., in which there was a reference to the power at that time of reducing the Stock *pro ratâ*. But that told in exactly the opposite direction from that which the hon. Gentleman had intended. It was perfectly true that in that Act, when loans were raised by public Companies, as in the case of the South Sea Company, there was a clause introduced enabling the Government to pay these off *pro ratâ*; but the Act of *Geo.* II., passed in the year 1751, did not convey that power, for the reason that at that time the present system of funds had been come to; and, therefore, the conditions of the loans having altered, it was no longer necessary to introduce either the words or the system of a *pro ratâ* reduction. The hon. Gentleman, too, had spoken of the Act of *Geo.* I. as having been repealed in the year 1870. That was not so. Certain clauses in that Act were repealed then; but, so far as redemption was concerned, the Act was repealed by the Act of 1751. Then the hon. Gentleman had asked why a Two and Three-Quarter per Cent Stock should be created at all, and, no doubt, there was a good deal to be said on that point.

He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had put that question very carefully before those who were concerned with him in framing the present scheme, and had urged the point on the ground that it might be expedient, instead of creating two Stocks, to create only a Two and a-Half per Cent Stock, which standing alone would be a larger Stock, and therefore more convenient at any time of pressure. But the answer he had received was that it was to many people more convenient that the fall in interest should be only by a quarter per cent. On that ground he was satisfied that, having regard to many whose interests he most wished to consult, the present scheme was the best. The hon. Gentleman had also made some observations about the Post Office Savings Bank Fund, and pointed out that money would come into the hands of the Commissioners on which they would have to pay 2½ per cent, and asked what was to be the margin when money was only worth 2½ per cent. The answer to that was that if it became necessary to reduce the rate of interest on Savings Bank moneys it would be not on account of the present Bill, but because the value of money had fallen. If the value of money permanently fell, it would be impossible to keep it up artificially, and it must be remembered that a Bill of this kind was not a cause of the fall in value of money, but a symptom of it. The hon. Member had said that redemption of premium was only another plan of Terminable Annuities, which did not reduce the Debt, but left it hanging round their necks. The system of Terminable Annuities, however, did reduce the Debt from year to year; for the difference between the Annuity and the regular interest took so much debt off the market. The case of settlements on daughters, and the remainder to be received after payment of charges, had been referred to; but he would point out that where the investment was in land the remainder had been much more largely interfered with by the diminution of rent than could be the case under this Bill; but no one contended that on that account rents should not be reduced. His hon. Friend (Mr. Magniac) had expressed regret that he did not at once state what plan would hereafter be adopted if it was necessary to bring compulsion to bear. He said there might be a *coup d'état*, and that all uncertainty ought to be removed on this point. But a *coup d'état* was out of the question, for as to compulsion nothing could be done without an Act of Parliament; and he did not think that any Act of Parliament was likely to pass with a *coup d'état*. He could not conceive anything more rash than for him to state at the present moment the exact method of compulsion that would have to be employed in the event of its becoming necessary, especially as it was not known with what amount they would have to deal. Circumstances might entirely alter between now and then, and it would be most incautious and unwise now to lay down a particular line of action. He desired to thank his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) for the very clear way in which he met the objection taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite to the increase in the nominal capital of the Debt which might follow the present proposal, and at that hour he could only say that he endorsed every word of his right hon. Friend's argument. He hoped the House would now consent to read the Bill a second time.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he did not wish to detain the House after the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was very well contented with the discussion which had taken place, because he thought it had been one of a most valuable character, and from both sides of the House a great deal of interesting matter had proceeded, which, no doubt, would be well appreciated by the public. There was, however, one particular point on which he wished to say a few words. It was one which went to the root of the whole proceeding—he meant mixture of the compulsory with the voluntary process. He did not think the objection on that score had been answered, and what had just been stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not carry them much further towards a proper solution of the difficulty. If they were dealing with a proposal to establish a new Stock, for which anyone who now held Three per Cent Stock could exchange at his own pleasure on certain terms, there would probably be no objection to be made, for the principle was now fully recognized that it was the duty of the State to reduce the interest on the Debt when the price of money permitted that operation. The question was whether the terms offered were sufficiently good to induce people voluntarily to make the exchange, or whether there were other inducements to be added besides the value of the Stock? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that if those to whom this offer was made did not voluntarily avail themselves of it, they would not be allowed to remain in their present position, but that they must take the probability, and almost the certainty, of having compulsory legislation brought against them. They would, therefore, not be free agents in the matter. They would have hanging over them the prospect of compulsion being exercised; and he thought the matter would not have been put in a satisfactory position if it were left on that footing. If certain persons should be induced to exchange from the higher to the lower rate of interest through fear of compulsion—a well-founded fear—and if the Government, after all, did not choose to bring in a Bill, and did not exercise that compulsion, then those persons who had made the exchange would have been led to do so by something approaching to false pretences. He thought they had a right to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tell them, before they proceeded to discuss the Bill in detail in Committee, whether he really did or did not intend to use compulsion, and to give the House a clear idea as to the nature of the compulsion which he intended to use. The right hon. Gentleman said this was an imprudent thing to do; but he would remind him that he was undertaking an experiment which could not be said to be other than a bold one. Undoubtedly, the suggestion had been made that no harm would result if it failed. This suggestion, however, could not hold water, because an experiment of this kind, if it failed, would not leave things as they were before. It would shake confidence in our great Stock, the Stock of Consols. If the measure failed, all that would be said would be that it was a disappointment, and reflected, to a certain extent, upon the position which had been taken up by the Government; but, on the other hand, if they were to have the compulsory process, they ran, as had been shown by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) a great risk indeed. The right hon. Gentleman had answered his hon. Friend by saying that there would be no risk, because if the values of money were seriously altered, all that would happen would be that this voluntary process would stop and go no further. But the question was as to the compulsory, and not the voluntary process. He thought they had a right to ask that a clear idea should be given as to the whole scheme of the Government. The one proposal was not independent of the other. The voluntary scheme depended for its success, in a great measure, upon the compulsory force behind it, and which was to be used as a lever to carry through the voluntary process; but they were not told anything about it. In these matters it was of the highest importance that they should act trustfully with the creditor, and tell him exactly what it was he had to expect; and if they made a great change they should explain to him the nature of their proposals, in order that he might regulate his proceedings accordingly. There could be no doubt that the position of Consols was one of an exceptional character. There was an exceptional confidence in Consols, and among other things that confidence was due to the expectation which, up to the present year, everyone had been encouraged to form that that Stock could not be made the subject of compulsory commutation. They were now going to destroy that confidence, and he thought it was a serious thing to do to shake the confidence in that great Stock. He thought they would shake that confidence still more if they held out in an indefinite way the prospect of some compulsion being used at some future time. They did not know how long this option was to be left open.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I stated the other day that the option would be open for a month or more.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he must impress upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and upon the House, the importance of considering, before the Bill got into Committee, what the whole proposal was to be. They ought to know how long the option was to be exercised, what the real position of the creditor was to be, and what was to be the action that was to follow. He admitted the principle of the reduction of the interest whenever there was a proper occasion to do so, and he was not disposed to make any objection to proceeding with the Bill; he did not even wish his right hon. Friend to divide the House; but before the Bill got into Committee they ought to insist upon a fuller explanation being given with reference to the compulsory power.

MR. HARRIS said, he wished to make a few remarks in support of the Bill. He had been engaged in commerce most of his life; and he was, therefore, apt to take a more thoroughly commercial view of this question than some of those who had previously spoken. He found that the value of money had been declining in this country for years, and that merchants and bankers now paid a much lower rate of interest than they used to do—securities with a fixed interest had also risen greatly in price. He thought that hon. Members must admit that, being sent to Parliament to administer the affairs of the nation, they must look at these matters as they would look on their own interests in business. If it was a fact that all borrowers for commercial purposes were paying much less than previously—and it undoubtedly was—then it was our duty to see that the nation secured for itself a like advantage, and this the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was likely to effect. The general impression among commercial men in the City, so far as he had been able to gauge it, was that the new Two and a-Half per Cent Stock would, within a reasonable number of years, be worth par, and would become a favourite investment thereat. The issue of this Stock at a discount was an inducement to men of speculative ideas to buy very largely, not so much with the view of receiving 2½ per cent for their money, as with that of making a profit within a short time. This speculative quality would materially assist the Chancellor of the Exchequer in making the conversion. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the advisability of dispensing altogether with the Stock paying 2¾ per cent. He had noticed that where there were several denominations of Preference Stocks in Railway Companies they were not easily negotiable, but that when they were all consolidated into one large Stock they rose in value, although the security was in no way increased; and in the same way he believed that one denomination of Consols—namely, the Two and a-Half per Cents, would simplify the conversion and add to its value. He was rather inclined to think that the price of conversion might be raised from £108 to £109 of New Stock in exchange for £100 of Three per Cents. This would increase the inducement for conversion and insure the rapid success of the scheme. He had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence), who sat on the Government Benches, and with much of it he thoroughly agreed. There could be no doubt that when the interest on Consols was reduced it would re-act on the borrowing powers in other directions, and thus make the charges on commerce and on investments somewhat smaller. When, however, the hon. Member went so far as to claim that cheap money always made trade good, he begged to differ from him. He supposed we never had a more serious depression of trade than now existed, although the rate of money had been for years declining. He, however, believed the converse of the proposition—namely, that depression of trade made cheap money; and it was greatly owing to this that the Chancellor of the Exchequer now had such an opportunity of carrying out his scheme. He merely made these remarks to prevent hon. Gentlemen—who were not engaged in commerce—running away with the idea that the ability to borrow at so low a rate meant an increase of national prosperity. With regard to the compulsory powers, he was very sorry to differ from his Friend and Leader, the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), on this point. He thought that the compulsory powers ought to be left in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There had been much discussion as to their being legally able to pay off the Debt; but he thought that had been set at rest by previous speakers. Of course, it behoved the Government to be fully assured of the legality of every step they took, as the credit of a country was even more valuable than any scheme of this sort could be. With that qualification, he hoped the House would not ask the right hon. Gentleman to bind himself down to any particular scheme or to any particular time for applying the compulsory powers. He thought it was impossible for him at the present time to foreshadow what he would do, or when he would do it. It was impossible for him to know what the state of the Money Market might be when he saw the time had come for bringing in a Bill for compulsory payment. He believed the compulsory powers, which were legally possessed, were the main feature in the success of this measure. Without they existed no one would be tempted to convert; with them everyone would be anxious to do so, and thus they might never be applied. With regard to the increase in the nominal amount of the Debt, he did not attach any importance to it. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that it was more important to look at the annual sum which the nation had to pay than at the capital amount of the Debt. An hon. Member had spoken about the hardship to daughters; but he thought daughters must, in a matter of that sort, take their chance along with other people. When their fathers or guardians invested their money in Consols they knew perfectly well what they were doing, and the contingencies which were attached to the investment. If, instead of Consols, they had chosen Railway Shares, or investments in land, they would have been subject to many more contingencies than the operation which was now about to take place. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that for each £100 of Three per Cent they would have in exchange £108 of the New Stock; and thus they might, when the Stock reached par—as he believed it would—sell out and invest the money elsewhere, if the conditions of the settlement allowed. He hoped hon. Members would not think that he had any want of sympathy with daughters; he would, on the contrary, regret their suffering any detriment; but he thought that such an important saving to the nation as was now proposed could not be set aside for the sake of a small class. Assuming that the law allowed the Chancellor of the Exchequer to apply the compulsory powers, he believed the Bill would produce a great gain to the finances of the country, and he wished it every success.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 117; Noes 34: Majority 83.—(Div. List, No. 106.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [5th June] *reported.*

First Sixteen Resolutions *agreed to.*

Seventeenth Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. BIGGAR complained that the Vote to complete the sum of £215,000 for disturnpiked and main roads in England and Wales was passed last night without discussion. Scotland received a similar Vote of £35,000; and he thought it was only fair that the Government should give some pledge that the ratepayers of Ireland would receive the same compensation in regard to their roads as was now granted to the ratepayers of England and Scotland. As a matter of fact, the ratepayers of the County of Antrim had to pay the entire expense of keeping up the main thoroughfare from Belfast to Antrim, a distance of some 40 Irish miles. Unless the Government would undertake to make some provision for the ratepayers of the County of Antrim, he would feel it his duty to divide the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 67; Noes 4: Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 107.)

Eighteenth Resolution *postponed.*

Nineteenth Resolution *agreed to.*

Twentieth Resolution *agreed to.*

Twenty-first Resolution *agreed to.*

Twenty-second Resolution *postponed.*

Further Consideration of postponed Resolutions *deferred* till *this day.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 5) (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City and County of Bristol, the Cities of Carlisle and Coventry, the Rural Sanitary District of the Epsom Union, the Local Government District of Northwich, the Borough of Preston, the Rural Sanitary District of the Taunton Union, and the Borough of Warrington, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Sir Charles Dilke.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 239.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 6) (BOURNEMOUTH, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Improvement Act District of Bournemouth, the Special Drainage District of Clacton-on-Sea, the Local Government District of Farnham, the Boroughs of Hythe and Margate, the Improvement Act Districts of Milton-next-Sittingbourne and West Worthing, and the City of Winchester, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Sir Charles Dilke.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 240.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 7) (ACCRINGTON, AND OTHERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Accrington and Church Outfall Sewerage District, the Boroughs of Bangor, Barnsley, and Burnley, the Local Government District of Fulwood, the City of Liverpool, the Local Government District of Llanelly, the Borough of Middlesbrough, the Improvement Act District of Milford, and the Borough of Nottingham, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Sir Charles Dilke.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 241.]

It being five minutes before Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the Clock.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock till Monday next.

* * *

SE OF LORDS,

lay, 9th June, 1884.

Sat First in Parliament — The
, after the death of his father.

adviso
with the
had notic
several de
Stocks in Ra
not easily ne
they were all
Stock they ro
security was i
in the same
Sir Staffo

Took the Oath for the First Time—The Lord Langford.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer)* (114).

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 72 and 82 be suspended for the remainder of the Session.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That the order of the 18th of March last be suspended, and that a statement in the following form be circulated in the case of all Bills to which Standing Order No. 38 applies, not later than the second day after the first reading.—[The Form is then appended.]

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND).

QUESTION.

The Earl of **DONOUGHMORE** said, that, seeing that the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack was the only Member of the Government in attendance, he would ask him, Whether he would make inquiries of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as to whether the correspondence between the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Arthur Hill relative to the Nationalist meetings at Newry and the proposed counter-demonstrations could be laid on the Table?

The **LORD CHANCELLOR**, in reply, said, he could not answer the Question without Notice; because it was manifestly one that could only be answered after communication with the Lord Lieutenant. He took it for granted, however, that any Correspondence which had taken place in regard to the matter which had appeared in the newspapers would be laid upon the Table sooner or later.

The Earl of **DONOUGHMORE** gave Notice that he would ask the Question another day.

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE) —NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Earl **STANHOPE**, in whose name the following Notice stood upon the Paper:—

"To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—1. "Whether the negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government relative to Egypt are concluded; and whether, before submitting those proposals to the other Great Powers, or before entering into a Conference, they will state to the House the nature of those negotiations.

"'2. Whether Her Majesty's Government have agreed with France to a limit of the occupation of Egypt?'"

said, in rising to make inquiry respecting the approaching Conference, or, rather, as to the preliminary negotiations which have taken place, I am actuated solely by considerations of the grave position in which I believe this country finds itself placed. It is in no Party spirit that I put the Question to the noble Earl; nor have I the slightest desire to touch upon matters which cannot at present be divulged. But, my Lords, I, and the majority of your Lordships, are in complete official ignorance as to the precise nature of the negotiations which have taken place between this country and France. Now, from Questions put to the Government in "another place" before the Holidays, and from their extreme reticence—nay, even refusal to give an answer to those Questions—I may assume that the following is the actual present position of affairs with regard to the Conference negotiations. In a Circular Letter, dated April 19 last, addressed to the Courts of Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Rome, and St. Petersburg, Her Majesty's Government proposed the assembling of a Conference in London or Constantinople, and invited their presence and assistance, to consider whether any change was necessary in the Law of Liquidation of Egyptian finances. Four of the Great Powers, we are informed, have agreed to this proposal; but France, while agreeing in principle, wished, first, to make a certain exchange of views as to our position in Egypt. We are also informed that friendly communications have been going on between the two countries; but it is rumoured, and it has not been officially contradicted, that France wished to fix a term to the British occupation of Egypt, and that the English Government suggested five years, but that they have since agreed to shorten that term to two or three years. It is also rumoured that the propriety of establishing an international audit of Egyptian finance is under the consideration of both Governments. Since your Lordships last met the matter may have been already concluded, so little have the Government taken Parliament and the country into their confidence. For these reasons I want, if possible, to gain some information from the Government. At first we were told that the Conference would be strictly limited to the consideration of the Law of Liquidation; and the Prime Minister said that, if any other matter was brought forward, it would be tantamount to convening a fresh Conference; but now we are informed that, when the negotiations going on with France arrive at a result, that result is to be communicated to the Powers before being communicated to Parliament. Really, my Lords, this seems rather a strong and arbitrary proceeding. Now, I wish to touch briefly on two points, which I will endeavour to put clearly and concisely to the House. First, as to our actual position in respect to the Government of Egypt; and, secondly, as to the dangers of a Multiple Control, and of fixing a short term for our occupation of Egypt. It will be in the recollection of the House that, though Her Majesty's present Advisers at first acquiesced in the Dual Control in Egypt, they afterwards strongly condemned it, and even when it had ceased to exist said it was the cause of all the difficulties in Egypt. So recently as the 12th of February, in "another place," the Prime Minister found great fault with the Dual Control; yet now, forsooth, he is going to make matters easier by the institution of a six-barrelled Control! Let me refer back two years. Then, a Conference of the Powers was convened at Constantinople, at the invitation of the Government, to consider the Egyptian Question, and met on June 23. In the course of its meetings the Arabi rebellion broke out; and before Turkish troops could proceed to Egypt, our Fleet bombarded and destroyed the Forts of Alexandria on July 12, France declining to interfere. After that a military expedition, undertaken and controlled solely by England, was despatched, and, after a very short but decisive fight, the rebels were completely routed, and so were all remnants of Egyptian Government. Then what followed? On the 3rd of January, 1883, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs addressed a Letter to the five Great Powers detailing all that had taken place. Among other things, that Letter endorsed the policy proposed by Egypt for the abolition of the Dual Control, and recommended the appointment of a single European Financial Adviser. This the Powers agreed to; and, for all practical purposes, England received a mandate from Europe to quiet and pacify the country. Now, what has taken place since then? Our great diplomatist, Lord Dufferin, drew up a brand new Constitution for Egypt; and we arranged, or acquiesced in the arrangement—which is much the same thing—that Mr. Edgar Vincent should be Financial Adviser; that Sir Evelyn Wood should form and discipline a Native Army; that General Baker Pasha should organize a Native gendarmerie, and that Mr. Clifford Lloyd should establish an urban police. At the opening of the Session on the 12th of February, the Prime Minister and the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) congratulated themselves, and took especial pains to point out how many reforms the Government had introduced into Egypt, how new tribunals had been formed, new Judges had been appointed, prison reforms had been made, and a general house tax had been agreed to. Can it be said, then, that we have not made every attempt to govern Egypt, and that we are not the governing Power there at this moment? Judging from all that has passed, I think it can hardly be doubted. Alas! my Lords, all these reforms exist, to a great degree, on paper, or, at any rate, for so long a time only as we shall remain in Egypt. Now all will be changed and destroyed, as a Multiple Control is to be proposed in Conference. I may be told that an international audit is a very different thing from a Multiple Control; but he who pays controls, and if the purse strings are held by an International Board, that Board will practically control the future policy of Egypt. Lately a French paper said that the object of a multiple audit was "not merely to pay, but to settle what should be done in Egypt;" and I do not think that this country will, for one moment, be blinded as to the real meaning of an international audit of finances. Settle what changes are required in the Law of Liquidation if you like—though many of us would prefer no Conference at all—but do not hand over to a mixed tribunal the paramount interest now exercised by England. I object, after such a large expenditure of money and so much shedding of blood, to Egypt being handed over to a Multiple Control. The serious dangers and disadvantages attending a Multiple Control are too obvious to require much explanation. First and foremost, this country would be absolutely deprived of the standing and power which she has justly obtained in Egypt. That power would be swept away, and there would be general confusion in Egypt. Where would be the result of the expenditure of so much money and the loss of so much life? Alexandria has been destroyed, Egypt has been placed hopelessly in debt, and 20,000 Egyptians and Arabs have been sent to their graves in our struggles to found a solid form of government. My Lords, we, who hold high the honour of this country, want to see a prosperous end and a happier state of affairs established before we retreat or "skedaddle" out of Egypt. Now, we are hated by every class in Egypt, and, unfortunately, not only hated, but despised. My Lords, let us try and live down this ill-feeling, by showing what security and good government can do in the future; not by turning our backs and refusing all responsibility just at a time that responsibility is most needed. If we have a Multiple Control, what about safeguarding our road to India? Is that a matter of no moment? We had a terrible Indian Mutiny 27 years ago. Suppose we had another such disastrous trial, and Russia sided against us, how should we find ourselves if the Canal were closed against our ships? Would it be no disadvantage to us, in case any part of our Eastern Empire was jeopardized, that we had to ask leave of the Great Powers to pass through the Suez Canal? Russia has this year added Merv and Sarakhs to her Empire, and is within striking distance of India. We have lately been remarkable only for giving up everything when a difficulty arose, or for being always too late in meeting those difficulties. It used to be a proud boast that an Englishman never knew when he was beaten. It has remained to the present Government to reverse all this, and to show how soon and how readily an Englishman can be beaten. Another reason, and a great drawback against a Multiple Control, seems to me to be that it may cause an apple of discord to be thrown into European Councils. No two European countries have exactly the same interests, and all the Great Powers are naturally jealous of one another. Which Power is to exercise the chief control? The old fable is still true—"*La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure!*" England has a vastly preponderating interest in Egypt, both on account of the great number of English ships which pass through the Canal—over 80 per cent of all the tonnage using the Canal being English—and also because of our great interests in the East, and our possession of India. Are we, in Egyptian affairs, only to have an equal share with five other Powers? If we are deputed to manage under a Joint Control, and only to share and share alike, we should not be able to move our little finger without the consent of another Conference of the Powers whose interests are very different and very inferior to our own. Then, as to fixing the terms of our occupation of Egypt. The very fact of doing so must tie the hands of our officials; the very fact that, at a particular time, no matter what has happened, we shall leave the country, will encourage agitation, and render all prospect of settlement hopeless. Undoubtedly, also, some other Power would step in to carry out what we have failed to establish—namely, a good form of government. But it is England that has been spending blood and treasure to put an end to anarchy and disorder; and England is bound, in honour, to carry out her work to a successful issue. Are we who govern the vast Provinces constituting the Empire of India, and who boast of the beneficence of our rule, to confess that we have tried to govern Egypt and have failed, and that we have, therefore, to call in the assistance of other European Powers? Then, as to our Army. Is the English Army to act as a "maid of all work," and to be under the management of this Joint Control; or, is the English Army to act as an Egyptian collector of taxes, in order to obtain the payment of the interest due to the Egyptian bondholders? I can conceive no more humiliating position for the Army of this country to be placed in, or of the extreme unpopularity of either proposal. I thought it hardly respectful to the House to make this inquiry without giving my reasons for doing so. Let it not be said that this Government, or any Government of England, is unable to govern a conquered country, and, is therefore, obliged to appeal to the aid of Europe to assist it in the task. That, however, is what certain foreign journals now say of us. Before it is too late, before further dishonour is thrown on the action of England, I implore the Government to confide in the wisdom of Parliament and in the good sense and right judgment of the people of this country. I beg to ask the Question of which I have given Notice.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, in answer to my noble Friend (Earl Stanhope), I have to remind him that on the last day before the Recess I repeated to the House that we were communicating with France on the subject of Egypt, and that if we found that our views respecting it were in agreement, we should then consult the Powers, and inform the House and Parliament before the Conference. The noble Earl gave Notice of a Question for to-day; and I stated that I could hold out no hopes of my being able to answer the Question to-day, and that is the case now. And although very great progress has been made in our communications with France, I can only say this—that we can only hope to be able to give a perfectly full statement to Parliament in the course of next week. The noble Earl said that it was an arbitrary thing for us to communicate with the Powers before informing Parliament what we were going to do. I am not aware, however, that there is anything arbitrary or unusual in that course. The noble Earl says that he has not spoken as a Party man. I venture to appeal to him—I should not have the courage to appeal to those who describe the Government as "imbecile"—but I venture to appeal to him, as one professing to have no Party feeling, to say whether it would not be better for noble Lords to reserve an opinion upon the course which Her Majesty's Government have taken until the full statement we have promised is before them with all the circumstances of the case. I may add that I see no danger in such a course, because it is clear that that full statement will enable Parliament to take action to prevent the country being committed to any course of policy which Her Majesty's Government may intend to adopt.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The last statement of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville), if I understand it aright, is the most important which we have yet received from his lips. I understand that he has given a pledge that this country shall not be irrevocably committed to any course with respect to Egypt until time has been given to Parliament to express its opinion. That I understand to be a plain pledge, and one which, had he given it some time back, would have saved us very much anxiety. It is a pledge which, I confess, I now receive with the greatest satisfaction; and I certainly shall not do anything to alloy that satisfaction by criticizing a policy of which we do not, as yet, know the full details, and which we know now, on the highest authority, we shall have the fullest opportunity of discussing before it is too late.

NAVY — CONDITION OF THE IRON-CLAD NAVY—CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR THOMAS M. SYMONDS, G.C.B.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

"1. Letter from Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thos. M. Symonds, G.C.B., to the First Lord of the Admiralty, dated 29th April 1884;

2. Letter from the Secretary of the Admiralty in acknowledgment of the above, dated 2nd May;

3. Letter from Sir Thos. Symonds to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated 5th May;

4. Letter from the Secretary of the Admiralty acknowledging the above, dated 9th May."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I should have assented to the Motion of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Sidmouth) without adding any remarks, if it had not been for an attack made last Wednesday at Devonport by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) upon Her Majesty's Government, regarding the condition of the Navy. The Correspondence between Sir Thomas Symonds and the Board of Admiralty, for which the noble Viscount has moved, refers to this particular subject, and fortunately gives me an opportunity of making some remarks on the subject. In some previous conversations in this House, I must do the noble Viscount the justice to say that he has never treated the condition of the Navy as a Party question. He expressed an opinion that the number of our armour-plated ships of war is not so great as it should be; but he directed his remarks as much to the Predecessors of the present Board of Admiralty as to us; and, in replying to them, I pointed out, what must be apparent to everyone who knows anything of the subject, that the present force of armour-plated ships of war depends, not upon the Admiralty of to-day, but upon the foresight of their Predecessors, for an armour-plated ship of war is hardly ever completed in less than five years. I said that, in my opinion, the state of the case had been much exaggerated, and that the Navy of this country undoubtedly was decidedly superior to any force that was likely to be brought against us; but I indicated that the construction of armour-plated ships of war had not, in my opinion, received the attention it deserved from our Predecessors, and that the present Board of Admiralty had, therefore, very considerably increased the rate of their construction. I supported my statement by figures, and I hoped that I had satisfied your Lordships. Therefore, it was with some surprise that I read the attack of the noble Marquess opposite at Devonport. He had been silent in this House; the attack was made when there was no opportunity for a reply, and at a place where such an attack, coming with his authority on an electioneering campaign, must, of course, tend to prejudice his opponents, and support his own Party. If the attack meant anything, it meant this—that Conservative statesmen watched the progress of Foreign Navies, and were resolved to maintain the superiority of the British Navy; while Her Majesty's Government were neglectful of this most important duty. My Lords, I can truly say that my wish has been to remove all naval questions from the arena of Party conflict; and the fault is not mine if I have now to speak more plainly on the subject, and to show that the attack of the noble Marquess is not only devoid of foundation, but that the real cause of any apprehensions which have been felt by Sir Thomas Symonds and others regarding the present condition of our force of armour-plated ships of war, arises from the want of foresight of the Government of which the noble Marquess was a distinguished Member, and not from that of Her Majesty's present Government. I have always deprecated comparisons between our Navy afloat and that of any Foreign Power, not only because of the invidious and irritating nature of such comparisons, but because there is great difference of opinion between naval officers as to the merits of different classes of ships. The same objection, however, does not apply to the much more simple question of a comparison between the numbers of ships laid down. An armour-plated ship cannot be built in a corner unknown to the world; and anyone who takes the pains can ascertain what ships of this kind are laid down by the French Admiralty and by ourselves. The last armour-plated ship laid down by the Board of Admiralty over which Mr. Goschen presided with great advantage to the Public Service was the *Inflexible.* She was laid down in February, 1874, and I may observe, as an illustration of the time which is sometimes taken to complete these large ships, that she was not finished and ready for sea till 1880. The late Government took Office in 1874, and I will give the House the names, year by year, from that time to the present, of the armour-plated ships laid down by the English and French Admiralties. In 1874 we laid down the *Nelson* and the *Northampton;* France none. In 1875 we laid down none; France two, the *Fulminant* and the *Vengeur.* In 1867 we laid down two, the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon;* France four, the *Dévastation*, *Foudroyant*, *Bayard*, and *Turenne.* In 1877 we laid down none; France three, the *Amiral Duperré*, *Tonnant*, and *Furieux.* In 1878 we laid down none, but purchased out of the Vote of Credit, in anticipation of war with Russia, four ships, the *Neptune*, *Superb*, *Bellisle*, and *Orion.* France laid down five, the *Duguesclin*, *Caïman*, *Terrible*, *Indomptable*, and *Requin.* In 1879 we laid down three, the *Conqueror*, *Edinburgh*, and *Colossus;* France three, the *Amiral Baudin*, *Formidable*, and *Vauban.* Your Lordships will observe that, during the six years of the late Government, seven armour-plated ships were laid down by us, and four bought out of the Vote of Credit, or 11 in all; while France laid down 17. In order to show that the comparison of numbers is a fair one, I will give the aggregate tonnage of the ships. The 11 English ships measure 85,000 tons, and the 17 French ships 128,000 tons. I must further observe that, when the present Government came into Office, in 1880, we found the Navy Estimates introduced, and no provision made in those Estimates to increase the rate of construction of armour-plated ships. I must supplement this statement by the remark that the activity of the French Admiralty was perfectly legitimate, and that there is no reason to assume it to have been prompted by any hostile feeling towards this country. Many of the armour-plated ships in the French Navy are built of wood, and are rapidly becoming unserviceable. The programme of the French Admiralty to replace them was openly announced, and was founded upon the Report of a Parliamentary Committee, over which M. Gambetta presided. The superiority of the British Navy, I may say, is constantly admitted in French official Reports. I have no wish, in any way, to exaggerate the state of the shipbuilding in 1880. Our previous superiority was great, and our superiority at the time was and now is decisive; but there certainly was a risk that, when the French programme was completed, the margin of our superiority might be unduly diminished. My Lords, I have now, I think, sufficiently explained the real cause of the apprehensions expressed by Sir Thomas Symonds and the noble Viscount opposite, which is that, in the six years from 1874 to 1880, much more vigorous action was taken by the French Admiralty to increase the number of armour-plated ships than was taken by the late Government. But your Lordships will, I am sure, agree with me that this retrospect is of little consequence compared to the account which I have to give of the manner in which the present Board of Admiralty have dealt with this very important part of their duty. We decided, gradually but substantially, to increase the provision made for the construction of armour-plated ships. In 1880, although, as I have before remarked, we found the Navy Estimates already introduced, we were able to make an arrangement by which the progress of the armour-plated ships on the stocks was accelerated; and in the years 1881, 1882, and 1883, we very largely increased the provision for the construction of such ships. Probably, the best way of showing this is to compare the expenditure on the hulls and machinery of such ships year by year. In 1879-80, it was £631,724; in 1880-1, it was £698,798; in 1881-2, it was £949,313; in 1882-3, it was £990,710; and in 1883-4, it was £1,240,700; or, in round numbers, the sum appropriated to armour-plated construction has been doubled. I will now give the names of the ships laid down during the last four years.

In 1880, in England, the *Collingwood* was laid down; in France none. In 1881 we laid down the *Impérieuse* and *Warspite;* France, the *Hoche.* In 1882 we laid down four—the *Howe*, *Rodney*, *Camperdown*, and *Benbow;* France two—the *Neptune* and *Marceau.* In 1883 we laid down the *Anson*, and France the *Magenta.* In the four years we have laid down eight ships, and France four. In short, the facts are, that during the six years of the Conservative Government armour-plated ships were laid down by the two nations at the rate of three French to two English, including the ships purchased from the Vote of Credit; and during the last four years at the rate of two English to one French. I do not pretend to explain the reasons for the shipbuilding policy of the late Government, and I have been only forced into making the comparison by the attack made upon us by the noble Marquess at Devonport. I trust that I have proved that Her Majesty's Government are not justly open to such an attack. I should have considered myself unworthy of being at the head of the Board of Admiralty if I had not embraced the earliest opportunity of showing, in a plain and business-like manner, that Her Majesty's Government are fully sensible of their duty to watch the progress of Foreign Navies, and that we have actually taken the measures which we believe to be sufficient to insure the superiority of the Naval Forces of this country.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the noble Earl who has just spoken (the Earl of Northbrook) has chosen to refer to what he is pleased to call my attack. It is a pity that he is not accurate. The nature of my observations was this. In the course of the luncheon at Devonport—at which I was sitting between two sailors—one my distinguished Friend behind me (Viscount Sidmouth), and the other Captain Price (the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport)—they both expressed considerable apprehension with respect to the state of the Navy; my observation, which was purely hypothetical, was that, unless Her Majesty's Government showed more wisdom in providing a sufficient Navy for the defence of these shores than they had shown in the rest of their policy; if they behaved towards the Navy—["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial laughter.*] These are facts. This is what I said—[*Renewed cheers and laughter*]—this is actually what I said—that if they behaved towards the Navy as they have behaved towards Egypt, and had not treated it any better; in that case I thought there was very considerable ground for apprehension; and I added that I listened to the statement of my noble and hon. and gallant Friends with considerable anxiety. I will not attempt at present—I am not competent—to analyze the figures which the noble Earl has laid upon the Table. I must wait until I have obtained information from others who are more competent than I am before I can arrive at an opinion on such matters. I wish, however, to point out that, in the remarks I made, I was not comparing the action of the Conservatives with the action of the Liberal Administration. If I had done so, I should have laid myself open to the reproach which I think applies to the noble Earl, for he appears to think that, upon the question whether this country is adequately defended, it is sufficient for him to utter a very loud and a very elaborate *tu quoque.* It is not a question of whether the late Government did or did not provide adequately for the service of the Navy. Before we decide that question it will be necessary, not only to look into the mere figures, but into the position of the political world at the time, the precise political dangers against which it was their duty to guard, and the possible complications which it was incumbent upon them to anticipate. I have no doubt that, upon the whole, allowing for some pacific influences which affected that Government, and have now been transferred to the other side, the verdict of the country as to the conduct of the late Government will be that they did provide adequately for the defence of the country. But whether they did, or did not, it is no answer whatever to the complaint that we are not adequately protected now. Supposing it was found that we were inadequately defended, or that we were overmatched, what kind of consolation would it be to the people whose interests were jeopardized, and whose commerce was ruined, to be told that the Liberal Government had provided so many tons more than the Conservative Government had provided six years ago? My Lords, this sort of reply is no answer at all. Whether the noble Earl can show that the Navy is in a state such as the present condition of foreign affairs requires, in a state such as the prevention of all dangers which may possibly threaten our shores demands—whether he can show that, or not, I must refer now, as I referred at Devonport, to the judgment of the experts who can decide upon that matter. But I do most earnestly protest against the idea that it is any defence against the charge of insufficiently providing for the Public Service to say that some other person at some distant time failed to provide sufficiently.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I do not say that what my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook) has said is an absolute defence, but I do say that it is a defence against the noble Marquess. I must remind your Lordships that the noble Marquess was a Member of that Administration, which, as has been shown, was largely responsible for the present state of the Navy. The late Administration did not provide for the building of a sufficient number of iron-clad ships; and the results of that neglect has been left to the present Government as a legacy, and as ships cannot be built in a day, we are bound, in consequence of that neglect, to be for some time at a disadvantage. We stand at this moment, not upon the ships which my noble Friend has laid down, but we are standing, as regards our power, only on those ships which were laid down or in course of completion or completed under the late Government. It is perfectly clear that our answer to the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Sidmouth), therefore, who complains of the comparative growth of the English Navy as compared with that of France, must necessarily be based on what the Conservative Government had done—in short, the condition of our naval power does not depend on what is being done now, but on what had been done before we came into Office. The case is absolutely clear against the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess says that his remarks were purely hypothetical; but can we conceive anyone in the position of the noble Marquess, in the circumstances, speaking as he has done at Devonport? The noble Marquess said he could not accept the official statement made by the Government; because, I suppose, he rather feared it might be inconsistent with his theory. The noble Marquess said here was a Ministry so craven and cowardly, so insensible to the honour of the country, that official statements were really not sufficient to satisfy him. But the noble Marquess cannot expect that he will blind the eyes of anyone by language of that kind. It is a kind of hypothetical insinuation which, coming from the noble Marquess who occupies a responsible position now, who has occupied a very high position in the Government before this, and who may occupy an even higher position in the next, is a very poor way for him to make an attack upon Her Majesty's Government—namely, by insinuation; and the more especially, as it now appears, that he was totally ignorant of the facts of the case. That attack, however, is of a very grave and plain character, and really means that the Government of the country have neglected the Navy. The noble Marquess now seems to feel disturbed by the facts placed before him, and says that it is an easy way of meeting his facts, to tell him that the Conservative Government neglected their duty. But my noble Friend did not confine himself to that. If he had, he might have been open to the charge brought against him by the noble Marquess—of dealing in *tu quoques.* My noble Friend, besides pointing out what the late Board of Admiralty had neglected, had shown what the present Board of Admiralty are doing, and has proved that, whereas the former Board had failed to keep pace with the French Navy, the present Board of Admiralty has largely exceeded the French in shipbuilding; and that, taking year by year, there has been an actual amount of ships laid down double that which was laid down in the last year of the Conservative Administration. I say, therefore, that my noble Friend's answer is complete as against the noble Marquess in showing that the late Administration, of which he was a Member, neglected their duty, and in showing the manner in which that duty has been fulfilled by the present, as compared with the late, Administration.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that the course which had been followed by the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) on the present occasion, was one of the most extraordinary that he ever remembered to have been adopted in their Lordships' House. What had happened? His (the Earl of Carnarvon's) noble Friend behind him (Viscount Sidmouth) had put a Motion, and had put it in general terms. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty came down to the House, and, without any Notice——

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: There was Notice of the Motion.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, the Motion referred to one subject, the speech of the noble Earl to a totally different question.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: No.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he would put it to their Lordships, whether any reasonable person could have formed the least idea that this attack was going to be made on the last Government? His noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) had made a speech at Devonport upon a most important and grave subject; and what he (the Earl of Carnarvon) complained of, was not that the noble Earl should have come down and given a complete and general denial to what his noble Friend had said, but that he should, without giving any idea as to what he was going to do, make in the most general terms upon a most important and grave subject an attack on the late Government which, if it were to be answered at all would have to be got up beforehand. If the noble Earl had come down and made a general denial of the charges made against the Government of neglect, that would have been fair enough. But it was a totally different thing to come with elaborate statistics to which no reply could possibly be made, and as to which it was impossible for any of their Lordships to refer. That was a most extraordinary proceeding; but the fact was, that the late Government in one set of circumstances laid down a certain amount of shipping, and the present Government in a different set of circumstances laid down a larger amount. How that proved a case of negligence against the late Administration passed his comprehension. The real question which the House had before it was not whether more ships had been laid down by the present or the late Government; it was were we, at the present moment adequately defended in naval matters, or were we not? The old maxim was that the Navy of this country ought to be a match for the Navies of any two other countries. That old maxim was a perfectly sound one, and it had not, so far as he knew, ever been seriously disputed by any competent authority. He did not, however, believe it could be truly asserted that, at the present time, our Navy was a match for any two Navies. Indeed, he should be surprised if the noble Earl himself could get up and say so. From what he knew, it was impossible to resist a feeling of very considerable anxiety. It had been his duty to look into the strength of Foreign Navies, and from what he knew, he had no hesitation in saying that, as compared with them, our Navy was by no means of the strength and adequacy which we could desire. He would do his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty the justice to admit that he had shown great anxiety to correct defects, and to do the best with the money that was at his command; but he should be surprised if his noble Friend could state that, as compared with foreign nations, he was entirely satisfied with the present condition of our Navy.

Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—MOTION.

Moved, "That this House do adjourn till Monday next."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he had no opposition to make to the proposal, provided that the House should have an opportunity of discussing the result of the negotiations with respect to the Conference, and that it was impossible that the noble Earl should be able to make any further explanation before that day. If that were the case, of course, no advantage would come from meeting at an earlier time.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that he had always put himself in the hands of the noble Marquess with respect to the Adjournment. He had done so, when he had proposed an Adjournment for three weeks, and he agreed to the noble Marquess's wish that the House should meet that day. The noble Marquess seemed to be very glad they had met that day, and he (Earl Granville) was also very glad, for reasons which he need not specify. He was entirely in the hands of the noble Marquess; but he did not think it was likely he could give any information about the negotiations before next week.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Say Friday.

Earl GRANVILLE consented.

Motion *amended*, and *agreed to.*

ROYAL MILITARY ASYLUM CHELSEA (TRANSFER) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for transferring the Royal Military Asylum at Chelsea from the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings—Was *presented* by The Lord Sudeley; read 1ª. (No. 114.)

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, to Friday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 9th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Lincoln City, *v.* John Hinde Palmer, esquire, deceased.

Supply — *considered in Committee* — *Postponed Resolutions* [June 5] *further considered.*

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) (Borough of Aberavon and others) * [242]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14) (Dawlish and Kenton) * [243]; Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *; Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation * [244]; Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Act (1860) Amendment * [245].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) (Parishes of Bisley, &c.) * [213]; Shannon Navigation [201]; Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment [208]; Irish Land Court Officers (Exclusion from Parliament) [89], *debate adjourned;* Colonial Attorneys Relief Act Amendment * [228]; County Courts (Ireland) [104].

Second Reading—*Committee*—Marriages Legalisation [237]—r.p.

Second Reading, and committed to a Select Committee—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage) * [211]; Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) [167].

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (*Clauses* 4, 7, 9, 11)—[Sixth Night]—r.p.; Royal Courts of Justice [139]—r.p.; Customs and Inland Revenue [206]—r.p.

Considered as amended—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) (Belchalwell, &c.) * [150].

Withdrawn—Post Office Protection [161]; University of Cambridge (Borrowing Powers) * [133].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CARDIFF CORPORATION BILL—UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SOUTH WALES.

INSTRUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE.

Sir EDWARD J. REED rose to move the Motion of which he had given Notice, and he asked the House to observe the precise terms of that Motion. It was merely an empowering Instruction to the Committee, and it was not framed in such terms as would finally dispose of the question. The state of the case was this. The Cardiff Corporation had promoted a Bill in certain clauses of which provision was made for contributing by the Cardiff Corporation £10,000 towards the University College of South Wales. The Committee which had been sitting on the Bill considered themselves not empowered to pass, or not justified in passing, such a clause, as it seemed to involve a general principle which might or might not have the approval of the House. He had not been able to gather that the Committee were opposed to the provision in this particular Bill; but, as he was informed, the Committee thought it desirable these clauses should not be passed by the Committee without an Instruction from the House to deal with them. Now, he hardly knew how to proceed, for this simple reason—that it seemed to him that for the House to refuse to allow a Private Bill Committee to deal with this question at all, to pronounce it unreasonable legislation, would be such an extraordinary proceeding, such a violent interference with the principle of local self-government, such a deviation from precedent, that he could hardly conceive the House taking that course, though he could perfectly well understand the desire of the Committee to have the opinion of the House on the matter expressed. Stating the case as briefly as he could, the position was this. In 1880 the Government appointed a very influential Committee to consider the state of Higher Education and Intermediate Education in Wales and Monmouthshire. That Committee was presided over by Lord Aberdare; and, after a lengthened and searching investigation, they recommended the establishment, under Government patronage, and with the sanction of Parliament, of a University College for South Wales, to be situated either in Swansea or Cardiff, as might be hereafter determined. The town of Swansea subscribed a considerable sum of money, and undertook to give a most valuable site as the town's contribution if the University College were erected there. Cardiff subscribed a very much larger sum by voluntary effort, and undertook through its Corporate body to give a site for the erection of buildings for the purposes of the College. The scheme of the Committee met with the approval of Government, Cardiff was selected by the arbitrators, and in October, 1883, the College was founded, Professors were appointed, and it now educated 150 students, and the whole proceeding of the University College was founded on the faith of the Town Council providing their volunteered support. It had happened, however, that the only site that was at the disposal of the Corporation for the University College was found to be less satisfactory in Cardiff than the actual site on which the College work had been commenced, and where it was now proceeding ; and the University College authorities were very desirous of having a change made in the form of the town's contribution to the College—of having a sum of money substituted for the piece of land. That was the proposal in the Bill of the Corporation—that they should be allowed to substitute £10,000 from the Corporation Funds in lieu of the land promised. This proposal, in one form and another, had been before the town of Cardiff for two years past; and not only so, but a Bill, the very Bill in question, with the clauses providing for the contribution of £10,000, had been, under the requirements of the Borough Funds Act, submitted to the ratepayers at a public meeting, and approved without opposition. When the Bill came before the Private Bill Committee there was not known to be any opposition whatever. It had happened, however, during the consideration of the Bill by the Committee presided over by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot), that some opposition to the clause was raised on the part of Lord Bute, who, as owner of docks and other property, was a large contributor to the rates of the town. Now, he would point out, in regard to this opposition, that in common fairness to the College authorities, the town authorities, to the town itself, and everybody concerned, it should have been raised when the question was referred to the ratepayers in accordance with the Act of Parliament; but on that occasion no voice whatever was raised on behalf of Lord Bute or his agent. This was a strong circumstance, which should operate very much against the present opposition of Lord Bute. And, in the next place, he had his own reasons for believing that this particular clause of the Bill would not have been opposed by Lord Bute if it had not been associated with other powers in the Bill, other town questions which Lord Bute would desire to oppose. Now, he believed the great question which had presented itself to the minds of the Committee, so far as he had been able to gather the facts, was this—whether the grant from the Corporation Funds of a sum of money towards the maintenance of the University College was a legitimate application of those funds; at any rate, he understood the Committee thought it was not an application they should sanction without an expression of opinion by the House. He did not know the minds of the Committee; but he had not heard that, either individually or in the aggregate, they had expressed an opinion against the grant. But he wished to point out that his Motion in no way whatever proposed to override any view the Committee might think proper to take; it simply asked the House to empower the Committee to consider the subject. The terms of the Motion were—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations that they have power to insert in the Cardiff Corporation Bill provisions enabling the said Corporation to contribute the sum of Ten thousand pounds to or for the purposes of the 'University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire.'"

That was what the Committee should have the power to insert in the clause if, in the exercise of their discretion, they thought proper to do so. He hardly thought the Committee would refuse to allow the Corporation the liberty of contributing to the University College of South Wales out of the rates of the town when there was no objection on the part of the ratepayers themselves, though there had been ample opportunity of investigation, and the only opposition now raised was in an unexpected, he might almost say an irregular manner, for it ignored the regular and legal process. Should the objection as now urged prevail, he really did not know what was to become of the considerations by which the House had supported the principles of local government. He could hardly imagine a more extraordinary action than for the House to intervene in this case, where a town was asking for itself to contribute from its own local funds. The University College was to receive under the auspices of the Government £4,000 a-year, for assisting the maintenance of the College. Now, £4,000 at 3 per cent capitalized was a large sum—£130,000—and to say that a College that was to receive the equivalent of £130,000 from the general funds of the country was to receive nothing at all from the funds of the town in which it was advisedly located, after the utmost deliberation, and which town wished to contribute a sum of money, would be an extraordinary interference with local self-government. In saying this, he made no complaint of the action of the Committee, and he apprehended no objection from the Committee itself. The House had a natural regard for precedents, and he should just like to mention that there was a precedent — possibly there were more than one—but there was a precedent bearing most materially on this case. In 1874, the town of Nottingham promoted a Private Bill, authorizing it to erect public buildings, museums, &c., and that Bill became an Act. The town of Nottingham erected out of its funds a University College, with other buildings; but doubts arising whether the Act of 1874 covered the erection of that College, the sum of £10,000 was subscribed by the town to meet the cost of the building, about which a doubt existed. But, in 1878, Nottingham came to the House and asked for authority to contribute that £10,000, and to have authority to grant an annual sum out of the rates for the permanent maintenance of the University College at Nottingham. Now, it would seem to him an incredible thing that the House in 1878 should empower the authorities at Nottingham to make an annual grant in perpetuity for the maintenance of their University College, and in 1884 deny to the town of Cardiff the right to contribute a lump sum in lieu of land promised. He would not detain the House at greater length. He would only add that serious consequences might result from the refusal of the Motion. The College was established and in full working order, and if by the intervention of the House the right of the town to make the promised contribution was denied, the whole established machinery of the College would be upset. Though he thought too well of the people of Cardiff to suppose that even under such an extreme state of things the University College of South Wales would not still remain in Cardiff, he thought the House would be slow to inflict such an injury on the College for which such exertions had been made. He hoped in his remarks he had said nothing of which the Chairman of the Committee, or his Colleagues, could complain, and he earnestly hoped the House would not refuse his very simple Motion.

Mr. RICHARD seconded the Motion. The hon. Member, who was indistinctly heard, said, that he had had something to do with the establishment of the College referred to in the Motion of his hon. Friend, and he naturally felt great interest in the proposal which his hon. Friend had made. The Government had appointed a Committee to inquire into the question of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales. He had the honour of being a Member of that Committee, and among other questions which came before it was that of establishing one or two or more Colleges in Wales. The Committee recommended, among other things, that a College should be established for South Wales, and soon afterwards there arose a keen competition between the towns of Swansea and Cardiff as to the place in which that College should be situated. The question was referred to arbitration —the arbitrators being Lord Carlingford, Lord Blackburn, and the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Committee of Council for Education. His hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) appeared before the arbitrators as an advocate for Swansea, and made a very powerful and exhaustive statement on behalf of that town. Another gentleman rendered the same service for the town of Cardiff, and the arbitrators ultimately decided that the site of the

University College should be at Cardiff; being guided partly, he thought, by the fact that the people of Cardiff, when they heard of the probability of a College being established, at once started a subscription, which amounted, he believed, to the sum of £26,000, for the purposes of the College. The Corporation of Cardiff further agreed to grant a site for the erection of the College. The College had now been established, and it had been singularly successful. As his hon. Friend had stated, it had already 150 day students and upwards of 600 night students; and he understood that the number was continually increasing week by week. Indeed, there was every probability of the College becoming a great success, and a blessing to that part of the Principality. He thought it was very much to the honour of the people of Cardiff that they were prepared to make such great sacrifices for so important an object as the promotion of higher education in Wales, and it would be very much to be deplored and deprecated if that House were now to step in and impose an obstacle in the way, throwing, as it were, a wet blanket upon a work which promised to be so eminently successful. He trusted, therefore, that the House would accept the Resolution of his hon. Friend, which was in itself a very moderate one, being simply to enable the Corporation of Cardiff to contribute a sum of £10,000 towards the purposes of the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, in lieu of the site they originally promised.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations that they have power to insert in the Cardiff Corporation Bill provisions enabling the said Corporation to contribute the sum of Ten thousand pounds to or for the purposes of the 'University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire.'"—(*Sir Edward J. Reed.*)

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, that it fell to his lot, as Chairman of the Committee to whom this Bill had been referred, to ask the judgment of the House upon the Motion now made. In the first place, in order to remove any misconception which might prevail in the mind of any person as to the matter, he wished to assure the hon. Member who had made the Motion that the Committee had not the slightest feeling about Lord Bute and his opposition, and he did not appear there in the least degree as the spokesman of any opponent of the Bill. All he asked was that the House should take the matter into consideration upon its real merits and as a matter of public policy. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), who moved the Resolution, had spoken in most moderate terms, and had rightly said that the Committee desired that the House should determine if this was a provision which they ought to consider with a view of inserting it in the Bill. The hon. Member was perfectly right in that statement, and, speaking on behalf of his Colleagues and of himself, he might say that they all thought that the matter was so grave in its bearings that it ought not to be decided solely by a Committee sitting upstairs. He might further say, at the outset, for the information of hon. Gentlemen who did not know anything of the working of this particular Committee, that it had had a good deal of hard work to do, and it seemed likely to have a good deal more in the future. The Committee was appointed in pursuance of Standing Order 173A. He would not read the Order, but he gave the number of it in order that hon. Members who desired might refer to it. The object of that Standing Order was this. It had been found that in many Private Bills enactments were proposed which very largely extended the scope of the general law. It was thought desirable to put a check upon that system, in order that the House might have an opportunity, through a Committee appointed for the special purpose, of saying how far the general law should be departed from. The Committee had had a good deal of work to do. They found that a number of Corporation Bills were being constantly introduced—the number was far larger than might be supposed—enacting all kinds of burdens, which were proposed to be laid upon the ratepayers —not only pecuniary burdens, but burdens affecting almost the daily life of the population of the great towns. In point of fact, attempts were made by means of these Private Bills to introduce into large towns provisions which he ventured to say were never contemplated, and which had never been proposed, by any Public Bill in that House. Whenever changes of this kind were made, they ought to be made in the face of day, and Parliament ought to have a full opportunity of expressing itself upon such questions, and of determining, with full consideration, the alterations which should be made in the law. But, as hon. Members well knew, many things were done in Private Bill Legislation which he was bound to say were done in a very slip-shod way. For instance, some Bills were unopposed, and might contain alterations of the kind referred to, which might have passed unopposed, unless the vigilance of the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, or of some of the officers of the House, had detected in them provisions that were largely beyond the powers conferred by the ordinary law of Parliament. And thus Parliament, without knowing anything of these provisions, which, in some cases, were inserted almost behind the back of Parliament, would find most important powers enacted which had never been really discussed before they became law. He had said so much because he thought it was desirable that hon. Members who did not know very much about the working of this Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations should understand the principle upon which the Business before them was conducted. He now came to the particular question involved in the present Bill, and he contended, in the first place, that it was a matter upon which the Committee ought to have the instruction and judgment of the House. Personally, without speaking on behalf of his Colleagues on the Committee—for he wished to guard himself carefully against doing that, although he knew that some Members of the Committee shared his opinion—he thought that this was a most improper and objectionable proposition, and he should, therefore, feel it his duty to oppose the Motion. He did so on this ground. He had nothing to say against the University College of South Wales. It might be a good institution, but he had no local knowledge with regard to it. It might be doing good work. They had been told that day that it was an institution of very great value, and that it had already begun its work; but he ventured to assert that it was not an institution which ought to be supported out of the local rates. If it was an institution doing good educational work it had a fair claim to come to that House and to the Government of the day—the responsible Advisers of the Crown—for a grant out of the public funds. It would be perfectly justified in making such an application, and let it take its place with the Scotch Universities, the London University, and other similar institutions; but to impose upon the ratepayers an additional charge to those great and excessive burdens almost daily increasing which they now had to bear, was not what he hoped this House would sanction. It was the duty of the House to remember who the ratepayers of the town of Cardiff were. They were not all of them wealthy people, interested in higher education, but many of them were people struggling on the very verge of pauperism—persons upon whom the burden of local rates was already pressing with the utmost severity. The subject of local taxation was one which had been a matter of much controversy in the House of Commons. It was a subject on which the Government, strong as it was, had not been able to command a majority in that House. Indeed, the feeling was so strong upon the question of the constant increase of local rates that the Government had already this Session been placed in a minority upon it. If that were so, surely they ought to watch with great jealousy any proposition that might have a tendency to increase local burdens, and he contended that the higher education of the people was not one of those objects for which provision ought to be made out of the local rates. Besides, the question of higher education, there was a further supplementary question involved—namely, whether the particular University College proposed to be established was conducted on principles that would commend themselves to all the community of Cardiff. If not, he would ask the House to observe what was virtually being done by accepting a proposition of this kind. They were saddling, by a mere vote of a majority of the ratepayers, upon the minority of the ratepayers an institution of which they might disapprove. If this was to be done in one way in one case it might be done in another way equally in another case, and in matters of education, where conscientious differences of opinion existed, it would be unwise for Parliament to sanction the imposition of such burdens upon the ratepayers. He saw opposite the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and he hoped the House would have his opinion upon the matter before the debate closed. The right hon. Gentleman was the Minister charged with the representation of the ratepayers, and was supposed to watch over their interests in order to see that no undue burdens were imposed upon them. He would, therefore, be glad to hear, before the debate closed, whether the right hon. Gentleman thought that a burden of this kind was one that ought to be fairly thrown upon their shoulders. But, whatever the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman might be, he, for his part, contended that this was not a proper purpose to which the rates of the Corporation of Cardiff ought to be applied. If the House chose to give the Committee the Instruction moved by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and which, no doubt, was couched in moderate terms, it would be the duty of the Committee to do their best to carry out the wishes of the House, and to take the matter into their serious consideration, although, personally, he should much prefer that the matter should be kept as it was, and that the Corporation Bill should proceed without this power being inserted in it. It was said that a precedent had been established in the case of the Nottingham Corporation. That there might have been a precedent established in that case he did not deny; but if there was only one precedent, it was obvious that the matter could not have frequently commended itself to the judgment of Municipal bodies. If there was only one precedent for a provision of this kind, he thought he might say that it was almost an exceptional proposition. He might further say that the very fact of the Nottingham Corporation having obtained this power from Parliament was an illustration in substantiation of his first remark—that it had been obtained with very little discussion in Parliament, and that, in point of fact, it was one of those things which had slipped through Parliament without being observed, and in the way he had referred to, without real discussion. He knew that Private Business was not attractive to hon. Members, and that it was never discussed at great length; but it must be borne in mind that this was a question of more than ordinary importance, and he did not think there was any subject to which the attention of Parliament ought to be more carefully given than to questions which involved an increase of the local burdens of the ratepayers. Whatever the judgment of the House might be, he trusted that local bodies would in future be more jealous as to the manner in which they imposed burdens upon the rates. He was much obliged for the indulgence of the House, and he felt bound to oppose the Resolution of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cardiff.

Mr. WEST said, he proposed to detain the House with only a very few remarks upon this very important question. He believed that the Committee which had been appointed to deal with questions relating to Police and Sanitary Regulations had had before them a good many precedents of the very worst kind, and it was owing to the existence of those precedents that the Committee themselves had been appointed, in order to prevent in future such precedents from becoming part of the general law of the land. His hon. Friend who had just sat down asked them to pause before they embarked in what appeared to be an extremely perilous course—namely, that of allowing the endowment of University Colleges by empowering a Municipal Corporation to impose burdens upon the ratepayers. He agreed with his hon. Friend that if they sanctioned such a proposition they would be embarking upon a highly dangerous course. He must confess that he had heard with considerable surprise the remarks of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) in support of the proposal. He had always been of opinion that his hon. Friend was personally opposed to religious endowments, and this was either a religious endowment or it was not. [Mr. Richard: It is not.] In that case it was open to the objection which was taken to the Queen's Colleges in Ireland. It was said that Lord Bute's Petition was the only Petition against the Bill. He did not speak on behalf of Lord Bute. He had had no communication with that noble Lord, and he knew nothing about him, except that he was a Roman Catholic Nobleman, who had a large interest in Cardiff, and that in his Petition he had put the matter very fairly. Lord Bute pointed out that the

Corporation of Cardiff ought not to be allowed to impose an obligation on the owners of property in the borough of Cardiff, who were sufficiently burdened with rates already. He further pointed out that they had already very largely contributed towards the establishment of the proposed College, and that he himself had subscribed the sum of £10,000. He added that the work ought to be carried on either by private subscription or by a Government grant, and that Parliament ought not to give power to the Corporation of Cardiff to levy additional taxes upon the ratepayers in aid of the College. The noble Lord further alleged that he himself was one of the largest ratepayers in the borough of Cardiff. He (Mr. West) had no wish to enlarge upon the danger of permitting this grant to be made out of local funds, and it was only because the Institution itself had the sympathy of the Members of that House that such a proposition had been made. If it had been made in respect of some other institution, such as a theatre or a racecourse, however much the ratepayers generally might desire to have it, there would be no sympathy with it in the House and it would not be acceded to. In the case of a theatre, no doubt the interests of a large number of persons might be served by establishing one; but would any great public service be rendered by a granting of the money of the ratepayers towards such an object? There was only one other observation he desired to make, and it was this. If the House of Commons agreed to embark in this dangerous course, they would run the risk, not only in Cardiff, but in other places, of inducing people to refrain from subscribing privately towards educational purposes, because they would consider that the contributions ought to come out of the rates. Even in this case, Lord Bute, who was a large subscriber to the school, said that he would not have given the contribution he had made if he had known that the money of the ratepayers was to be devoted to the same object.

SIR. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he was bound to say that he had never been more astonished than when he found that an opposition had been raised to this grant being made by the Corporation of Cardiff to the University College of South Wales. It seemed to him that the Committee had been appointed to prevent jobs from being perpetrated on the part of Corporate bodies; but it would appear that in addition to that duty they were endeavouring to exercise a kind of paternal influence in guiding those who were elected by the ratepayers of the borough of Cardiff as to the way in which they were to manage their own affairs. In point of fact, the Committee were endeavouring to intervene between the ratepayers of Cardiff and that which was undoubtedly regarded on all hands as a most important and valuable Institution. The ratepayers were almost entirely unanimous upon the subject—indeed, he thought he would be justified in saying that they were altogether unanimous. [MR. WEST: Quite unanimous.] His hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich, who was on the Committee, confirmed him in saying that they were quite unanimous. Then, why should this paternal Committee step in and say—"No, Gentlemen; you do not know anything about your own affairs. You shall not grant this money towards the University College of South Wales. We all know you will be immensely benefited by the establishment of this College, and that you all desire it above all other things. You have already pledged yourselves to support it, and by that pledge you have been allowed to locate this College in your midst. We know that it is going to be of the utmost value to you; but we are a paternal Committee, and we therefore step in and say that you shall not grant this sum of £10,000 out of the rates towards it?" Surely that was an extraordinary position to take up. The Representatives of a great borough like Cardiff were surely the best judges of what it was right for them to do. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. West) said that education was not a proper subject for the application of the rates, and he likened this University College to a theatre or a race-course. He could scarcely understand what his hon. Friend was thinking about. At this time of day, when the country was granting such enormous sums of money for the support of education, were they to put educational grants on the same footing as grants for theatres and race-courses? He confessed that he was lost in wonder and astonishment. Then, again, the hon.

Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) was about the last man he should have expected to come forward in opposition to a grant for educational purposes. He (Sir Hussey Vivian) entertained the hope that the establishment of this College would have the effect of inducing a large number of Welshmen to find their way into the University of Oxford hereafter, and yet one of the Members for that University came forward to say that institutions of this nature ought not, in any way, to be suppported out of local rates. It certainly seemed to him to be a contradiction in terms, and he would venture to appeal to his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, and to ask him whether, when this question was decided by those to whom it was submitted, of whom his right hon. Friend was one, this grant of £10,000 by the Town Council of Cardiff did not exercise very considerable weight upon the judgment of those by whom the decision was arrived at? In regard to the site of the new College, there was a considerable amount of contention between the towns of Swansea and Cardiff. The Corporation of Cardiff said—"If you will give us the estimable blessing of having this institution in our midst we we will contribute £10,000 towards it;" and he had no doubt that that fact did have considerable weight upon the minds of the arbitrators. The town of Swansea came forward very much in the same way, and said—"We will give you a very fine site for the College, which we consider to be worth very nearly as much." Were the Corporation of Cardiff to be told now, at the last moment, that they were not the best judges of the way in which their own funds ought to be expended, and that it was contrary to public policy for the money of the ratepayers to be applied to educational purposes? He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) would take the sense of the House upon the Motion. He could not for one moment believe that the House would refuse to assent to it, and that the Town Council of Cardiff would not be permitted to devote this comparatively small sum of £10,000 towards assisting the great educational work which had been commenced in their midst.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he would only detain the House for a few moments. He thought the Resolution which had been submitted raised a very important question. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had let the cat out of the bag. It now appeared that the towns of Cardiff and Swansea had competed against each other, and the Corporation of Cardiff obtained the preference because it promised to pay in aid of the College a sum of £10,000 out of the rates contributed by the ratepayers of the borough, provided that the Institution were established at Cardiff instead of Swansea. He would ask the House to remember what it was they were now called upon to do. They were asked to interfere with and override the decision of a Committee which had been expressly appointed to take note of such exceptional and extraordinary proposals as those inserted in the present Bill.

Sir EDWARD J. REED said, he was sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. The Committee had not refused to give effect to the proposal contained in the Bill, but simply asked to have the decision of the House upon it.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, the explanation of the hon. Member was not strictly correct. A clause originally appeared in the Bill sanctioning the expenditure of this sum of money, and it had been struck out by the Committee.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, it appeared that his information was perfectly correct, and that this was an appeal to the House to interfere with and override, by an Instruction to the Committee as to what their duty was, a decision at which they had already arrived. The House must remember that very large and exceptional powers had been deliberately placed in the hands of this Committee. He was himself Chairman of the Committee two years ago, and he knew, therefore, how arduous and responsible the duties were which were imposed upon that Committee. He thought that in the exercise of their responsibility the Committee were perfectly justified in striking out this particular clause, and his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) might fairly complain of this attempt on the part of hon. Members representing Welsh constituencies in that House to interfere with the progress of a Private Bill and with the conduct of the Committee in regard to it. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) said that this would not be an interference on the part of the House with the business of the Committee, but that it was merely an Instruction which would permit the Committee to do a certain thing. Now, the House knew very well what an Instruction to a Committee meant. If the House passed this Instruction, it would be tantamount to a direction to the Committee that the purpose for which the Instruction was passed should be carried out. It must be borne in mind that the Committee in question was not an ordinary Private Bill Committee of the House. On the contrary, it was a Hybrid Committee, which had been placed in charge of the general interests of the public, and of the House, and of the ratepayers of the whole of the United Kingdom. He was certain, therefore, that if the House sanctioned this Instruction, they would inflict a heavy blow against the interests of the ratepayers generally, and that it would be almost impossible for any amount of labour on the part of the Committee itself to recover the effect of that blow. It was said that the contribution of this sum of money towards the University College would be of great advantage to the town of Cardiff itself. He dared say that that would be so; but there might be a good many other things that would also be of advantage to the town of Cardiff—improved railway communication, for instance. Only last year a very important railway proposal was brought before a Private Bill Committee, and if the Committee had been armed with the excessive powers which the Instruction of the hon. Member for Cardiff was intended to give they might have authorized three important towns to carry out an undertaking, which they were quite prepared to carry out, by contributing a sum of £70,000 out of the rates, for the purpose of assisting in the establishment of improved railway communication. The towns in question were situated at some distance from each other, and an improved railway communication would, no doubt, be of advantage to each; but the Committee thought it their duty to strike out of the Bill those clauses which would have enabled that undertaking to be completed, and he thought they were perfectly right in doing so. In the case of the town of Halifax, also, another Committee refused to allow a contribution to be made in this way out of the rates of the borough. Allusion had been made to the Nottingham Bill. His own opinion was that the Nottingham Bill was one of the most flagrant instances of an abuse of Private Bill Legislation ever assented to by the House of Commons. It was a Bill which held over for an excessive number of years the repayment of a loan until it amounted to something like a perpetual annuity charged upon the rates of the town. In the present case, the Town Council of Cardiff were asked to obtain an advantage for themselves by mortgaging the rates of the town. He could hardly conceive a more improper proposal. The ratepayers of Cardiff were not more interested in this College than the whole of the ratepayers of South Wales. It was merely a struggle to get the College established in Cardiff instead of somewhere else. Town Councils and Corporations were not supposed to be possessed of infinite wisdom, and they were not always entrusted by the Legislature with the right of scattering broadcast the money contributed by the ratepayers. If they were now to introduce a new system, where was it to end? What was to become of the Borough Funds Act which now stood between the public and Corporate bodies in order to prevent excessive demands from being made upon the rates in aid of extraordinary projects which might be promoted by particular individuals? He trusted that the House would not permit this Instruction to be passed, but that it would firmly set its foot down upon every proposal of such a character.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he would not occupy the attention of the House for more than two or three minutes; but he wished to state what the question really was. It was a question of establishing in a condition of efficiency a University College in South Wales. As far as local feeling was concerned, the whole of Wales was of one mind. All of the Welsh Members on both sides of the House were in favour not only of the College, but of the present Bill. He had been surprised to hear the observation which had been made by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. West), although he had been quite prepared for the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who was Chairman of the Committee whose decision was the subject of the present Motion, because he remembered very distinctly that that hon. Gentleman had been from the first a most consistent opponent of the scheme for establishing Colleges in Wales.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked if the hon. and learned Member referred to him?

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD said, that he did.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he was bound to say that the remarks of the hon. and learned Member were entirely inaccurate.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD said, he was very glad to hear that the hon. Gentleman had withdrawn his opposition to the scheme. His recollection went back to the year 1879, and to the debate which took place in that House in reference to the establishment of Colleges in Wales on that occasion. He mentioned that circumstance in justification of the observations he had made. He was glad, however, to hear that the hon. Gentleman was no longer an opponent of this College. The hon. Gentleman said that they were establishing a dangerous precedent. Now, it was a precedent that was very unlikely to occur frequently, because it was a very unusual thing for a College of this nature to be established at all, and he believed there was no danger that many other towns would be called upon to follow the precedent. Not only were the ratepayers of Cardiff in favour of the present Bill, but it was universally supported by the Welsh people—at all events, in that part of the Principality; and he trusted that the House would give the Committee another opportunity of considering the question.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY wished to say a word, because he thought that the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) were altogether beside the question. He (Sir Gabriel Goldney) was in favour of the College, and if he were a landowner in the locality he would be very glad to subscribe to it; but the question was whether it was a proper object for a contribution from the rates. The expenditure of the rates of a town was regulated by the Municipal Corporations Act and the Borough Funds Act, or the Provision for Health of Towns Act; and it was clearly provided by those Acts what objects were to be furthered by the application of the rates of the inhabitants. The Committee to whom it was proposed to give this Instruction were specially appointed in order to prevent any clause being inserted in a Private Bill that would override the general law, unless there were some special reasons for doing so, and, in the event of such special reasons existing, that they should then report them to the House. He thought it was quite clear that the borough rates should not be applied to the endowment of Colleges. In the case of public baths, wash-houses, public libraries, and so forth, a general law had been passed enabling the expenditure to be paid out of the rates; but in regard to the endowment of Colleges no such general law had been passed, and the present proposal amounted to an infringement of the general law. The hon. and learned Member said it was very hard that the Corporation of Cardiff should not be allowed to do as they liked; but the Municipal Corporations Act was passed specially in order to prevent them from expending the money of the ratepayers as they liked. He had no doubt that the Corporation were unanimous as far as they could be, and probably a good many of the people of the town were consenting parties; but the population of Cardiff now amounted to 120,000, and he should like to know how many of the inhabitants were present at the meeting which sanctioned the present application? He was informed that the number present did not exceed 4,000, so that it was quite impossible to say that the meeting represented the feeling of the ratepayers of Cardiff. The House must bear in mind, before they consented to give this Instruction to the Committee, that the Committee itself had been appointed under a special Standing Order to guard jealously all expenditure out of the rates in aid of projects that were in excess of the general law. This was, practically, a test case; and if this precedent were now established, he was afraid they would find something of the same kind in every future Bill that might be introduced by a public Corporation. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) had mentioned the precedent of the Nottingham Bill, and if the House consented to legislate exceptionally for particular localities, they would find increased demands made upon them year by year by different Corporations. Other towns, jealous of the privileges conceded to Cardiff, would endeavour to do something of the same kind for themselves. He, therefore, thought this was a matter which ought to be carefully and jealously watched by the House; and he trusted the present Instruction would not be adopted. Of course, if the House said that it ought to be adopted, the Committee would do it; but, without a special Instruction from the House, the Committee had no power to do it.

MR. RATHBONE said, he was unable to accept the statement of the hon. Baronet who had just sat down—that the general law, as at present framed, prevented the application of the money of the ratepayers in this matter. He could only say that the Conservative Corporation of Liverpool had recently given more than double the amount the Corporation proposed to give for purposes that were somewhat similar. No objection had been raised to their action, and he did not see why what the Corporation of Liverpool did the Corporation of Cardiff should not be able to do. He was quite sure that both the Corporation of Liverpool and the Corporation of Cardiff were doing a good stroke of business for the ratepayers.

MR. CARPENTER-GARNIER said, that he was a Member of the Committee, and he desired to express an opinion upon the very important principle involved in the Motion. As a Member of the Committee, he was prepared cheerfully to carry out any order that might be given by the House; but, as far as his own private opinion went, he felt that it would be a mistake to pass this Instruction, and for this reason—that it would raise the whole question of local taxation. Although the ratepayers were ready to provide elementary education, and they were bound to do so, they nevertheless very much objected—and he thought justly objected—to be called upon to provide higher education. There was another point which deserved mention. Anyone who looked into the question would be astonished to see the extraordinary amount of indebtedness of the Local Authorities which had grown up within the last generation. Nowadays the towns were vieing with each other in the grandeur of their new streets, in the magnificence of their Town Halls and their school boards, public buildings, and other improvements. It was now proposed that the ratepayers should provide funds for establishing Universities. He thought it was necessary to impose some limit upon this kind of expenditure; and, although the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) said that the town of Cardiff had decided upon spending this money, he would ask what was the use of coming to Parliament for any money at all if such questions were to be decided locally? Another point was that hereafter the ratepayers might be called upon—he did not say more in regard to Cardiff than any other place—to provide for religious education, which would certainly give rise to a considerable amount of bickering and difficulty.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he had not been aware when he come down to the House that this question was about to be brought before it, and until he heard himself appealed to by his hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) he had not intended to take part in the debate. What he knew of the matter was that when Lord Carlingford, Lord Blackburn, and himself were appointed arbitrators to decide whether the site for the new College should be fixed in Cardiff or Swansea, both of those towns offered a site worth £10,000, and the decision of the arbitrators was in favour of Cardiff. Ultimately, the South Wales University College was established on the site of the old Infirmary, which was preferred to the site offered by the Corporation of Cardiff; and then the Corporation, in order to keep their engagement with South Wales, Swansea, and the University College, came to the House of Commons and asked to be allowed to rate themselves to the extent of £10,000, the value of the site. Those he believed to be the facts of the case. At any rate, they were the facts which came before him. He might say further that no new precedent was proposed to be established. It was quite true that the Borough Funds Act was in existence; but the Borough Funds Act simply provided that expenditure of this kind should not be undertaken without the consent of the ratepayers. It did not matter whether the whole of the 120,000 inhabitants of the borough were present at the meeting, or only 4,000 or 400. One man alone could raise an objection; and, as a matter of fact, he believed that at the public meeting convened on this question some of the clauses of the Bill were modified, after which the Bill passed without further opposition. Liverpool had recently voted £20,000 for a University College, and the town of Nottingham came to the House of Commons in the last Parliament and obtained powers, in a very extensive Local Government Bill, for establishing a Free Library, an Art Museum, and a University College. Further than that, he believed that Birmingham was at that moment building an Art Gallery and furnishing it under its powers of rating.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Yes; with unlimited powers.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that several other towns were following a similar course and doing the same thing. The town of Cardiff was bound to enjoy very great advantages under this scheme. Already there were a large number of day students who came from a distance, and in addition there were about 700 night students, who were receiving some technical education under this scheme. These were no small advantages for a town like Cardiff, and it was a matter of the highest importance that these facilities should be afforded. If hon. Members would turn to the Report of the Commissioners on Technical Education they would see how strongly they recommended that Corporations should exercise their powers of rating for the encouragement of education of this kind. Already some of the chief towns in England were exercising the right of spending their own funds for educational purposes; and as the Corporation of Cardiff, supported by the population whom they represented, wished to expend their own funds for such purposes, he thought the House would do well not to stand in the way by overriding the desire of the locality.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council for Education as well as the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Rathbone) had pointed out that Liverpool and other towns were already exercising their right to expend the funds of the ratepayers in this manner. If that were so, those hon. Members had given the strongest possible reason against the introduction of this clause into the Cardiff Bill. The real fact of the matter, however, was that the question came before the House because the Corporation of Cardiff knew perfectly well that they had no power to expend this money without the assent of Parliament. The question submitted to the House appeared to him to be a most serious and important one—namely, whether the policy which had prevailed of late years as to what was to be done with rates raised by a compulsory process, as defined by Act of Parliament, was to be departed from when there happened to be a chance majority for the time being? The fact that a Museum and Free Libraries had been established in Nottingham did not affect the particular question now before the House, because in the case of Nottingham the expenditure was not incurred until after legislation had taken place in regard to it.

Mr. MUNDELLA wished to point out that all he had said was, that an Art Gallery Museum, a Free Library, and a University College had been established under the rating powers of the Corporation.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he had understood the right hon. Gentleman to speak much more generally. As, however, the right hon. Gentleman had explained the matter, it did not appear to be the very best precedent to follow. Everyone who knew anything about the history of Municipal Corporations and the legislation which had been applied to them of late years, knew that one of the principal objections to the exercise of the powers of such Corporations was that from time to time they got money from the ratepayers and applied it to purposes that were beyond the objects for which local self-government had been conferred upon Corporate Bodies. It had, therefore, been thought right to impose certain restrictions upon the powers of Municipal Corporations, and Parliament had deliberately enacted restrictions. The question was, whether in a Corporation Bill, the principal object of which was to improve the supply of water, powers ought to be introduced to enable the Corporation of Cardiff to redeem a promise which it was admitted they had no right to make? The Corporation of Cardiff had no right whatever to promise a contribution of £10,000 out of the rates of the borough towards the establishment of a University College.

An hon. MEMBER: What was promised was a site.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that was quite true; but when the site the Corporation offered to give was not selected, they promised a contribution in money of £10,000, and they had distinctly no right to make any promise of the kind. The College declined to move out of their present quarters in order to occupy the site selected by the Corporation, and therefore the Corporation asked Parliament to sanction their contribution of this sum of money. No doubt there were many people in Cardiff who would have lodging-houses to let, and who could easily raise an agitation upon a question of this nature; but the point was, whether Parliament should not interpose its authority in order to prevent the ratepayers from being offered up as a sacrifice in such interesting transactions as those which the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) and the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) had described? There had been a race between the two towns of Cardiff and Swansea, and now that Cardiff had won the ratepayers of Cardiff were called upon to bear the expense. He sincerely hoped that the House would refuse to pass the Instruction.

MR. CARBUTT said, that as Monmouthshire had been referred to in the course of the debate, he rose for the purpose of cordially supporting the proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed). He thought that the question was purely one for the ratepayers. He understood from hon. Members opposite that all they desired was to protect the ratepayers. His own impression was that the ratepayers were fully competent to protect their own interests; and if hon. Members opposite would devote their time to the consideration of larger and more Imperial interests, it would be more for the advantage of the ratepayers generally. When the University College was fully established at Cardiff, it would necessarily attract a large number of people who would have to live in the town, and thus the town would be materially benefited. In addition, the sons and daughters of the poorer ratepayers would be able to obtain the educational advantages offered by the new College at a cheap rate, and others would be prevented from expending considerable sums of money in obtaining higher education elsewhere. Therefore he trusted that the House would support the proposal of the hon. Member for Cardiff. Something had been said to the effect that the Marquess of Bute would not have subscribed so large a sum if he had known that the Corporation of Cardiff intended to contribute anything towards the establishment of the new College. It was a well-known fact that the Corporation promised to give a site long before the Marquess of Bute sent in his subscription; therefore that argument fell to the ground. Reference had been made to the Borough Funds Act. That Act was passed in order to prevent Municipal Corporations from spending the money of the ratepayers improperly. In this instance, there was not a single ratepayer in Cardiff, with the exception, perhaps, of the Marquess of Bute, who was opposed to this contribution; and he thought the House might well allow the people of the town to be the best judges of what would be advantageous for themselves.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, that in the course of the remarks of the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Talbot) he (Sir Edward J. Reed) had made a correction, and he wished to say that he had made it in perfectly good faith. He had been assured that when the Committee presided over by the hon. Gentleman took action with regard to the clause contained in the Bill of the Corporation of Cardiff, it was quite understood that the matter should be left open for the consideration of the House itself, and that the Committee would be guided by the decision come to by the House.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 185; Noes 141: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 108.)

PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) (LOWER THAMES VALLEY SEWERAGE SCHEME) BILL.

(*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain.*)

[BILL 211.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he had given Notice of his intention to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee; and he thought he was in Order in making that Motion now.

MR. SPEAKER: The regular course would be to read the Bill a second time, and then for the hon. Member to bring forward his Motion.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he hoped that before the Bill was read a second time some explanation would be given on behalf of the Local Government Board of what was intended to be done with it. It was a Bill which provided for pouring an enormous quantity of sewage, amounting, he believed, to 10,000,000 gallons daily, into the Thames at Kew; and after all the expense which had been incurred in endeavouring to keep the River clear and pure, he hoped the House would hear something about the Bill before they consented to read it a second time.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE trusted that the House would not take its opinion of the Bill from what the hon. Member had said. The object of the Bill was not to pour sewage into the Thames, but to prevent sewage being poured into the River. He, however, asked the House not to discuss the Bill at this stage, because an understanding had already been arrived at. It was intended to adopt the proposal which had been placed upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff); and he hoped, upon that understanding, the House would consent to read the Bill a second time.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would only explain that the Motion which he now begged to move was in the shape of a compromise, which had been accepted by the Government, and which, he thought, would be satisfactory both to the promoters and to the opponents of the Bill. His proposal was to refer the measure to a Select Committee in the nature of a Hybrid Committee, with power to hear the evidence of certain persons who would not otherwise have a *locus standi.* He thought he should best consult the convenience of the House by simply moving the Motion; but he ought to state that there had been one or two verbal alterations made in it since it had been placed on the Paper, and he begged to move it in its amended form.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee to consist of Seven Members, Four to be nominated by the House, and Three to be added by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, or Orders, which have been presented be referred to the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to inquire into and report upon the scheme of Sewerage in connection with which the lands are proposed to be taken under the Bill.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

ARMY—SMALL ARMS—REGULATION SWORDS.

MR. C. PHIPPS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that many of the swords lately supplied to the 15th Hussars were found, when tested by the regimental armourer sergeant, to be soft, notwithstanding the fact that they had been passed at Woolwich as fit for service; whether any of the swords that have been lately supplied to any other cavalry regiment have been found to be of a similar character; and, whether more effectual steps cannot be taken to render the issue of defective arms an impossibility?

MR. BRAND (for The Marquess of HARTINGTON): The new swords issued to the 15th Hussars were, I understand, irregularly tested by an armourer sergeant, who subjected them to an undue pressure. There is every reason to believe that the quality of the material of which the present swords are made is excellent.

INLAND REVENUE (SCOTLAND)—INCOME TAX—THE TARBERT FISHERMEN.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is true that among the 47 Tarbert Fishermen who have memorialized the Commissioners of Inland Revenue against the imposition of Income Tax, on the ground that, on their appeal to the local Commissioners of Income Tax, they were not allowed to know the evidence on which the assessment was based, and were consequently deprived of an opportunity of rebutting it, are Alexander Macfarlane, aged 17, and Donald M'Niel, aged 19, lads who had never been to a season's fishing, and who had only joined the crews last December; whether, out of a crew of eight fishermen, each receiving an equal share of the profits during each consecutive year, Robert Campbell, John M'Lachlan, and Alexander M'Lelland, have been assessed, and Duncan Campbell, John M'Farlane, Donald Leitch, John Johnstone, and Alexander Marcus exempted; and, whether, if such be the facts, he will direct further inquiry to be made into the matter?

MR. COURTNEY: The information supplied to my hon. Friend differs in several particulars from the recorded facts. The Alexander Macfarlane who appears to be referred to was relieved on appeal. Donald M'Niel described himself as having been a fisherman for a year. Seven of the eight men referred to in the second part of the Question belonged to three different crews, and the eighth, Donald Leitch, is not known. Of these seven, five were duly assessed. Duncan Campbell was relieved on account of separate losses; and further inquiry will be made as to Marcus, whose name was not returned for assessment, as it should have been. I have already explained that there is no power to interfere with the decisions.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT — TELEGRAMS IN DUBLIN, WITHIN TWELVE MILES RADIUS.

MR. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, If he could state approximately the number and value of telegrams annually despatched from Postal Telegraph offices, within a radius of twelve miles from the central office in Dublin, to addresses within the same radius?

MR. FAWCETT: I have ascertained that the number of telegrams despatched in the district referred to by the hon. Member in a twelvemonth is about 27,100, and that the amount received for these telegrams is about £1,390.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE TREATY OF TIEN-TSIN.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the article in *The National* with regard to the recent Treaty of Tien-Tsin, in which it is stated that the French

> "Do not plume themselves on an exaggerated Liberalism in tariff matters; and, though they will not shut out Foreign trade from their new markets, yet they will make it pay its share of the expenses of the conquest and occupation;"

whether the freedom of commerce in the provinces of Southern China will, in future, be hampered by prohibitive duties, and henceforth dependent on the goodwill of France; whether China has infringed the letter of her engagements with other Powers by her concession of exclusive rights to France; and, whether he will take any steps, and, if so, what, to prevent the destruction of British interests?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have nothing to add to the answer which I returned to a similar Question asked by my hon. Friend a few days ago —namely, that the Commercial Treaty between France and China has not yet been negotiated, and that meanwhile the subjects adverted to by my hon. Friend are receiving the careful attention of Her Majesty's Government.

In reply to a further Question,

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that, as he had already informed the House, the Commercial Treaty would not be signed until three months after the signature of the Political Treaty.

EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—NOTICES BY POST.

DR. CAMERON asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that a man named Archibald Steele recently obtained from the Post Office at Lochboisdale, South Uist, two registered letters containing summonses of eviction, addressed to two crofters who were not anxious to receive them, and delivered them at the houses to which they were addressed; whether Steele had any authority to possess himself of letters technically the property of the Postmaster General; if he had authority, why the Post Office interfered in the matter; and, whether he will take steps to prevent unauthorized persons possessing themselves of registered letters not addressed to them?

Mr. FAWCETT: It is the case, as supposed by my hon. Friend, that two registered letters were inadvertently delivered by the Postmaster at Lochboisdale. He has been cautioned, and steps will be taken to prevent the recurrence of the irregularity.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF MISS KELLY, OF BALLICUDIHY, CO. KILKENNY.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Marum) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged improper conduct of certain bailiffs, furnished with a police escort for their protection, in effecting the arrest of Miss Kelly, of Ballicudihy, in the county of Kilkenny; that whereas, upon the death of her father Michael Kelly, intestate, and possessed of 500 acres of landed property, and other assets, Miss Kelly remained in occupation of the premises, and entitled thereto, share and share alike with her two married sisters; that an attachment order having issued in an administration suit, for the arrest of Miss Kelly, two sheriffs' bailiffs demanded admission at her aforesaid residence at Ballicudihy, on Friday the 9th instant, at the hour of four o'clock a.m.; that Miss Kelly, having got out of bed, only partially dressed, to answer the summons at the door, thereupon was immediately seized upon by the bailiffs, dragged across rough pavements, injuring her bare feet, and forced upon an open outside car in a semi-nude condition, to which she was strapped down by a strong cord round her waist, and her hands tied with cords, with such violence that the police escort remonstrated with the bailiffs to have the cords relaxed; that, without permitting this lady to dress herself, or procuring a closed vehicle to convey her, the bailiffs, accompanied by the police escort, drove her, in this condition, a distance of ten miles, through the streets of Kilkenny city, to the railway terminus there, whence she was conveyed by rail, in a third class compartment, with the bailiffs, to the gaol of Waterford, in the adjacent county, being a further distance of some thirty miles; whether a report of this action has been furnished to the constabulary authorities; and, if so, whether he will state its substance, and the course he intends to take thereon; and, whether the Prison Board will be requested to reopen the gaol for female prisoners in Kilkenny city, and avoid sending them some thirty miles to the adjacent county gaol of Waterford?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Miss Kelly is defendant in an administration suit in which, for disobeying an order of the Court of Chancery, a writ of attachment was issued for her arrest. Two attempts were made to execute the writ. The sheriff was obliged to abandon the first, owing to Miss Kelly's violent resistance. On the second occasion, which is probably that referred to in the Question, the bailiffs went early to the defendant's house; but they made no attempt to enter, until a servant opened the door at half-past 6, and they waited until Miss Kelly came down stairs at half-past 7 before they arrested her. She was not in the condition described in the Question, but had her boots on, and was fully dressed. She again resisted violently, and the bailiffs found it necessary to tie her to the car upon which they took her to Kilkenny, a distance of four miles. It is not the case that they tied her hands. At Kilkenny a covered vehicle was obtained, in which she was driven through the city to the railway station, and taken thence by rail to Waterford. This is the account which is given by the police, and from it it appears that the bailiffs were only doing their duty in arresting Miss Kelly, and that any additional annoyance she was subjected to was entirely owing to her own violent behaviour. This case affords no reason why Kilkenny Prison should be re-opened for female prisoners. Waterford, where the prisoners are now taken to, is only one hour and a quarter distant by rail.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS —DR. C. BROWNE'S REPORTS.

Mr. RAIKES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on

Education, Whether he will be able to lay before the House the Reports of Dr. Crichton Browne and others on Over-pressure in Elementary Schools, in extenso, before moving the Education Votes in Committee of Supply?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Reports on Over-pressure have not yet all come to hand, and the Bradford Report has only just been received, so that I shall not be able to lay any summary of them before the House before the Education Estimates are moved, as I believe they will be, next Monday. During the Recess I have had an opportunity of reading the voluminous and highly controversial letter of Dr. Crichton Browne, and I certainly could not make myself responsible for its publication *in extenso*.

MR. RAIKES asked whether, in consequence of the statements made by Dr. Browne and others, the right hon. Gentleman did not think that the system of education was being unduly pressed?

MR. MUNDELLA: I think the right hon. Gentleman had better wait and see the Reports.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether any modification would be made in the New Code in consequence of Dr. Browne's Report?

MR. MUNDELLA: Certainly not, Sir.

THE CIVIL LIST—THE ROYAL PALACES.

MR. RYLANDS asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Agreement entered into with the Crown at the time when Her Majesty came to the Throne, under which the Government undertook to maintain and keep certain Royal Palaces in repair?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, if the hon. Member would move for this he would have the copy of the Agreement laid upon the Table.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF MAP.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will place in the Library of the House a Copy of the Russian General Staff Map of March 1884?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There will be no objection to place a copy of this map in the Library.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—PROMOTIONS.

MR. ACLAND asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Mr. Maclean, principal clerk in the Customs at Leith, has been appointed collector at Sunderland, over the heads of almost the whole of the collectors in the service; whether he is aware that this setting aside of the claims of these officers to promotion in this instance, and in the case of the recent appointment of Mr. Walpole, late assistant secretary of the Customs, to the collectorship of Dublin, and that of Mr. Smith, a clerk in the London Custom House, to the collectorship of Hull, has excited a feeling of discontent and distrust among the staff; whether several of the junior collectors have been degraded to the position of superintendent and placed under district collectors, in consequence of the reduction and grouping of some of the outports; and, whether the Board of Customs has accepted the responsibility of these changes?

MR. COURTNEY: These appointments were made by the Board of Customs in the interests of the Public Service, and the Treasury does not interfere in them. The Board are not aware of any feeling of discontent among the collectors. None of them have suffered pecuniary loss owing to the changes in the Customs organization; but in some cases, where there is no revenue to collect, they have been styled superintendents instead of collectors.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ADMINISTRATION OF THE BRITISH COLONIES.

MR. ROE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any steps have been taken to remedy the grievances complained of in the Memorial presented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 12th of December 1883, with reference to the administration of the Government of the British Colonies on the West Coast of Africa?

MR. COURTNEY (for Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY): The local Government is being consulted; and Correspondence on the subject will be included among a batch of Papers on the subject of the Gold Coast which will be laid before Parliament at once.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MOUNTMELLICK UNION —CLAIM TO VOTE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, before the late election of a guardian in the Kilcomban Electoral Division of the Mountmellick Union, Mr. Mathew S. Cassan, a justice of the peace for the Queen's County, lodged a claim to vote out of property in the said Electoral Division; and, whether after the election, when the matter was investigated by the returning officer of the Union, attested copies of documents on the files of the Court of Lunacy were produced wherein the said Mathew S. Cassan declared that he had no right, title, or interest in the said property?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Returning Officer reports that Mr. Cassan claimed to vote as owner and occupier of certain property. At the scrutiny of votes an objection was lodged as to Mr. Cassan's right to vote as owner; and in the course of the discussion some document connected with a lunacy matter in the Court of Chancery—the precise nature of which I am not informed of—was produced. The person who produced it did not leave it with the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer was not satisfied as to Mr. Cassan's right to vote as owner, and decided the legal point raised in this respect against him, but allowed him six votes as occupier.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — ALLEGED ILL-CONDUCT OF SERGEANT M'GRATH AT COOLRAIN, QUEEN'S CO.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will cause inquiries to be made into the conduct of Sergeant M'Grath at Coolrain, Mountrath, Queen's County, and especially with regard to alleged misconduct towards Mr. John Prescott, licensed publican of that place, in returning to his house after it had been closed at the legal hour, frequently knocking and awaking the family during the night unnecessarily entering the house, and forcing his way, in spite of protestations, into the sleeping apartments of the female members of the household?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that, owing to well-grounded suspicions that breaches of the Licensing Acts were taking place, Sergeant M'Grath was directed to keep a special watch on the licensed premises mentioned, and that in the execution of this duty he has occasionally gone to the house after closing hours; but he never went later than half-past 10 o'clock, and never acted in the improper manner described in the Question.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION REPORT.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to send the Report on Technical Education to the Free Libraries and Public Libraries throughout the Kingdom?

MR. COURTNEY: The suggestion of my right hon. Friend is new to me. Three hundred copies of the Report have been placed at the disposal of the Royal Commission for distribution, besides 200 each of the Reports by Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Mather. I should think this number would be sufficient to meet all the cases in which free gifts would be proper. I may add that copies can be bought at a small price, and a general distribution seems uncalled for and inexpedient.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX SURCHARGES.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been called to complaints from various towns of the Income Tax Surveyors having surcharged residents who, on previous occasions, had proved by appeal the accuracy of their returns; and, whether he will discourage such exercise of authority?

MR. COURTNEY: I have heard nothing of any such complaints; and they are not known at the Inland Revenue Board; but if any be made they will be duly considered, so far as the law allows any appeal from the decisions of the unofficial local Commissioners.

ARMY—DRAINAGE OF THE NAAS BARRACKS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in spite of frequent remonstrance, the barracks at Naas are still drained into a stream used for drinking purposes; and, whether he will give immediate orders for the abatement of the nuisance?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am informed that it is not correct to say that the barracks at Naas are drained into a stream used for drinking purposes; but there is no doubt whatever that the sewerage of the town of Naas is in an unsatisfactory state, and the War Office are quite prepared to aid the town in carrying out an improved system of sewerage works.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether, in the meantime, steps would be taken to abate this nuisance?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he was afraid he could not speak on that matter. He was informed that the Local Sanitary Authority were aware that the War Office were prepared to give assistance to any satisfactory scheme for the improvement of the sewerage of the town and barracks.

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that there is only one industrial school for boys in the province of Connaught; whether any representation has been lately made to him on the subject; and, whether the Irish Government will afford the same facility and aid towards the establishment and maintenance of industrial schools in Connaught as are now afforded elsewhere in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: There is at present only one industrial school for boys in Connaught. There were formerly two others, which were closed in consequence of mismanagement. An application for a certificate for a boy's school at Letterfrack, in the county of Galway, is at present before the Government. It is desirable to remember that industrial schools are not merely local institutions, but are open for the admission of children from any part of Ireland, and that, therefore, children from Connaught may be received into schools in other parts of the country. At the present time the Government feel great difficulty as to granting certificates for new schools anywhere. The proportion of payments to industrial schools in Ireland, as compared to those in England, is nearly three to one as compared with the population.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF MAP—THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that the Russian Government has published a new General Staff Map, which places the new frontier of Russia within fifty miles of Herat, and includes within that frontier territory hitherto always recognized as Afghan; whether any practical steps have been taken for the delimitation of the Afghan frontier; and, when he proposes to lay upon the Table any of the Correspondence with Russia upon this subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have seen the map to which the hon. Member refers. I beg that I may not be understood as in any way admitting the accuracy of this map if I add that his description of it is not quite correct. It is true that it traces the Afghan boundary line at about the distance from Herat which he mentions; but a large extent of territory to the north of that line is left uncoloured, and is not included within the Russian boundary. As I stated on the 26th of May, in answer to the hon. Member for Berwick (Mr. Marjoribanks), communications are proceeding with the Russian Government as to the delimitation of the frontier of Afghanistan; but I am not able at present to give any details, or to make any promise as to laying Papers upon the Table.

Mr. MACFARLANE: May I ask if, in regard to this proposed delimitation, the Ameer of Afghanistan is represented, or only England and Russia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I said communications were proceeding, and I cannot at present enter into details.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: In regard to the answer of the noble Lord, may I ask him whether any portion of the territory recently occupied by Russia—namely, Merv and Old Sarakhs, is coloured on the Russian Staff Map as belonging to Russia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not think that is a Question which can be said to quite arise out of my answer.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: If the noble Lord is unable to answer the Question now, I will repeat it, with Notice.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Sarakhs and the adjoining line of frontier has been occupied by Russia in accordance with any Treaty with Persia; and, if so, when Her Majesty's Government first became aware of the existence of such a Treaty?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If by Sarakhs is meant the place on the Western bank of the Heri Rud, it has not been occupied by Russia; and we are not aware of the existence of any Treaty by which Russia is authorized to occupy it. As I stated on the 26th of May, a report has reached us that the Russian Commander-in-Chief was about to take possession of lands on the right bank of the Heri Rud at Old Sarakhs, and to make them over to the Turcomans.

MR. BOURKE: Is there any Treaty with Persia with regard to the latter Sarakhs mentioned by the noble Lord?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office have no information.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA RECRUITING.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether certain Militia Battalions in the Home District are still allowed to recruit upon the old system of paying 10*s*. to recruits upon enlistment, while Officers commanding other Militia Battalions are not allowed to act upon the same system; if so, what is the reason for the absence of uniformity; and, if Her Majesty's Government are prepared to take steps to place all Commanding Officers of Militia on the same footing in this respect?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Under present Regulations no bounty may be paid from public funds on enlistment of Militiamen, and since the issue of this Regulation payment of such bounty has not been allowed in any case. I understand, however, that a practice exists in one regiment, at all events, of making an advance for enlistment from the pay of recruits, which is subsequently recovered; but this practice is not authorized by Regulations, and the question is now under consideration.

THE UNITED KINGDOM—DEFENCES OF THE MERCANTILE PORTS—THE CLYDE.

MR. J. STEWART asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the Government to erect defences at the entrance to the Firth of Clyde, and so to give security to the large amount of shipping and other property which, in its present defenceless condition, would, in the event of war, invite attack?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Report of the Committee on the Defences of the Mercantile Ports of the United Kingdom, which was presided over by Lord Morley, was referred for detailed consideration by the Departments concerned. I believe these detailed Reports are now practically completed. They have not, however, yet been submitted to me; and until they have been so submitted, I am not prepared to state what action is proposed to be taken by the Government in consequence of the Report of the Committee.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT OF TERMONFECKEN, CO. LOUTH.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, at the time of the appointment of the last Protestant magistrate in the Petty Sessions district of Termonfecken, County Louth, there resided in the district a Roman Catholic who owned considerable fee simple property there, and whose valuation was more than twice that of the gentleman so appointed; and, whether he would consider such Roman Catholic a fit and proper person to be entrusted with the Commission of the Peace for a district almost exclusively Catholic, and with a local magistracy entirely Protestant?

MR. TREVELYAN: The gentleman referred to as last appointed was appointed so far back as 1881, and has proved a most excellent magistrate. Appointments to the Magisterial Bench cannot depend on a contrast between two gentlemen as to the respective amounts of property they may possess. The fitness of any particular person for the Commission of the Peace is for the Lieutenant of the County and the Lord Chancellor to consider.

RAILWAYS (METROPOLIS) — METROPOLITAN URBAN DISTRICTS FOR RAILWAYS—THE MAP.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the map defining the Metropolitan urban districts for Railways, as settled by the Board of Trade, has yet been issued to the various Railway Companies; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of such map upon the Table of the House; and, whether such "urban districts" have been certified as being—

> "Within areas which have continuous urban, as distinguished from a rural or suburban, character, and contains a population of not less than 100,000 inhabitants?"

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: There will be no objection to lay the map referred to upon the Table of the House, and it will be accompanied by a certificate that will show that the district has been defined in accordance with the terms of the Act of Parliament.

INDIA (MADRAS)—RETURNS OF LANDS HELD BY UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVANTS, &c.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will lay upon the Table the Returns of lands held by Madras Uncovenanted and Military Officers in Civil employment, referred to in the Letter of the Government of Madras to the Secretary of State, dated 30th January 1884, and promised on several occasions during last Session?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Returns referred to have not been received in the India Office. On the 9th of April, last year, I informed the hon. Member that the Government of India would be requested to furnish a Report on the whole question of the concessions granted in Mysore. This Report has now been presented, and will be in the hands of Members in a few days.

INDIA (MADRAS) — BREACH OF INDIA OFFICE REGULATIONS, 1879.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Secretary of State for India has received a complaint from P. Rungiah Naidoo, a Vakeel of the High Court, and Municipal Commissioner, Madras, to the effect that, in contravention of the India Office Regulations of 1879, the Government of Madras on 30th April gazetted Mr. Tarrant and another European to certain appointments; and, whether the Secretary of State has sanctioned these appointments?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The communication referred to has been sent direct to the India Office, and has been returned to the writer for submission through the Government of Madras in accordance with fixed Rules. A letter from the Madras Government relating to these appointments has also been received, and is at present under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council.

IRELAND—THE COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES, DUBLIN.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Kennedy, the temporary Collector General in Dublin, has recommended Mr. Burke for a special addition of £60 per annum to his salary; whether Mr. Burke is a second class clerk, and if such an addition of salary would not give him a higher rate of remuneration than the first class clerk immediately above him; whether, if Mr. Burke were to retire, this addition would increase the retiring allowance payable to him out of the rates; and, whether, finally, such recommendations for increase of salary are not outside the functions of an officer employed temporarily like Mr. Kennedy?

MR. TREVELYAN: The facts are as stated, except in the last paragraph of the Question. It is the duty of the head of the Collector General's Office, whether permanent or temporary, to make such recommendations as he considers desirable for the proper conduct of the business; and Mr. Kennedy's recommendation will, therefore, be duly considered by the Government.

MR. GRAY asked whether the Government still adhered to their intention of bringing in a Bill to deal with the collection of rates in Dublin; and was the appointment of Mr. Kennedy still a merely temporary one?

MR. TREVELYAN answered both Questions in the affirmative.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CHARGE AGAINST SERGEANT GALLAGHER.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether District Inspector Saville, of Ballymahon, county Longford, who was a member of the court of inquiry lately held in the case of Sergeant Gallagher of the police force, and who took a favourable view of Gallagher's conduct, has been since removed from the county; whether Police Constables Shanaghan and Spillane, who were witnesses for Gallagher in the same inquiry, have also been removed; and, whether he can give the reason for the removal of these men from the county where they had served for a long time?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have already stated that the Court which heard the case against Sergeant Gallagher considered the charge against him fully proved. District Inspector Saville was a member of that Court, and the Inspector General has no reason to suppose that he held any other view of the case than that expressed in the finding which he signed. Mr. Saville has, on his own application, made long before and with no reference to this case, been transferred to another county. The constables who were witnesses have not been removed from the county. They have been transferred to another station within the county to meet the requirements of the service. The fact of their having been witnesses at the Court referred to had nothing whatever to do with their transfer.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—GRATUITY TO THE FORCES.

Sir JOHN HAY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the intention to lay a Supplementary Estimate upon the Table, to enable the Crown to pay a gratuity to its Forces employed in the late battles in the Eastern Soudan; and, if so, on what day it will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There are certain charges on account of special expenditure in the Soudan which have come in course of payment during the current year, as well as the proposed expenditure for gratuity and medals. A Supplementary Estimate will be presented when it has been ascertained that the Votes for the year 1884-5 are insufficient to meet these extra charges. This cannot be determined yet.

Sir JOHN HAY: I beg to give Notice that when the House goes into Committee on that Supplementary Estimate I shall move the Vote of Thanks to the men engaged of which I have given Notice.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can now state when he proposes to take the Second Reading of the London Government Bill?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: In answer to this Question, I have to state that it is proposed to go on with this Bill on the earliest day possible; but we cannot interrupt the progress of the Representation of the People Bill.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE GARRISON AT SUAKIN.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the strength and components of the garrison at Suakin; and, whether it is true, as reported, that reinforcements of Marines have been despatched to that town?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: As the defence of Suakin is at present intrusted to the Royal Marines, and to the Egyptian troops, this Question should more properly have been addressed to the Secretary to the Admiralty, or the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I am informed, however, that it is not considered desirable that the exact strength of the garrison should be stated; but there is a considerable force of Marines there and a battalion of the Egyptian Army. A reinforcement of 500 Marines is on its way, and it is also stated—I am not aware of the particulars—that another Egyptian battalion is about to be added to the strength of the garrison.

CONSOLIDATED FUND, &c. (PERMANENT CHARGES REDEMPTION ACTS, 1873 AND 1883)—COMMUTATION OF THE MARLBOROUGH AND PENN PENSIONS.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it be not the fact that the terms on which the two £4,000 pensions have been commuted would still cost the taxpayer £6,420 per annum of interest, leaving the debt of £214,000 to the Savings Banks still unpaid; and that, if the

£1,580 saved every year were put into a sinking fund, it would take about 55 years to pay the debt; whether the transaction is not thus, to the taxpayer, equivalent to giving the pensions an assured continuance of other 55 years; whether, in order to end the payment sooner, and to recoup the Post Office Savings Banks the £214,000 taken from them, and the interest on it, he is to create ten year terminable annuities; and, whether it will not require for those ten years an annual payment of about £25,000, in place of the £8,000 now paid?

MR. COURTNEY: My hon. Friend's arithmetic appears to be correct; and he is also right in supposing that it is intended to create 10 year annuities for this purpose.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What was the purport and effect of the Despatch sent by the Government to General Gordon on May 21st; when will it be laid upon the Table of the House; is there any, and, if so, what reason to believe that General Gordon has yet received it; and, was there any Despatch sent to General Gordon between April 23rd and May 21st; and, if so, what was its date?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The despatch in question gave General Gordon full permission to adopt at the first proper moment measures for his own withdrawal, and for that of the Egyptians who have served him, by whatever route he may prefer. He is also allowed to make free use of money rewards. The receipt of the reply from General Gordon will probably be the first Her Majesty's Government will hear of the receipt of their message by General Gordon. No other despatch was sent to General Gordon between the dates mentioned by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. It will be laid before Parliament at once.

MR. GIBSON: How soon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: To-morrow.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE ORDER BOOK.

MR. HICKS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, on Monday May 19th, there were thirty-six Orders on the Paper, of which twenty-six were Government Orders; and, on Thursday, May 22nd, twenty-eight Orders, of which twenty-one were Government Orders; and, whether he will, with a view to the convenience of the House, and to the reduction in the cost of printing, consider the propriety of limiting the Government Orders (involving, as they frequently do, a great number of amendments) to such measures as they really purpose, and have reasonable expectation of being able, to bring forward?

MR. GLADSTONE: I rather presume that the Question of the hon. Gentleman refers to our having before the House a larger number of Bills than we can expect to pass. I am not quite sure whether that is the intention of the Question. If it is so, no doubt, at a certain period of the Session, it is the practice for the Government to consider its position, and endeavour to relieve the Order Book of such measures as it thinks it has no reasonable hope of passing. Beyond that I cannot go at the present time, because that period of the Session has not arrived; and I do not think, until we have made considerable further progress with the Representation of the People Bill, that we should be in a position to say anything on the subject. The hon. Member also referred to the practice of adjourning Orders for only a short time. That is a question of considerable difficulty; because it does sometimes, though very rarely, happen that the House, which usually labours under a plethora of Business, finds itself, owing to the sudden disappearance of the principal subject of the night, with a famine of Business, and the House naturally resents a contingency of that kind very much. I recognize the excellent intention of the Question of the hon. Member, and I quite think it is not right to place on the Order Book for any given night a number of measures which there is no hope of proceeding with.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

MR. BOURKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can now communicate to the House any information with respect to the recent negotiations with France on the subject of Egypt?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, in answer to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I am able to state that great progress has been made in the communications with France, of which I have on previous occasions spoken to the House. They have, in fact, reached a point which is such as to allow us to hope that, before many days are over, we may be enabled to proceed to that second step in the process I described to the House—that is to say, to the step of consulting the Powers; and though I cannot frame any precise and positive estimate of the number of days that may be necessary for that purpose, I think, on the whole, it is reasonable to hope that in the course of next week we may be in a condition to make the promised statement to Parliament; and of course that statement will be made before the first meeting of the Conference. In the meantime, Sir, I would respectfully counsel hon. Members, and gentlemen elsewhere, to be on their guard against erroneous and misleading statements, sometimes made with considerable confidence, as to the nature of the arrangement which is in contemplation. But I can make one material addition to what I have said, which is, in truth, simply to give more point to something which I have formerly conveyed to the House in more general terms. I can now undertake to assure the House that it will have an opportunity of pronouncing upon the arrangement itself, of which I spoke, before anything is finally concluded, so as to bind the country.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Are we to understand that the communications now taking place with France will be communicated to the Foreign Powers, and discussed with them before any communication is made to the House on the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE: What I stated on a former occasion was that the Powers will be consulted on the subject; and I think that the right hon. Gentleman will find that I have not asked for any unreasonable limits of time in giving the opinion—not an absolute opinion, but an opinion founded upon a reasonable estimate of the necessities of the case—that in the course of next week our consultations with the other Powers will be in such a state as to enable us to make the statement to Parliament.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The point is this. The consultation with the Powers may lead to much correspondence, and that would take up time. If it is to be understood that the correspondence is to be concluded before this House is to be put in possession of what is going on we may be kept waiting for a very long time.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have already stated that in respect of time it is not in the contemplation of the Government to enter into communications with the other Powers of the same nature and in the same detail as with France. I should not have been so imprudent, had this been the case, as to say that we had a reasonable expectation that in the course of next week we may be able to make the statement.

Mr. BOURKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Papers to be presented to Parliament will be presented at the same time as the promised statement is made?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir.

EGYPT—NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKEY.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: With respect to the negotiations with the Government of Turkey, will the right hon. Gentleman give a similar pledge to the House as he has given with respect to the negotiations with France—namely, that no Turkish troops shall be despatched to the Soudan before the terms of the negotiations with that Power are laid before Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not able really to say that there are negotiations with the Porte on this subject; but if the noble Lord likes to place the exact terms of his Question upon the Paper, I will take care to give him an answer.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—INTERNATIONAL CONTROL.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have agreed to place the finances of Egypt under International control, and to specifically limit the term of the British occupation of Egypt; and, whether the Conference is to meet upon this basis?

MR. GLADSTONE: I really think, Sir, that after what I have said the hon. Gentleman may consider that I am fairly and reasonably dispensed from making any specific answer to his Question.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—THE NEWRY PROCESSION.

LORD ARTHUR HILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether his attention has been called to a report in *The Times* of this day of the proceedings at Newry yesterday to this effect:—

> "Several innocent persons returning from places of worship were struck and kicked by the constabulary, who appear to have become excited, and in some instances to have acted indiscriminately. Two of them were reported to their officers and placed under arrest."

Further, I wish to ask, whether the right hon. Gentleman will cause instant inquiry to be made into the alleged unnecessary violence on the part of the police?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that before the right hon. Gentleman answered that Question he should like to ask him whether the Correspondent of *The Times* in Dublin, who had furnished the report in question, was Dr. Patton, the well-known editor of the Orange organ, *The Daily Express*?

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes, Sir; he is. In answer to the noble Lord, I beg to state that I took very good care to be provided with a Report of the proceedings from the County Inspector as full as could be given by telegraph. I will read that Report to the noble Lord, because probably it will throw some light upon the Question to which he desires an answer. The first portion of the report I will not read, as it contains nothing of public interest. [*Cries of* "Read."] Nothing of particular interest. [*Cries of* "Why?" *from the Opposition.*] Very well, I will read the whole of the Report—

> "I have to report that about the hour of 2 o'clock P.M. this day a large procession from the neighbourhood of Hilltown and Mayo Bridge, county Down, with bands and banners, passed through the principal streets of the town as far as William Street, which is at the extreme end of the town, where they were joined by another procession which had formed on the Mall. The entire body, numbering about 8,000, having seven bands and 16 banners, turned up Castle Street, and again marched through the principal streets and went to the place of meeting, about one mile from the town. The banners bore the inscriptions 'God save Ireland,' 'For God and your country,' 'The Land for the People,' &c. The meeting lasted until about 5 P.M., and was addressed by Messrs. T. D. Sullivan, J. F. Small, M.P., John Dudley (Belfast), O'Brien, M.P., John Ferguson (Glasgow), Iver M'Guiness (Pontypass), Father O'Neill (Rostrevor), and Father Quin (Camlough). The meeting lasted two hours and a quarter. It terminated at 5.15 P.M., when the procession returned to town, reaching it about a quarter to 6, and shortly after it passed the Orange Hall some stones were thrown at it by some members of the opposite party, who were dispersed by the police. The contingents from Camlough and Newry, who had escorted the Mayo Bridge party some short distance outside the town, were attacked with stones when returning. I was in rear of the procession at the time, and had the parties dispersed by the police. Mr. Wray, County Inspector, was more in front. On the procession approaching the Orange Hall several shots were fired out of the windows and doors. This exasperated the Nationalist Party, who retaliated by throwing stones at the windows, breaking 10 panes of glass. More shots were then fired from the windows of the Protestant Hall, and one of the bullets, which passed through a shutter of a window on the opposite side of the street, has been found. Mr. Wray, County Inspector, ordered District Inspector Green and party to force their way into the Orange Hall, and all the persons therein, 67 in number, were placed under arrest. Five revolvers were found in the room and one outside, under the window. Some presented the appearance of having been recently discharged, and some of the chambers of them were still loaded. Two of the prisoners—namely, Charles Kernaghan, publican, Newry, and George Morrison, keeper of the Orange Hall—have been fully identified by the police as having fired shots from the window and door, and Kernaghan had a number of revolver cartridges in his possession. A third man, William Orr, clerk, Newry, was observed throwing a revolver out of the window by District Inspector Green, and he has been discharged, on a guarantee given by his solicitor to appear to-morrow. Kernaghan and Morrison have been committed to gaol until Wednesday next. All the other prisoners have been discharged, to be summoned if necessary. When the procession was returning towards the Orange Hall down Sandy Street some stones were thrown at it over the tops of houses. As far as I can ascertain no person has been injured. I consider the prompt action taken by County Inspector Wray and District Inspector Green deserving of the greatest praise, as the course they pursued will be the means of bringing some of the guilty parties to justice. The magisterial inquiry did not terminate until 12 o'clock midnight. H. G. Cary, County Inspector."

MR. GIBSON: I should like to ask the Chief Secretary if the authorities took any, and, if so, what, steps to prevent the procession, either in going or returning, from marching in close and direct proximity to the Orange Hall?

Lord ARTHUR HILL: I would direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that he has not answered a single point in my Question.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have told the noble Lord that I sent for a Report, and that that Report states that certain people had thrown stones at the procession, and had been dispersed, but that no one had been injured. That is as much information as I have hitherto been able to obtain on the subject. If the noble Lord wishes I should specially refer the report in *The Times* to the authorities, I am perfectly willing to do so.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to print and to lay upon the Table the Correspondence which has recently taken place between the Lord Lieutenant and the noble Lord (Lord Arthur Hill) as a Parliamentary Paper?

Mr. TREVELYAN: If it is thought by the House desirable that I should do so I have no objection to do it.

Mr. GIBSON: I beg to remind the right hon. Gentleman that I have not yet got an answer to the very plain Question which I have asked. Everyone knew where the Orange Hall was. Were any, and, if so, what, steps taken by the Executive or local authorities to prevent the procession either going to or coming from Newry from marching in direct proximity to the Orange Hall?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am not aware that any steps were taken to prevent the procession from marching in proximity to the Orange Hall. The Orange Hall is in the main street of the town; and I think it is a very strong thing to say that because the Orange Hall stands in the main street of the town, and has within it men armed with revolvers and prepared to break the law, that any procession permitted by the law should be ordered not to pass that way.

EGYPT—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—MISSION TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government is in a position to give any further information with regard to Sir William Hewett; whether he is still at the capital of Abyssinia, or on the way back to the coast; and, whether the negotiations have had any result?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I made a very full statement on this question on Friday, and no new subsequent intelligence has been received at the Foreign Office.

Subsequently,

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said: I have been informed by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty that he has just received further intelligence at the Admiralty of a favourable kind.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill will be taken?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That is a Question, which, perhaps, the Prime Minister will answer.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In the position in which we stand in regard to the Representation of the People Bill I am not able, at the present moment, to make any engagement in reference to any other Bill. When we have closed the Committee upon that Bill and see our way to its further stages, then I hope to be able to make a further statement with regard to the other Business of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[Bill 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 26th May.*]

[SIXTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Prohibition of Multiplication of Votes.

Clause 4 (Restriction on fagot votes).

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK moved, in page 2, to omit the 1st subsection, which provides that, subject to the saving for existing voters—

"A man shall not be entitled to be registered as a voter in respect of the ownership of any rent-charge except the owner of the whole of the tithe rent-charge of a rectory or vicarage."

He wished to ask for some reason why the owners of rent-charges were to be disfranchised? It had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury in one of the speeches he had made on the Bill that property qualifications were to be retained; and a few days ago the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, speaking at Bury, confirmed that view of the Prime Minister, and stated that for the present, at least, the property qualification should remain. That being so, he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) wished to know why the owners of rent-charges were to be disfranchised? This really was a point of very great importance. He also wished to draw attention to the marginal note upon the clause, where what he must call the slang term of "fagot vote" was used. Could there be found in any great Act of Parliament a slang term used such as was used here—"Restriction on fagot votes?" The Government had been asked more than once to explain what a fagot vote was, but no satisfactory answer had been given to that inquiry. A fagot vote, as was well known among those who used the term, was a case where the registered voter had paid no consideration whatever for his qualification. It was to all intents and purposes a fictitious vote, and applied to any qualification. But he was utterly at a loss to understand why the owner of a rent-charge —a *boná fide* owner — should be disqualified. He would ask the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to this point. In his opening speech on the Bill the Prime Minister spoke of incorporeal hereditaments, and said—

> "We strike at incorporeal hereditaments where there is no reversion to the person who takes the benefit."

But, if that were so, how did it affect the owner of a freehold ground-rent? And what was the substantial difference between the owner of a freehold ground-rent and a rent-charge? It might be said, "the one has a reversion in the land, and the other has not;" but he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) did not hold that view himself. Yet the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman, while it disqualified and disfranchised the owner of a rent-charge, at the same time allowed the owner of a freehold ground-rent to remain upon the Register where there was an infinitesimal reversion at the end of 999 years, or even of 99 years, for a 99 years' lease in London was looked upon pretty nearly as a freehold. They had never heard, either from the Prime Minister or from the learned Attorney General, any intelligible principle to show why the rent-charge should be disqualified. He ought to be a voter just in the same way as anyone who held a feu in Scotland, or anyone who held a head-rent in an Irish county, for he could devise his title by will in all these cases. According to the Government clause as it stood in the Bill, the owner of the feu in Scotland or of the head-rent in Ireland would still continue on the Register. Why, then, in the name of all that was sensible, if the owner of the head-rent or of the feu was to remain upon the Register, why was a new purchaser to be disqualified? The clause as it stood was most unfair, for it applied only to such owners as derived their interest by descent or marriage; and while they were to be retained on the Register, and supposed to be capable *boná fide* citizens, any individual who bought at the market price was to be disqualified. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) was quite at a loss to understand upon what principle the Government had arrived at their decision in the matter, and therefore he felt bound to move his Amendment. He could not understand why a rent-charge should be regarded as only giving a fictitious vote, when it might represent £1,000, or, in some cases, many thousands a-year. There was no particular machinery attaching to a rent-charge which made it easy to multiply votes. This extraordinary bugbear of fictitious votes, or fagot votes, was a very singular argument to come from the mouths of Her Majesty's Government, who were now engaged in extending so-called household suffrage to counties, and who were putting an instrument into the hands of any man who chose to use it to create any number of fictitious votes by what was called the service franchise. By means of the service franchise anyone could easily add 100 or 200, or indeed any number, of voters to the Register. All he had to do was to take a house, pay rent for it himself, let every room out separately, and give to every tenant a key of the street door, and all the tenants would then become voters. Under such a condition of things it would not be necessary to resort to rent-charges, or to sub-division of freeholds, when the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had placed such an instrument in the hands of anyone who desired to create fictitious votes. The real fact of the matter was this, that these owners of property were likely to vote against the Liberal Party, while the so-called householders would probably vote for them. He asked, then, that Her Majesty's Government should give some reason for the course they were adopting in this matter, and to afford them that opportunity he moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, to leave out sub-section (1).—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH wished, before the hon. and learned Attorney General answered the question which had been addressed to him, to ask for some explanation as to what limits were intended to be placed by the Government upon the proposals contained in the Bill. He did not find in the Interpretation Clause any interpretation of the phrase "rent-charge." Now, there were rent-charges and rent-charges—there was the rent-charge which was *bonâ fide* purchased by an individual with the view of securing it to him, and which passed at his death to his legatees and executors. That was such a piece of property as had been understood to give a man a vote just as well as if he were a 40*s*. freeholder in the ordinary sense of the word. He had in view the case of a gentleman, a friend of his, who had purchased for some small sum a rent-charge to qualify him for a vote for the county. Upon his death it went to his son, and that son was now a registered voter. Was that son now to be disfranchised under this clause? If so, it would be most unjust, for the man had just as much a freehold in it as anyone else could have in anything else.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down asks for the view of the Government on this point. The position of the right hon. Gentleman is this—that whenever a pecuniary interest is obtained, however dissociated that interest may be from anything except the possession of a certain amount of money, there the vote is perfectly legitimate, and there is no reason for disfranchisement. However, I will say this, that we cannot undertake to maintain a property qualification if that doctrine is held and is to be applied in the unlimited manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has stated it. It is an ancient part of the electoral system of this country, no doubt; but I did not at all state, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) seemed to think I had stated —I did not at all state, in making our proposals on the introduction of the Bill, that we proposed to retain the property qualification. I cannot undertake to say that it is to be eternal; there is no utterance on the part of the Government to that effect. But if it is to be retained it ought to be associated, in our opinion, as a rule with something more than a merely pecuniary interest of a very limited amount, for if you allow that wherever a pecuniary interest can be obtained to an extremely limited amount, quite dissociated from every natural interest—from every moral and social interest—then we must consider what is the effect on a country like this where there is a very large class of rich men with vast disposable funds—we must consider what may be the effect of laying open to their operations such a property as a rent-charge. This is not a theoretical question. There are many cases. I could quote many cases in other counties too. My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General is conversant with one particular case where an appropriated rent-charge of £90 was made to qualify 41 voters, without such voters having any residence or natural connection with the place in which they were registered. The Motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is that all that objectionable system should be retained. We join issue on that point. We are quite willing that the property connection should be retained, but by property connection we mean something more than the mere possession of a sum of money. Let me take a case, no doubt undesirable in itself, but, at the same time, not so bad as the case of a subdivided rent-charge. Let me take the case of a particular plot of ground. There is something done in regard to the management and disposal of that particular plot of ground, and it is turned to account in some way besides the mere receiving of a sum of money. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says why not prohibit the special division of votes in reference to a plot of ground of that kind? I hope he will not drive us to answer the question, because he might be more likely to compel us to extend our proposal than to limit it. We have endeavoured to take a very Liberal, and, at the same time, a most Conservative, view of this question of property qualification; and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman is discreet, I think he will do well to accept our proposal. We wish it to be understood that this kind of property vote—if it may be so called—which is merely a pecuniary interest, dissociated from every other interest, and capable of indefinite multiplication by a peculiar description of machinery, is not the kind of vote we wish to maintain.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the right hon. Gentleman had not referred to one point in his remarks. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to draw a distinction between a rent-charge of a personal character and a rent-charge which devolved upon an individual by inheritance, or in various other ways. He hoped the question he had put to the right hon. Gentleman would receive an answer before the matter was disposed of.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had objected to the qualification by rent-charge, because the rent-charge was not, in his opinion, sufficiently identified with property. Now, he (Mr. Newdegate) imagined that the rent-charge was liable to Income Tax, and if the tax collector could trace the property, he did not see why the difficulty of tracing it should be insuperable to those who were charged with the due and proper registration of voters. But he held that it was quite possible to avoid any abuse, or, otherwise, how were abuses avoided under the Income Tax? He had adhered to the present provisions of the law for this reason—that he felt with the Italians, that no one should be entitled to vote unless he had proved that he had contributed something towards the taxation of the country. That was the principle of the Italian Constitution, and was the Italian system of enfranchisement, and he had not heard that in Italy any difficulty had been experienced in tracing the qualification. Then, why should they have any difficulty here? And when they were about to enfranchise under another section of the Bill—namely, the service franchise —persons who were not identified with property except by service, which was a qualification terminable at the will of another, surely a Bill which went as far as that towards manhood suffrage should attach value to a property qualification, inasmuch as property was a source of taxation. He held that the old principle was a just one—namely, that the payment of taxes should be the first qualification for those who were to vote for the election of those who were to be the imposers of taxes. He held that the old principle of the English Constitution was perfectly fair and just; and inasmuch as they had seen it preserved in the most recent Constitution which had been adopted in Europe, he thought his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), who proposed to retain this property and taxable qualification, was perfectly justified in doing so.

MR. ELTON said, he thought that some modification might be made in the sub-section without getting rid of it altogether. He thought it might be made perfectly clear that fagot voting, or ficticious voting, in the proper sense of the word, should be put an end to; and also that species of new fagot voting, which the Prime Minister had described as the creation of rent-charges for the purpose of conferring a vote. The right hon. Gentleman complained that in regard to that class of voters they did not even reside on the property from which their rent-charges were drawn, and it would in some cases be a difficulty for them to do so. But, while admitting the desirability of preventing this new kind of fagot voting, he thought it would be possible to give votes to the *bond fide* rent-chargers who had obtained their rent-charges by inheritance, descent, marriage settlement, or some other properly acquired interest. For instance, he might mention the case of copyholds and fee-farm-rents acquired from the Crown. Enfranchisement was about to be very much extended throughout the country, and a great number of persons would find themselves in the possession of rent-charges created by the Commissioners under the Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill. He presumed that when the Prime Minister had considered the case of those individuals, which probably he had not done hitherto, because the Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill had not been permanently passed, he would find that a great number of cases would arise in which the persons enjoying property of this description would be entitled to a vote. He certainly thought a distinction ought to be drawn between the purchase of a *bonâ fide* estate and an estate cut up for the purpose of multiplying votes. This would apply to the case of lay rectories and vicarages which sometimes came into the market and might, undoubtedly, be made into a machine for the multiplication of votes. He could quite sympathize with the desire of the Prime Minister to prevent property of this description from being employed for the multiplication of votes; but he thought the case was very unlikely to occur in future, and although it was undoubtedly desirable that rectories and vicarages should not be purchased for the purpose of conferring votes, still it would not be just or right to abolish all votes for rectories except one single vote for each, because, as was perfectly well known by everyone who had been in the habit of dealing with ecclesiastical estates, they were sometimes not altogether composed of the rent-charges arising in the same parish. He himself was acquainted with a case in Shropshire where the rectory was divided into three or four portions, and there were chapelries and separate portions of the tithes which in ancient times had belonged to the monasteries. His own opinion was that each separate estate forming a portion of a rectory or vicarage ought to have a vote if occupied singly, and he could not help thinking that if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would turn his attention to the question, he would see that there was considerable force in the arguments he had ventured to put forward.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, the Attorney General would know very well that copyhold land formerly gave no vote, and it would only give a vote now when it was of a certain value. In a large district of the county in which he resided the property was copyhold, and all the tithes were appropriated to copyhold land. It was now provided that a copyhold should be of £5 annual value before the holder obtained a vote; but there were a variety of small copyholders in regard to which the tithe rent-charge was a certain element in regard to estimating the value. He thought there should be some words inserted in the Bill to provide that where the copyholder was also holder of the land from which the tithe rent-charge was derived he should have a vote; but he was afraid that as the Bill was at present drawn that privilege was not conceded. A person would get a vote as copyholder and tithe rent-charger to the extent of £5 annual value; but if he had no vote in respect of the tithe rent-charge itself, a large number of persons would be practically disfranchised.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had not answered the objection which he had taken in regard to the anomaly of allowing this ancient qualification to remain, even when the land had been practically disposed of, because the position of a reversioner who held a freehold ground-rent which would revert to him on the completion of a lease for 999 years could not be said to have a very large interest in the property, and he could not see why such a holder should be preferred to a rent-charger. He considered it most unfair that while one had a vote the other should be disfranchised. The right hon. Gentleman had not answered his observations upon that point, nor, also, the observations he had made with regard to the injustice with which innocent purchasers were dealt. Under the circumstances, he conceived that the only object of the right hon. Gentleman was a political object, and that he desired to get rid of a certain number of voters. Indeed, the measure appeared to him to be entirely a political move from beginning to end. The right hon. Gentleman was altogether mistaken in saying that a rent-charge was not associated with the land. The rent was distinctly a charge upon land, and, in the event of its not being paid, the charger had a right to enter upon the land and distrain. The right hon. Gentleman now raised a new point as to whether the Bill was a Conservative measure or not. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) certainly did not feel that it was a Conservative Bill; and, most assuredly, if it were a Conservative Bill, it would not have been pressed by the right hon. Gentleman, and so energetically supported by hon. Members sitting below the Gangway on the other side of the House. He contended that this clause was a disfranchising clause, and that, like the whole of the Bill, its object was to gain a Party advantage.

Mr. WARTON protested against the manner in which the Bill had been drafted. He objected not only to the wording of this section, but to the marginal note at the side of it. They all knew perfectly well that the marginal note did not form part of the clause; but, at the same time, he thought it extremely wrong, and positively indecent, for those who drew up the Bill and for those who supported it to introduce such a note as this "restriction on fagot votes." Those words were misleading, and had no business to be there at all. The draftsman could not have been led to the expedient of using these words from the want of any better, because he had chosen as a prefix to the section other words which were not of an objectionable character. He thought similar words might well have been employed in the marginal note; and before the clause was passed he would take the opportunity of asking the Chairman what could be done to get rid of this abominable expression, which could have been inserted only for political purposes. It was a phrase which had no legal weight whatever. ["Question!"] He contended that he had a perfect right to discuss this point.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY rose to Order. The hon. and learned Member was discussing the marginal note, and not the Amendment before the Committee.

Mr. WARTON said, that he was discussing both at the same time, as the hon. Member would have discovered if he had only the sense to see it. The point he desired the Committee to consider was the words used to describe the clause; and he wanted to know how far such words as these were justified in a Reform Act? He contended that every rent-charge was not naturally a fagot vote; and he thought the error into which the Government had fallen was in effect that there was no distinction whatever between what was usually called a fagot vote, and what was really an important rent-charge. He thought this had been shown by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and learned Member that this is not the time for objecting to the marginal note; but the proper time will be upon the Question, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. WARTON said, he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman, but he had already left that point. He was now addressing his remarks to the words "rent-charge" in line 6, and he was pointing out that in the statement of the Prime Minister the right hon. Gentleman had confused a trumpery interest in land, which might be called a fagot vote, and a genuine and important rent-charge. Did the Prime Minister mean to tell the Committee that a man who had a rent-charge of £1,000 a-year, and who had had to pay for it—probably 30 years' purchase—was not a capable citizen? Hon. Members were voting for the Bill because it was proposed to enfranchise capable citizens, and he would therefore ask the Prime Minister if he was of opinion that a man who was worth £30,000 was not a capable citizen? Whether a capable citizen or not, he was to be disfranchised, and the reason appeared to be that he was a man who was not very likely to hold opinions in accordance with those of the Prime Minister. He did not know whether it was altogether fair for the Prime Minister to turn round to the Attorney General, and appeal to him whether he was not acquainted with a particular case in which fagot votes had been created. He did not doubt for a moment that a property worth £90 a-year might be cut into 41 votes, and perhaps three or four more, if proper ingenuity had been exercised. He believed that the Attorney General himself had lately acquired a vote for one-half or one-third of a property in some county or other. That, however, was not a fair way of putting the matter. There were other rent-charges besides those, and what he wished to see was some modification of the section which would enable those who had a *bonâ fide* and important interest in property to exercise the franchise. They might make it £15 or £10, or any amount they liked, and that would be far more reasonable than the disfranchisement of the owners of every description of rent-charge. Where was the line to be drawn? The copyholder of the annual value of £5 was to have a vote, and under the Chandos Clause £50 was the limit imposed. All the arguments which had been adduced about the owners of these rent-charges not being connected with the county for which the voting was to take place were all arguments put forward in order to prevent votes from being given to persons who were legitimately entitled to them. As a protest against the wholesale disfranchisement effected by the clause, and on the ground that it would prevent people with property from ever obtaining political influence, he should vote against the clause.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I should like to point out to the Committee that the Government have not given any answer to the speech of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton), which I consider to have considerable bearing on the question before us. The suggestion of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) is to leave out the whole of the sub-section, because the sub-section will have the effect of not only doing that which the Government wish to do—namely, of preventing fagot voting; but it will go beyond that, and will prevent any vote from being given by any *bonâ fide* rent-charger whatever. There have been certain cases mentioned in which such a prohibition would amount to a very serious disfranchisement and a very unreasonable disfranchisement—cases in which rent-charges have been created for perfectly legitimate objects, without having any regard to the vote at all. I could mention myself, from my own personal knowledge, several cases in which the owners of estates have given up the property and taken a rent-charge for life—a rent-charge of £100 or £200 a-year. That has been done without the slightest view of conferring electoral privileges; but, at the same time, according to this Bill, if the owner had no other property than that rent-charge he would lose the vote, although the property itself really conferred it upon him before. I want to know whether the Government will consider the proposal of my hon. and learned Friend, and agree to some modification of the clause, so that while fagot votes are prevented, rent-charges created under ordinary and legitimate circumstances will afford a vote to the possessor? My own opinion is that the two descriptions of rent-charges should be kept perfectly distinct and separate—one being made for the simple purpose of conferring a vote, while the other is made for entirely different purposes. If the Government would give a satisfactory answer to the suggestion of my hon. and learned Friend, I am satisfied that the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) would be contented with an arrangement on that basis, and would not desire to press his Amendment. Our only desire is to attain the object I have pointed out, and I think that it would be attained by accepting the proposal of my hon. and learned Friend.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton) would do more than the hon. and learned Member desired, for, if it were adopted, the only way of preventing a rent-charger from having a vote would be by proving that it was the intention of the person holding and the person succeeding to the rent-charge to create a vote. Thus it would be necessary to prove the state of men's minds, and clearly, if he accepted the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Elton), he would be allowing all rent-chargers to enjoy the qualification. In this clause they were only going back to a provision enacted as far back as the Reign of William III., which prevented the conveyance of land and tenements in any corporate town, &c., for the purpose of multiplying votes, and which also prohibited devices for splitting up property for the mere purpose of enabling votes to be given in the election of a Member of Parliament. The words contained in the present clause would have the same effect; but if the Committee accepted the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend, they would really allow the principle of a rent-charge to remain as a qualification. The Government had been strongly urged to abolish all property qualification as distinguished from occupation, and to proceed upon the principle of one man, one vote. They had not, however, gone to that length, but they had come to the conclusion that where a man had a large stake in the country it was desirable that he should be represented in the locality in which his interest was situated. Therefore, they had given way to the extent of allowing property to be represented; but they had come to the conclusion that that property should be really property—that it should be property having a real interest in the locality, and that it should not be property perfectly distinct from the locality, which might be held by a non-resident having no interest whatever in the management of the property or in the locality from which he received his rent-charge. A rent-charger might have no special interest in the locality in which the property was situated, and in such cases the Government intended to prevent in future such a course as the creation of fictitious votes from being held in contemplation. The reason why they disqualified incorporeal hereditaments was that it was found that incorporeal hereditaments were the most convenient form in which fictitious votes could be created. It was difficult for a man to give a false qualification if he was himself required to be in possession of the property; but it was very easy to give a rent-charge of 40*s.* a-year, which might be paid or not. Therefore, what the Government said was that where the interest was clear and real the owner should be represented, but not where he was simply possessed of an incorporeal hereditament. It was believed that the adoption of this principle would, in future, prevent a practice which everyone admitted to be a great evil—namely, the creation of fagot votes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do I understand the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) to withdraw his proposal?

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: No.

MR. WARTON said, it would be a pity if they were not able to come to some understanding upon this question, especially after the amount of courteous feeling the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had displayed in considering beforehand what would be the effect of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton). With a view of bridging over the difference between what might be called fagot votes and the mere 40*s.* qualification, he would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General if he would object, after the word "rent-charge" were adopted, to insert words to provide that the rent-charge itself should not be less than £100 per annum? His (Mr. Warton's) object was to draw a distinction which he thought ought to be drawn. A rent charge of £100 per annum would represent a considerable amount of money, and would not be a mere matter of form. He contended that a person who was possessed of a rent-charge of £100 a-year was a person of considerable importance, especially when they took into consideration the low scale upon which they were admitting other voters. He hoped the Government would take time for reflection, and that they would not say in the end that a person of that condition was not entitled to a vote, or that he had obtained a rent-charge of that description without intending it to be real and *bonâ fide* property.

Amendment *negatived.*

MR. WARTON asked the Chairman whether he would now be in Order in moving the Amendment he had suggested?

THE CHAIRMAN: Not yet.

MR. ELTON said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had said nothing about the case he (Mr. Elton) had put to him, of a person who by accident became possessed of a small rent-charge on ecclesiastical property—that was to say, a person who became the owner of a small portion of a tithe rent-charge. He thought there ought to be no difficulty with regard to that point, and he trusted that the Government would accept his suggestion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was sorry that he could not accept it.

MR. WARTON rose to Order. He believed that there was no Question before the Committee.

Mr. ELTON then formally moved an Amendment in the same clause, with the object of providing that a man should not be entitled to be registered as a voter in respect of the ownership of any rent-charge

"Created or sub-divided for the purpose of conferring a qualification as a voter on any person, or in respect of the ownership of any tithe rent-charge."

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 6, after the word "rent-charge," to insert the words "created or sub-divided for the purpose of conferring a qualification as a voter on any person, or in respect of the ownership of any tithe rent-charge."—(*Mr. Elton.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 77; Noes 162: Majority 85.—(Div. List, No. 109.)

Mr. WARTON moved, after the word "rent-charge," to insert the words "of not less than £100 per annum." The effect of that Amendment would be that persons having a rent-charge of £100 a-year and upwards would be qualified to vote, and surely persons in that position were of sufficient importance to be regarded as capable citizens and to enjoy the franchise. It was not the case of a person qualifying in order to obtain a vote, but it was the case of a person who must have a substantial interest, because a person who was the owner of a rent-charge of £100 a-year would have been called upon to pay £2,000 or £3,000 for it. It was not the case of a man who possessed a rent-charge of £2 or £3 a-year for which he had paid nothing whatever. He thought it was only fair, if they were to give a vote to the owners of these rent-charges, that they should require a certain income to be derived from the rent-charges, and therefore he proposed to fix the limit at £100 per annum. For his own part, he would prefer to fix a much lower limit, because he was of opinion that persons possessing a rent-charge of much less value than £100 a-year would have a sufficient interest in the property of the locality to justify them in enjoying a vote.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 6, to add, after the word "rent-charge," the words "of not less than £100 per annum."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I feel that it is not in the power of the Government to accept the proposal of the hon. and learned Member. We have no wish to recognize in the prospective arrangements of the country those purely money qualifications which have no connection with the different places or districts which are to be represented. Of course, we are perfectly aware that there is a great deal of property in this country of this character, such property, for instance, as the Funds, and a great mass of other property upon which people who have invested in it receive an interest for the capital invested; but, at the same time, that description of property is not represented because it has no genuine connection with the particular place or district to be represented. In the same way, there is no genuine connection in the case to which the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member applies, and it would certainly enable a rent-charge to be acquired for the mere purpose of obtaining a vote. As my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has already shown to the Committee, if we admit the principle of a rent-charge at all, we must open the door to the acquisition of fictitious votes. The main objection which the Government entertained to the proposal on which the Committee have just voted, applies also to this Amendment, and the Government have no choice but to oppose it.

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. ELTON moved to strike out, before the word "vicarage," in line 7, the word "or."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. ELTON moved to insert, after the word "vicarage," in line 7, the words—

"Chapelry or benefice to which an appointment of tithes rent-charge shall have been made in respect of any portion of tithes."

Mr. GLADSTONE assented to the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he wished now to raise a point on the 2nd sub-section of the clause. That sub-section ran thus—

"Where two or more men are owners either as joint tenants or as tenants in common of an estate in any land or tenement, one of such men, but not more than one, shall, if his interest is sufficient to confer on him a qualification as a voter in respect of the ownership of such estate, be entitled (in the like cases and subject to the like conditions as if he were the sole owner) to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote at an election."

He thought that some explanation ought to be given by the Government in regard to this sub-section. He proposed to move formally to omit the word "where," at the beginning of the sub-section, in order to raise a point which he did not think was at all settled by the Bill as it stood. Where there were two or more tenants in common or joint tenants, how was it to be decided which of the joint tenants was to be entitled to the franchise? As the Bill now stood, it appeared to him to be left entirely to chance who might be the first to apply, because the Revising Barrister would scarcely be entitled to refuse to insert a man's name upon the Register, on the ground that some other person might apply who had, perhaps, a larger interest in the property than the man who claimed to be registered. It would be obviously unfair that a man possessing the minor interest should, by the mere accident of having made a prior application, be placed upon the Register, whereas the person who had the larger interest was entirely shut out. The question he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government was, how they proposed to meet that objection? and in order to enable them to give an explanation, he would move formally the omission of the word "where" from the beginning of the sub-section.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 8, to leave out the word "where."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'where' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was not at all surprised at the right hon. Baronet raising that question, because he quite admitted that a theoretical difficulty did present itself. But they were now following old legislation in the matter. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the Act of 1867. [Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: No.] At any rate, the right hon. Baronet was associated with the Party who were responsible for it, and under the 27th section of the Act of 1867 the number of persons entitled to vote as joint occupiers in a county was limited to two. No more than two persons could vote as joint occupiers in a county. The section did not refer to boroughs; but in the Bill of 1867 under the £12 Occupation Clause, two occupiers only could vote even if there were 10, 12, or any other number of occupiers. The same provision was contained in the Scotch Reform Act of 1868, that two occupiers only were entitled to vote. From that time to this no practical difficulty had been experienced in settling the question as to who was entitled to the vote. Seventeen years had, therefore, elapsed, and as there had been no difficulty the matter in some way had settled itself, and he could not find that any objection had ever been made to this provision of the Acts of 1867 and 1868. If more than two persons did apply, the first comers were placed on the Register, and so long as they were there no other person could be placed upon it. He presumed that if any difficulty ever arose in the registration the first applicant would be the person whose name was inserted upon the Register, and it was obviously impossible for the Revising Barrister to decide that only the man who had a greater interest than another should have a vote, and that the man who had the minor interest should be kept off the Register. Parliament was well aware of what had been done in the Act of 1867, when they applied the same principle to the Act of 1868 for Scotland, and, as no practical difficulty had ever occurred on the subject, it had been thought wise to follow the existing rule, and to make no distinction of persons.

MR. BULWER asked whether a practical difficulty might not arise in the case of property being left to two sons by a father—say, for instance, a farm worth £500 a-year? Both might go into occupation as farmers and joint tenants; but brothers, as hon. Members well knew, were not always of the same political opinions. One might be a Liberal and the other a Conservative, and he wanted to know what would be done in a case of that kind?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that no such case could arise, but both would come under the provisions of the Bill and be entitled to votes. It was only in cases where there had been a conveyance of property to tenants in common, or joint tenants, that the difficulty arose.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he thought the hon. and learned Attorney General had failed to explain how, under the Scotch Act of 1868, if several claimants equally entitled as joint tenants to be placed on the Register made a claim, their application was disposed of.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he had only answered the question which had been put to him by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer), and he had intended to point out that no difficulty would arise except in the case of the conveyance of the property, because where the names of more than one person appeared on the occupation rate as occupying a farm for the legitimate purpose of cultivation, every tenant who made his claim would be entitled to a vote; but in other cases of tenants in common or joint tenancy, the persons whose names would appear on the Register would be those who made the first application. He believed that no difficulty had occurred on the subject of occupation under the Scotch Act of 1868; and with regard to other matters, it would be necessary in Scotland to exercise in future the same discretion which had been exercised without difficulty in the past.

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would move the omission of the sub-section altogether.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee have not yet reached the point when it would be regular to move the omission of the sub-section.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, that in that case, he would move the omission of the next words in the sub-section — namely, "either as joint tenants or," although he thought, as the Amendment appeared on the Paper, his hon. and learned Friend the Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton) was entitled to move the next. He objected altogether to the disfranchisement of joint tenants. He was unable to see on what grounds those who held a material interest in the country, and were capable citizens, were to be deprived of their right of voting.

Mr. BUCHANAN rose to Order. He wished to know what was the Question before the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot tell yet. The right hon. and learned Gentleman is, however, perfectly in Order.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he thought it was a great pity that the hon. Member had not waited to hear what he had to say. An objection had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to joint owners or rent-chargers, on the ground that they had no interest in the land. The right hon. Gentleman laid down the principle that property should really be property, and that the owner should have a genuine connection with the district for which he claimed to be qualified to vote. But how was it possible to argue that joint tenants of a property and tenants in common had no interest and were not connected with the land? It was not the abuse of a thing to which they should have regard, but the use of it. The fact that here and there instances could be found where joint tenancies and even tenancies in common might have been created for the purpose of giving voting power, was no reason whatever why the principle should be done away with altogether. The abuse of a principle was no justification for getting rid of the principle itself. Nobody would contend that joint tenants or tenants in common were not capable citizens, and why should they be disfranchised when Parliament was about to enfranchise a large number of persons who paid little or nothing for their holdings? They proposed to disfranchise joint tenants and tenants in common of an estate worth £10,000 a-year, while they were enfranchising others who might only pay an occupation rent of 20*s.* a-year. More than that, they were establishing a service franchise.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD rose to Order. He asked the Chairman whether the remarks of the right hon. and learned Gentleman were regular, and had any bearing upon the sub-section before the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. and learned Gentleman proposes to move the omission of the words "either as joint tenants or," and as long as his remarks are addressed to that point they are perfectly in Order.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK thought that the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd), instead of interrupting the proceedings, had better go to dinner. The Bill proposed to place upon the Register a vast number of electors, and yet, while doing that, and enfranchising persons who had a very small stake in the country, this clause proposed to exclude and disfranchise the owners of joint tenancies and tenancies in common who were largely interested in the property of the country. What would be the result of passing the new service franchise? He presumed that in Scotland thousands of persons would be enfranchised under it, including shepherds, gamekeepers, and others in domestic service, and while those persons were to be put upon the Register, tenants in common and joint tenants were to be excluded. He knew himself of more than one case where, in order to avoid the payment of heavy duties, a father and son had purchased together a considerable estate, and yet only one of them was to be allowed to vote, the other losing his right and capable citizenship. He did not think that the answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General as to which of the joint tenants was to be preferred was at all satisfactory. The hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to an old Act of Parliament, and then to the Acts of 1867 and 1868, in which a similar provision appeared to have been got in by hap-hazard, and he said that no inconvenience or difficulty had been experienced in consequence. On the other hand, he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had heard of cases where very great inconvenience had taken place in this respect, and he thought that in new and important legislation of this kind it would be better to prevent any anomalies or difficulties of the kind. But the existence of anomalies did not affect the principle of his objection that they were about to disfranchise the owners of property who were associated with the district for no reason whatever except that the Government thought that, in some cases or other, the rights and privileges of joint tenants or tenants in common had been so dealt with as to lead to inconvenience. He begged to move the omission of the words "either as joint tenants or."

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 8, to leave out the words "either as joint tenants or."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he hoped the Committee would hear some reasons from Her Majesty's Government for retaining the provision proposed to be omitted from this sub-section. He was quite ready to admit, as all of them must admit, that there had been great abuses in the way of creating fagot votes, under a system which the sub-section was intended to check. He would venture, however, to point out that these abuses had not been brought about so much by the facility of creating the joint tenancies or tenancies in common referred to in the section, as by the fact that the constituencies had been small in numbers, and that, therefore, the creation of fagot votes conferred a large power on the holders, and might have a material effect upon the result of an election. But if the franchise were extended as Her Majesty's Government proposed, this would no longer be the case, for it would be perfectly absurd for any person owning an estate to create these joint tenancies or tenancies in common simply for the purpose of placing persons upon the electoral roll, because it was obvious that the number of these persons would be so very small in comparison with the new electorate that it would really not be worth while to enter upon such a course in order to swamp the opinions of the resident and properly qualified electors. That, he believed, would be the real safeguard against these abuses in the future; and, therefore, he thought the Committee ought to have some reason from Her Majesty's Government why it was that they proposed to make a change in the law, which, even according to the admission of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, might possibly prove an injustice as between the joint owners of property—an injustice which the hon. and learned Gentleman also admitted that he did not see his way to remedy, but which, by the omission of the sub-section now under discussion, would be guarded against. He must say that it seemed to him Her Majesty's Government had gone quite far enough in the way of disfranchisement by passing the 1st sub-section of the clause. He did not deny that it dealt with a matter which the Prime Minister rightly said was not in the nature of a corporeal hereditament. But the present sub-section dealt with another matter altogether. It was a case of a *bonâ fide* form of ownership, in respect of which a joint owner or an owner in common ought, in all fairness, to be as well able to vote as if he were the sole owner. If there had been no abuses, no one would have ventured to propose the disfranchisement of these owners. His own opinion was that abuses would be sufficiently checked by the mode in which it was proposed to extend the franchise, and, therefore, the retention of this sub-section was really unnecessary.

Mr. GREGORY said, there was a broad distinction between joint tenants and tenants in common. In the first case, there was no partition, and the estate passed to the survivor of them. They, in fact, constituted one ownership; and it might be reasonable to treat them on that footing for the purpose of the franchise, giving, in fact, one vote only for the entire property. But with respect to tenants in common, the case was different. They had separate and independent estates and interests in the property, which they could alienate, or which passed to their heirs or devisees on their respective deaths, and they had a right to call for and enforce an actual partition of the property at any time; and he therefore thought that tenants in common were fairly entitled to enjoy the right of voting, and that their claim ought to be considered in dealing with the franchise.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he gathered from the remarks of the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) that he was in favour of retaining tenants in common, and of striking out joint tenants; but he was unable to say that he agreed in the views of the hon. Gentleman. In order to save time, he might say that as far as the Government were concerned they regarded the present discussion as representing the discussion upon the whole of the sub-section. He would, therefore, say at once that the Government would adhere to the sub-section. They were willing, as he had said before, to give a vote to a property qualification even although it might include non-residence, and even although, in some cases, the persons enfranchised might have very little interest in the locality. In that way, property would be represented; but they desired to surround that representation of property with certain safeguards, and not to allow it to be used simply as a pretence for obtaining the vote. How was it that fagot votes had been created? They had been created by giving votes to many persons who had only an interest in one tenement. The Government endeavoured to get rid of that difficulty by taking a provision contained in an old Act of William III., which enacted that not more than a single vote should be permitted for one and the same house or tenement. Words to that effect had been introduced into the present clause, and the Committee were asked to go back to the wisdom of the legislation adopted 200 years ago, and to give one vote only for a single tenement. The Government, however, had been more generous than the Legislature in the time of William III., because in certain cases they had allowed one tenement more than one vote—namely, where the right accrued through inheritance, marriage settlement, or will; but wherever attempts were made to split up the qualification by transference of the property to a great number of persons so as to give votes to those who had no real or substantial interest in the tenement, they went back to the old legislation of the time of William III., and said that only one such person should be entitled to vote, whether the persons in question were joint tenants or tenants in common—the intention was to allow one vote, and one vote only, for a single tenement. As he had pointed out, the Government had recurred to the legislation of the Reign of William III.; but in 1867 the Bill of the Conservative Government said that only two occupiers should vote for a single tenement, and all that had just been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) might, with equal force, have been urged against the legislation of 1867. The only alteration made by the present Bill was that, whereas by the Act of 1867 two occupiers were allowed to vote for the same tenement, the present Bill took only one owner instead of the two occupiers. The right hon. and learned Gentleman would remember that the Prime Minister had already referred to an instance in Scotland in which 40 votes had been created for one tenement. Her Majesty's Government wished to put a stop to such a state of things, and to prevent the creation of fictitious votes for the sole purpose of conferring the franchise on persons who had no real interest in the property.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that a technical distinction existed in England between joint tenants and tenants in common. Although precisely the same distinction did not exist in Scotland, the same objectionable practice had been resorted to for the purpose of creating fagot votes. It had long ago been discovered that a similar description of tenure afforded peculiar facilities for the creation of the same evil of fagot voting. All that was necessary was to divide the annual value among the number of persons it was wished to enfranchise. An indefinite number of votes might be created in that way, and in Scotland they had become so familiar with the system that there were instances in which 40 voters qualified for what would be called in England a single tenement. In the present Bill the Government endeavoured to preserve the rights of property, and all the legitimate claims of property were carefully safeguarded in the later part of this provision. Where the acquisitions of interest were not fictitious, and where there were evidences of good faith, the Bill preserved to them their capacity of conferring the vote. Rights obtained by descent, by marriage, by co-partnership, or by will, were preserved; but in other cases, where they were obviously fictitious and only acquired for the purpose of giving the vote, they were done away with.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he thought the argument of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was a very strong one against the general principle of the Bill—namely, the extension of household franchise to counties, and, so far from being a protection against fagot voting, the provisions of the Bill would afford ample opportunities for the creation and multiplication of fictitious votes; all that it would be necessary to do was to pay the rates and give a man a key of the street door, and they would be able to create at once as many fagot votes as they liked. Indeed, he thought the Bill ought to have had a provision inserted in the Preamble to this effect—"Whereas it is desirable to extend the principle of fagot voting." He should certainly take the sense of the Committee upon the Amendment, because he desired to enter his protest against this disfranchising process, whereby joint tenants and tenants in common, who were associated with the land itself, were to lose the rights as electors which they had enjoyed from time immemorial.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, the Government had now enunciated their views with regard to the extension of the franchise, and had fully exemplified what the real principle of the Bill was. They refused to acknowledge any of the rights or privileges of property in the franchise, and spoke of them as incorporeal hereditaments. Surely, the Public Debt of this country had become a property; but the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister emphatically declared that he would not acknowledge that kind of property as entitling the owners of it to enjoy the franchise. This was a very serious declaration, because the right hon. Gentleman also excluded taxation—either general taxation or local taxation—as an element of qualification. The right hon. Gentleman established this rule and principle when he was about to add 2,000,000 to the electorate—2,000,000 of persons who were certainly not be identified by their possession of property. He was ready to admit that he agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman had formerly written—that the tendency of this democratic change would probably be in the direction of establishing again the principle of the protection of labour in this country; and he trusted that that protection would not be limited to protection for the property of the country, but would be extended to the competition of foreign nations.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must request the hon. Gentleman to confine himself to the Amendment, which is to omit from the clause the words "either as joint tenants or."

Mr. NEWDEGATE apologized, and said, he would bow to the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair. At the same time, he thought it was only fair, seeing that these arguments had been adduced upon the subject-matter of the clause, to make the observations he had made. He would now sit down, subject to the authority of the Chair, by repeating that he had learnt a lesson from the discussion which had taken place.

Mr. WARTON said, he would make an appeal to his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) not to press his Amendment. His object in making the appeal was this. There was a distinction to be drawn between the case of joint tenants and tenants in common, as had been pointed out by his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), and he quite agreed with his hon. Friend that it would be better to keep tenants in common in the Bill, and to strike out joint tenants. He thought such a course would fully accomplish the object which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had in view. The right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to treat joint tenants as if they were in precisely the same position as tenants in common, which, as a matter of fact, was not the case. If the Government were in favour of giving the vote to one of these classes of tenants, then those who ought to have it were tenants in common and not joint tenants. Personally, he did not see why several persons who enjoyed the same rights as tenants in common should not have the privilege of the franchise. Under these circumstances, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would withdraw the Amendment, so that the Committee might be in a position to proceed at once with the discussion of the real question at issue.

Mr. BULWER said, he had gathered from the observations of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, that they were now really engaged in a discussion of the merits of the entire sub-section, and that the vote they would be asked to give, as accepted by the Government, would be upon the Amendment to leave out Sub-section 2. The Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) applied to a portion of the sub-section only; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman had also an Amendment upon the Paper lower down, for the omission of the sub-section. As it did not seem to be generally understood, he wished to know from the Attorney General if he was right in the impression that they were now engaged in discussing the entire sub-section?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought it was understood that the vote would be taken upon the entire sub-section.

Mr. GREGORY suggested that the Division should be taken upon the word "either." The object of those who agreed with him would, he thought, be best attained by the withdrawal of the Amendment now before the Committee, and the substitution of an Amendment to omit the word "either." That would leave it open to retain joint tenants, or tenants in common, provided that the Committee agreed to take one or the other, but not both.

The CHAIRMAN: The Question before the Committee is to omit the words "either as joint tenants or." Does the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) press that Amendment?

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: No; I will withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. GREGORY moved to omit from the sub-section the word "either."

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 8, to leave out the word "either."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Question put, "That the word 'either' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 115; Noes 24; Majority 91.—(Div. List, No. 110.)

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had an Amendment which he should like to move at the end of the clause, with the object of making the clause clearer.

Mr. ANDERSON said, he rose to move the Amendment standing in his name, the object of which was to limit the number of owners of land or tenements proposed by the clause to be entitled to vote by reason of their carrying on trade or business as partners on such land or tenements. It occurred to him that the term "partners" was a little too comprehensive. In that county of Scotland represented by the Prime Minister (Edinburghshire) there was a large number of oil-making Companies, and he could see nothing in the Bill, as it stood, which would prevent the partners in those Companies, however numerous they might be, from being put on the Register and voting. The words of the clause were—"and are bonâ fide engaged as partners carrying on trade or business thereon." His object in proposing this Amendment was to prevent any possible abuse of the intention of the clause by a large number of partners carrying on trade or business, and with that view he had in his Amendment put down the number of persons who should be entitled to be registered as voters at six, which number was taken from the Joint Stock Companies Act.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 17, after the word "and," insert the words "not exceeding six in number."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government were not disposed at present to accept the Amendment. So far as the persons forming Joint Stock Companies were concerned, the Company as such would be the occupier, and no member of the Company simply because he had shares in it would be entitled to vote. The clause contemplated people who were engaged as partners in trade or business personally on the conditions specified, and not as members of a Company. Then with regard to partners not members of Companies, bearing in mind the safeguards contained in the clause, the Government saw no reason why the number of persons entitled to be registered and to vote should be confined within the limit proposed by the hon. Member for Glasgow, inasmuch as they considered that in practice the abuse apprehended by him would not arise.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY pointed out that the wording of the clause was alternate; it was "or"—not "and"—where they occupied the land or tenement.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he desired to call the attention of the Attorney General to the wording of the clause which rendered it necessary, for the purpose of this franchise, that certain businesses or trades should be carried on. He had no doubt that the intention of the Government was to include the class of persons whom he was about to refer to; but the words of the clause were—

> "Where" (such owners) "occupy the land or tenement, and are bonâ fide engaged as partners carrying on trade or business thereon."

Now, it was clear that this wording covered the case of owners occupying land for the purpose of farming; but he believed the hon. and learned Gentleman would admit that it might not be sufficiently comprehensive, because he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) conceived it possible that owners occupying land as woodland, or for grazing purposes, might not be held to be carrying on business as farmers. If his view were incorrect, he should be glad to hear a statement from the Attorney General on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government were quite at one with the right hon. Gentleman in his desire not to exclude from the franchise persons occupying the land for purposes of the kind indicated, and which they believed would come within the words "carrying on trade."

MR. WARTON objected to the words "restriction on fagot votes," and proposed to substitute the words "prohibition of multiplication of votes," which stood at the head of the section.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) rose to Order. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport was discussing the wording of a marginal note which was not part of the Bill. If the hon. and learned Member would communicate with him, any suggestion he had to make on this point should receive attention.

MR. WARTON said, that the words proposed to be substituted were perfectly innocent, and he could discern no reason why the Attorney General should object to his suggestion. The drafting of the next clause showed that he was perfectly consistent, the same wording, "Assimilation of Occupation Qualification," having been placed both at the heading of the clause and in the margin.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought there might possibly be some misunderstanding in regard to the point he had just raised. He did not mean the ordinary acceptation of the word "farmer." His desire was to prevent the exclusion of persons owning and using land for some purpose which would not be ordinarily covered by the words "trade or business"—grazing or woodcutting, for instance.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, if the right hon. Gentleman would communicate with him, the subject should receive attention.

Mr. BULWER asked if persons owning and occupying land for the purpose of sport only would come within the meaning of the Proviso?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), said the clause referred to the ownership of property as distinct from occupation.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he regretted extremely that the clause should pass in its present form, because it was clearly a disfranchising clause. There were a large number of persons in the Kingdom who had rent-charges — especially in Ireland — and who were particularly interested in the various localities in which the rents were receivable, and these persons would be clearly disfranchised. He himself had a rent-charge in the county of Kent, which had been in the possession of his family for many generations, and he presumed that by-and-bye it would cease to be available for the purpose of voting. He had an undoubted interest in the locality in question—he was anxious to know whether the rent would be paid or not—and therefore he, for one, did not hold with the objection of the hon. and learned Gentleman that owners of rent-charges had no interest in the localities where such rent-charges were receivable. It was perfectly well-known that there were many persons who owned rent-charges, and the effect of the clause would be that they would lose all interest in the localities, so far as the vote was concerned. Although the clause might, to a certain extent, prevent fagot voting, it clearly took away from persons legitimately holding property the right of voting, which, he thought, they ought to possess.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Assimilation of Occupation Qualification.

Clause 5 (Assimilation of occupation qualification).

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he proposed to move the omission of the words "clear yearly value," in line 30, on the ground that their interpretation would cause difficulty hereafter. The words were interpreted in Clause 11 with regard to Scotland as the "Annual value appearing in the valuation roll;" in respect of Ireland they were interpreted as the "Net annual value at which the occupier of such land or tenement was rated under the last rate for the time being;" but with regard to England they appeared to have no interpretation at all. He suggested that it would remove some difficulty in the settlement of the value before the Revising Barrister, in the case of applications for registration under the clause, if the value were taken in the same way with regard to England as in other parts of the Kingdom.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 30, to leave out the words "clear yearly value," and insert the words "rateable value."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Committee would perceive that the question of striking out the words "clear yearly value," for the purpose of substituting the words "rateable value," was one of considerable importance. The object of the words was very simple—namely, the assimilation of the occupation franchise in boroughs and counties. The borough occupation franchise, as created by the 37th section of the Act of 1832, was a £10 clear yearly value, and the county occupation franchise was a £12 rateable value, which latter, as the Committee would be aware, represented a yearly value of £15 or £16—the rateable value being arrived at by making certain deductions. The intention of the Government being to assimilate the two franchises, they put in the words "or tenement" after "land," as distinguished from the simple building in the case of boroughs, the effect of which would be that the occupier of a field would have a vote, whereas before the field must have had a building upon it to entitle him to be registered as a voter. For the purpose of assimilation they had reduced the £12 rating to a £10 clear yearly value. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not press his Amendment.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he understood that this was a Bill for equalizing the franchise in the three Kingdoms. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Yes.] But that was precisely what it did not do. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the rateable value was less than the yearly value; and yet the Government proposed to take the yearly value with regard to England, and the rateable value in the case of Scotland and Ireland. Everyone knew that the rateable valuation in Ireland by no means represented the real value of the property; a few years ago it was very much less than the real value, and it was so, to a certain extent, even now. Therefore, as far as this clause was concerned, the occupation franchise in Ireland was not the same it would be in England. The reason for the introduction of the words "clear yearly value" was, according to the hon. and learned Gentleman, because the Government wanted to lower the value as much as they could. Then, why not take the yearly value in all cases? His object, as he had already stated, was to have a fixed standard, instead of a phrase which would become the subject of constant discussion in the Revision Courts; and that point had not been met by the argument of the Attorney General. He was willing to take a lower figure than 10 for the purpose of equalization, his anxiety being that the work of the Revising Barrister, which would be materially increased under the Bill, should be made as easy as possible; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman would not admit his Amendment at this place, he should certainly move an Amendment to Clause 11, where the question could be very conveniently raised, and where the interpretation "rateable value" would more obviously carry with it the intention expressed by the Government that the franchise in England should be the same as in Scotland and Ireland.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the question was practically whether they should take the clear yearly value, or whether they should allow the overseer to determine the value of the property. With regard to the difficulty which it was supposed the words would place in the way of the Revising Barrister, he believed there was very little difficulty indeed in interpreting what constituted a clear yearly rental for the purpose of registration.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he wished to move to reduce the qualification from £10 to £5. He hoped the Committee would not think there was any bugbear of property in this matter; it was a genuine occupation franchise, and had nothing to do with property. The hon. and learned Attorney General, therefore, need not be afraid of it. The clause enfranchised non-resident occupiers; his Amendment merely reduced the amount of qualification. The ground of his proposal was this—that he thought the occupation franchise should bear some proportion or relation to the household franchise, as it was proposed in this measure. The franchise, as they knew, was degraded by the Bill, and the degradation would produce very illiterate and ignorant voters. Testing a man's capacity by occupation, he did not think it could be said that by reducing this qualification from £10 to £5 they would be introducing incapable people, or people below the level of dwellers in mud-huts, or of those included under the lodger or the service franchise. His proposal would certainly be a lowering of the franchise; but not to so great a depth as was already proposed by the Bill. The tenant of a £5 holding without a house was a more respectable and a more trustworthy person than the householder or lodger who might be paying 6*d.* a-week for his house or room. He did not think the Government would be able to say that he was proposing to enfranchise anyone who ought not to have the franchise by reason of incapacity. He therefore looked about to find what earthly argument the Government could produce against his proposal. Was the £5 occupier so disreputable that the Government would refuse to allow him to have the franchise, or was it because he did not occupy a house together with the land? The latter could not be the case, because in proposing this £10 occupation franchise the Government were deliberately abolishing the necessity of residence. Residence was no longer a test or a condition for a vote; therefore, what reason could the Government bring forward against the Amendment? Five pound holdings were holdings occupied by capable persons; and why should not they have the franchise? There seemed to him to be an incongruity in enfranchising a £1 householder, as they did in Ireland, whilst refusing to enfranchise the occupier of a £5 tenement. He could not, in thinking over the matter, conceive any possible argument that the Government could bring forward against his proposal, unless, indeed, it was that the Bill was so incomplete, and so full of anomalies, that it was useless to attempt to remove any of them, and that they were determined to send it up to its account in "another place" with all its imperfections on its head. As a sincere reformer, he could only look with anxiety and dread upon the determination of the Government not to accept any improvements, from whichever side of the House they were proposed. He begged leave to propose this reduction of the occupation franchise from £10 to £5, and would only express a hope that the Government would accept it, or, at all events, adduce some reasonable argument against it.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 31, to leave out the word "ten," and insert the word "five."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'ten' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. CUBITT said, he wished to ask the Attorney General whether this franchise was to be dependent or not on residence? If he (Mr. Cubitt) understood aright, the present £50 county occupation was independent of a residence; but the £10 household franchise was dependent upon it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that the borough franchise was dependent upon a residence within seven miles of the borough; but that residence was not required in respect of such franchise in a county. As to the Amendment, it sought to enfranchise a non-resident voter—it was the enfranchisement of the property owner. He really could not tell why the sum of £10 should be the uniform limit of occupation; it had been so fixed in boroughs in 1832, and in 1867 it was retained at £12 in the counties and £10 in the boroughs. The hon. Member objected to such a sum being fixed; but he had adduced no more argument in favour of the reduced sum he proposed than could be offered in support of a proposal to reduce the qualification to £2, or even to £1. It was necessary to have a uniform limit, and the £10 limit having been decided upon, and being well understood, it was desirable to retain it. All he could say on the question was that the Government had been anxious to avoid altering the franchise more than they considered to be absolutely necessary. They found the £10 franchise in existence, and thought it well to retain that figure, although they admitted they saw no particular charm in it.

Mr. RAIKES said, he must confess that he was a little disappointed by the answer given by the Attorney General to his hon. Friend the Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), because it seemed to him that though what the hon. and learned Gentleman had said might be a very good argument against any reduction of the £10 occupation franchise to a £5 occupation if this question stood alone, he had hardly touched the point as to how it was to be dealt with in connection with the other provisions of the Bill. The principal point of the hon. Member for North Shropshire was that the Government were going to enfranchise a great number of persons of presumably less intelligence than the £5 occupier. It appeared to him (Mr. Raikes) that that was an argument the Government were bound to meet. If they thought that a £5 occupier was likely to be a less "capable citizen" than the people it was proposed in this wholesale manner to admit to the franchise then there would be some reason in their rejecting the Amendment. If this matter stood alone, he should oppose the proposal that the £10 should be reduced to £5; but, having regard to the different parts of the Bill, it seemed to him that the Government were bound to show that the people whom the hon.

Member for North Shropshire proposed to enfranchise were less fit to receive a vote than those to whom it would be given by the Bill. The 2,000,000 of capable citizens who were to be admitted to the franchise by the measure would not, he presumed, be very largely increased if this Amendment were adopted; and it would, at least, be said that those who would be admitted under the Amendment had more of a stake in the country, and were possessed of a higher qualification, having regard to what had hitherto been considered essential to make a capable citizen, than the great mass of the new voters the Government proposed to bring in. He trusted the Committee would hear some further argument from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in connection with the other provisions of the Bill before this Amendment was disposed of, because, unless they did, it seemed to him that up to now the hon. and learned Gentleman's observations had rather missed the point.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had given no reason at all why £5 should be adopted in place of £10. If the Committee were disposed to adopt the £5 limit there was no earthly reason why another proposal to reduce it to 40*s*. should not be brought forward, and supported by precisely the same arguments as those which they had heard to recommend the present proposal. If the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Shropshire were pressed to its practical conclusion an Amendment reducing the occupation franchise in regard to land to 40*s*. might just as well be accepted. This was the first occasion, to the best of his belief, on which it had been proposed by any Government to establish a franchise of a non-residential character in boroughs, without any connection with houses or buildings; and, for his own part, he should have been very glad if the proposal contained in Clause 5 had never been made. The Prime Minister had said that the occupation of land would confer a franchise in boroughs, whether the land was connected with buildings or not.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government were following the old rule laid down in 1832, by which, in case of a borough franchise, residence was necessary within seven miles of a borough.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he was glad of that, and he understood the franchise was only introduced for the sake of uniformity. It was introduced as a borough franchise as it had been in Scotland. It was felt there was no reason why they should adopt £5 any more than they should retain the present figure, only that having been adopted and having become generally known, it was as well not to interfere unnecessarily with the arrangement.

MR. M'LAREN said, if the effect of the proposal were to add voters, not otherwise enfranchised, to the Register, he would have supported the Amendment, and declared that he could not understand Liberal Members voting against proposals which would bring about an extension of the franchise. But he could not help thinking that the Attorney General had put the thing on an intelligible footing when he showed that the Amendment in the clause would only put the law on a worse footing as to fagot-voting than it was at present. The Government were giving them an antidote first, and then offering them the poison in this Bill, because to his mind the clause, even as it stood, did more harm than good. It would practically confer a fagot qualification in boroughs, and such a proposal was made for the first time in our legislation.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the matter was rendered rather worse than he had supposed by the reply of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold). The hon. Member for Salford not unnaturally supposed that the requirement of residence with respect to a borough was to be abolished, and that this clause was practically introducing in boroughs the franchise which now existed in counties, lowering it from a £12 rateable value to a £10 yearly value. But that, according to the hon. and learned Gentleman's explanation, was not his intention. The Government proposed to keep up the qualification of residence in boroughs. Why did they do that? Why, because they feared that if they were to abolish it they would be introducing a system of fagot votes through this occupation franchise. But why were they going to inflict on counties a system which they would not inflict on boroughs?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The clause will not do so.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH certainly thought it would. The present county qualification of England was a £12 rating qualification, which did not require residence. The Government might leave that as it was—he had no objection at all to their doing so; but he certainly did not think they ought to lower it if they had in their mind the danger that would be brought about by lowering the qualification without requiring residence through the creation of fagot votes. If the rating were lowered to £10 yearly value they might see a great many people over-estimating the value of their property in order to get votes out of it. They would find many people possessing property, with a value of £7 or £8, using every means they could devise to persuade the Revising Barristers that they had a £10 qualification. There might be just as many fagot votes created in counties in this way as Her Majesty's Government proposed to abolish by the clause which had just passed the Committee. If this county franchise, free from the requirements of residence, was to be inserted in the Bill, the other clauses of which would give the county franchise to every householder in the county, there would be very few cases indeed in which it could be fairly applied. On the other hand, it was a clause which, by the showing of the hon. and learned Gentleman, was capable of being applied for the purpose of creating fagot votes, or else there was no reason why they should continue to require a residence in boroughs. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would give some further explanation beyond that he had tendered to the Committee, which was that the Government desired to keep up the existing law. The Committee should have some reason why the Government proposed to inflict on counties this possibility of the development of a new system of fagot votes.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was afraid he did not quite clearly understand the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. If the right hon. Gentleman proposed any Amendment they would discuss it; but, so far as he could follow him, he was objecting to the necessity for a residence in boroughs.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: No; I did not.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman did not object to the fact that the non-resident voter should have a vote in the county, and the right hon. Gentleman was willing there should be a residence qualification in boroughs, and declared that non-residence was not necessary in the counties; and he said, on an Amendment proposing to reduce the qualification from £10 to £5, that he wished to leave the franchise as it was. The right hon. Gentleman, as a county Member, refused to allow a £10 occupier in the county to vote, because he supposed such a person was not fit to exercise the franchise.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I did not say so.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman had said something to that effect. He must be consistent. If he wished to allow the franchise to remain as it was he wished to allow the county franchise to rest unaltered, which was a £15 or £16 rental. The Government, on the other hand, wished to reduce it. The Government were seeking to enfranchise the county occupier, and the right hon. Gentleman to prevent it. The Government wished to assimilate the two franchises—that was to say, to reduce the £15 or £16 rental to the same qualification as that of the boroughs.

MR. WARTON said, it seemed to him that the Attorney General got into difficulties, not understanding the argument of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), because of his extraordinary passion for assimilation. That passion led him to ludicrous lengths. Hon. Members could quite understand that the object of the Bill was to give the same household franchise to the counties that the boroughs possessed; but the Attorney General was now endeavouring to assimilate things which were not at all similar—a qualification where residence was required in boroughs, and a qualification where residence was not required in counties. These things could not be assimilated by making the £15 or £16 rental a £10 qualification as it was in the boroughs.

If they had a householder in the county, and a householder in the borough, they could, in a certain sense, assimilate their franchises; but they could not assimilate totally dissimilar qualifications. Upon the Amendment before the Committee, he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had given due force and weight to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). With regard to "capable citizens," these Irish voters, or the majority of the Irish people who were to be admitted to the franchise, were persons who were paying somewhere about £1 a-year rental. He believed there was a majority of about 100,000 of these people who paid no more than £1 a-year rental; and he certainly thought, with due submission to the Attorney General, that a £5 occupier in a county or borough in England should have as much, if not more, weight than a £1 occupier in the wilds of the West of Ireland. However, the Government knew very well that by the proposals they were making they would get the support of the Irish Members; and he presumed they cared more for the votes of these £1 occupiers than they did for £5 occupiers in England. With regard to the whole clause, he must repeat that the passion of the Government for assimilation had produced a most deplorable state of things.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he had listened to the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General with amazement; it seemed that his main contention was, "what has been shall be;" because £10 had been the qualification in the past so it should be in the future. Such logic would be fatal to the Bill. Why had the Prime Minister brought in a measure to overturn the whole system of voting if the Government were to argue, as soon as an Amendment of this sort was brought forward, that because a certain thing had been done up to this time, therefore it was right? The Attorney General declared, with the confidence of a man asserting some incontestible truth, that because £10 had been adopted up to this time, therefore £10, and nothing but £10, should qualify for the franchise for ever. He was glad that he had, at any rate, elicited by his Amendment some evidence of the fact that the Government were opposed to anything in the shape of an enfranchising clause when it came from the Opposition side of the House. It was as well that that fact should be known to the Committee and the country—that the Government were afraid of accepting an enfranchising clause when it came from the Conservatives. He confessed he felt some tenderness for hon. Members opposite, many of whom sympathized with the Amendment, but did not dare to go against the Government. He pitied hon. Members opposite very much, and out of pity he would withdraw the Amendment, and not put them to the trouble and difficulty of having to vote against their convictions.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he wished to move an Amendment, which was not on the Paper. In page 2, line 31, to leave out the words, "after the passing of this Act." This he proposed in order to carry out the undertaking which had been given by the Prime Minister that they should not at present fix a date at which the Act should come into operation.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 31, to leave out the words "*after the passing of this Act.*"—(*The Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. WARTON was under the impression that the words "after the passing of this Act" remained in Clause 4. If they struck them out here, when they went through the Bill again on Report it would be necessary to strike them out of the other clause.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that if it were necessary to strike the words out on Report it should then be done.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Supplemental Provisions.

Clause 6 (Voter not to vote for county in respect of occupation of property in borough) *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Definition of household and lodger qualification and other franchises, and application of enactments relating thereto).

Mr. GREGORY moved, in page 3, line 2, to leave out from "as," to "Ireland," in line 7, inclusive, and insert—

> "The occupation as tenant, for a period of twelve months, of a tenement which is rated, or capable of being rated, and on which the rates have been duly paid, and to which tenancy is attached the right of free access and egress to and from such tenement, without the control or interference of the landlord, or any person claiming by, through, or under him."

The hon. Member said the Amendment he proposed was rather an Interpretation Clause than an Amendment, and it was not proposed in any spirit of antagonism against the Bill. The clause in which he proposed to move the Amendment was the 7th of the Bill, and the marginal note relating to it was—

> "Definition of household and lodger qualification and other franchises, and application of enactments relating thereto."

What he desired to make clear was what the expression "household qualification" meant. He contended that its meaning under the clause was no meaning at all, and the interpretation given was no interpretation and no definition whatever. There was no question, he believed, in the whole range of the law, about which so much difficulty and conflict had arisen as what was the determination of the expression "household qualification." Under these circumstances, it was desirable in this Bill to give some definition which should guide the Revising Barrister; and it had occurred to him that some attempt should be made to give a definition, or, if not a definition, at all events some indication of what was meant by "household qualification" when the expression was made use of in an Act of Parliament. He had referred to the legal decisions upon the subject, and he found that there was nothing as to which greater difference of opinion had arisen. The matter was, however, considered to be of so much importance that it was ultimately taken before the Lords Justices of Appeal for a decision upon the question. The late Sir George Jessel was one of the Judges before whom the appeal was brought; and in the Amendment which he (Mr. Gregory) proposed to insert in the Bill he had followed as far as he could the interpretation of that learned Judge. Sir George Jessel pointed out that the question was one of extreme difficulty, and that it had been very much complicated by the conflicting decisions which had been given in regard to it, and which it was impossible to reconcile. The learned Judge admitted the difficulty of laying down a definition applicable to all circumstances; but, at the same time, he laid down a certain principle by which a Judge or Revising Barrister who was hereafter called upon to deal with the question might be guided in giving a decision. The principle thus laid down by Sir George Jessel he had endeavoured to follow in giving an interpretation to the clause. The leading principle of the decision of the learned Judge was that "household qualification" meant that the man claiming it should have the dominion or control of his tenement —that was to say, that he should have the uncontrolled possession of it, and free access and egress to and from it without the interference of the landlord, or of any other person claiming through or under the landlord. Of course, he would be liable to the landlord in regard to repairs; but, subject to that, he ought to have the uncontrolled possession of the tenement, and to be able to go in and out of it without any interference on the part of the landlord, or of any other person. That was the interpretation which he proposed to give to the expression "household qualification," and he believed the Amendment would fully carry out his object and intention. He proposed to leave out of the clause certain slip-shod words which now appeared in it, and which were, he believed, taken from the Act of 1867 for the purpose of giving a clearer and more distinct interpretation; and for that purpose he proposed to insert words to provide that the occupation of the person claiming to be qualified should consist in his having been tenant for a period of 12 months of a tenement which was rated, or capable of being rated, to which tenancy was attached the right of free access and egress without the control or interference of the landlord, or of any person claiming through the landlord. It would thus be seen that he contemplated three elements in regard to qualification. First of all, there must be an occupation of 12 months, which was the law as it now stood. Secondly, that the tenant should be rated, or capable of being rated, which was also the law at the present moment. The law originally, however, went further, and said that the rates must have been duly paid by the tenant. In his Amendment he did not go as far as that; but he simply required that they should be paid by somebody. Whether they were paid by a foreigner he did not care, nor did he inquire; but what he did contend was that the tenement should be rated, and that the rates should have been paid. In the third place, he came to something which was somewhat new, and which was founded principally upon an argument to which he had already referred—namely, that the tenant should have the right of free access and egress

"Without the control or interference of the landlord, or any person claiming by, through, or under him"—

that was to say, that the tenant should be in full and complete enjoyment of the tenement. He thought that was a very material and important requirement, and he was of opinion that there was no qualification which they could fairly define as an element for the enjoyment of the franchise unless they insisted upon some provision of this kind. He did not claim that the right should be confined to the tenancy of two, three, or more rooms; but he gave it to one room, provided the tenant complied with the provisions contained in the Amendment. All that he said was that the person claiming to be placed upon the Register and entitled to a vote should be an independent person, and that the tenement he occupied should be a real tenement—a tenement of which he had the unrestricted possession, and in regard to which his right of access and egress was free, and uncontrolled by the landlord or any other person. The only stipulation was that the tenement should be rated, or capable of being rated, and that the rates should have been paid. He thought the Amendment, if it were adopted by the Committee, would give some indication of what the opinion of Parliament was upon the matter, and would obviate hereafter a good deal of the confusion which now arose from conflicting decisions. With that view, and not from any antagonism to the Bill, he ventured to submit the proposal to the Committee.

MR. RAIKES said, that before the Chairman put the Amendment, he wished to move an Amendment after the word "Ireland."

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman can propose his Amendment after that which has been submitted by the hon. Member for East Sussex has been disposed of.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 1, to leave out all the words after the word "as" down to the word "Ireland" in line 7, inclusive, in order to insert the words, "the occupation as tenant, for a period of twelve months, of a tenement which is rated, or capable of being rated, and on which the rates have been duly paid, and to which tenancy is attached the right of free access and egress to and from such tenement, without the control or interference of the landlord, or any person claiming by, through, or under him."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was sure that his hon. Friend had not moved the Amendment in any hostile spirit, but that he was desirous of bringing before the Committee the principle which it contained. He was afraid, however, that his hon. Friend had, with the very best intentions, undertaken a very difficult and ambitious task. He recollected a learned Judge saying, not long ago—

"If you ask me to define what is day and what is night, I cannot really do it; but I can tell you what is day and what is night."

His hon. Friend had now undertaken to define what was a house for the purposes of the Bill, and he wished that his hon. Friend could have been successful. If he had been, he had no doubt the Committee would have been most happy to accept his hon. Friend's definition. He asked the Committee to examine what it was that the proposal of his hon. Friend did. He had suggested that "household qualification," which was substantially the same thing as a house, should mean the occupation as tenant for a period of 12 months—that was without reference to any date before the registration—"of a tenement which is rated, or capable of being rated." That would include any building with a roof upon it, even a coal-shed. Of course, his hon. Friend did not mean for a moment to confer a vote upon the tenant of a coal-shed; but he would be aware that a tenement did not mean a dwelling house only, but any building.

Mr. GREGORY said, the Amendment referred to a building which was rated.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the coal-shed could be rated. "A tenement" was a word of very wide signification, and included anything that had a roof over it; and under the Amendment as it now stood any holding would be able to confer the franchise upon the tenant who was in occupation of it. He thought his hon. Friend must admit that he had broken down on the very threshold of his attempt to define the term "household qualification." In the next place, the Amendment dealt with the question of the payment of rates. It said "a tenement which is rated, or capable of being rated, and on which the rates have been duly paid." What was the meaning of the words "duly paid." If they were paid in March, April, or May, they would be duly paid; and how was the Revising Barrister to be guided upon the matter? No dates of any kind were specified, and he contended that in that respect the Amendment broke down for the second time. Then, again, how were the words "rated, or capable of being rated," to be applied? Where there were two or more tenants in occupation of different parts of the same premises, would it be necessary that each of them should be separately rated? His hon. Friend admitted that he did not care whether the tenant was the occupant of one room, two rooms, or any number of rooms in a tenement. So long as he had

> "The right of free access and egress, without the control or interference of the landlord, or any person claiming by, through, or under him,"

the tenant was to be regarded as enjoying the "household qualification." The hon. Member had failed to make a complete definition. Under the Act of 1867 a house was any part of a house separately occupied and separately rated, and that was exactly contrary to what the hon. Member now proposed. The result was that the Act of 1869 was passed, and the question again came before a Select Committee in 1878, and in the Act of 1878 it was enacted that the term "house" should include any part of a house where that part was separately occupied. Upon that definition decisions of the law had been given, the law had settled itself down, and the Government thought it better to take the law as it now stood; but the hon. Member proposed to disturb it by this definition. Under these circumstances they could not assent to the Amendment.

Mr. WARTON said, some of the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman had force, but others had not; while those that had some force had been weakened by the introduction of a word here and there. With regard to the word "tenement," he wished to make a suggestion to his hon. Friend—namely, to insert the words "fit for habitation" after "tenement." A cowshed would not be fit for human habitation; and he thought these words would be useful to define a house within the intention of the Bill. In the Sister Isle the inhabitants lived with their cattle, and perhaps a cowshed might be a proper place as a dwelling for many of the voters in that country. The Attorney General had missed the most important part of the definition. He had criticized small matters, and had not given the hon. Member credit for the best part of the definition; and that was the part which was supported by the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel—namely, as to the control or interference of the landlord. About that the Attorney General had said nothing; and the real point, after all, as to a tenement was, whether the occupier of the tenement was or was not free from the control of the landlord? If a landlord lived on the premises, and let the house out in separate rooms, the tenants ought to be considered as occupying separate houses, otherwise the landlord might shut the door, and refuse to let the tenants go in or out. But the Attorney General had omitted all reference to that important point, and had devoted himself to trivial matters. The only criticism he had made of any importance was that as to the word "tenement." If they inserted after the word "tenement," the words "fit for human habitation," they would get over the difficulty as to the house or any part of it being rated. If the hon. Member would consent to this trifling alteration, that would, he thought, obviate all the criticisms of the Attorney General, and allow the important point which he had not noticed, to stand by itself. He begged to move that Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: When the Amendment before the Committee has been disposed of, then will come the time for the hon. and learned Member for Bridport to move his Amendment.

Amendment *negatived.*

MR. RAIKES said, he must apologize to the Prime Minister, and to the Attorney General, for not having placed the Amendment he now proposed to move on the Paper. The question he was going to raise had hardly been discussed, and it had, by common consent, been deferred until the Definition Clause was reached. Words very much to the same effect as his Amendment were moved by the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) on Clause 2; but it was felt that that was not the right place for the Amendment. What he proposed was, to insert after the word "Ireland" the words—

> "The occupation of a dwelling house containing not less than two habitable rooms."

That Amendment had, in substance, been formerly proposed; but it was withdrawn. He anticipated that it would be negatived; but he believed he was perfectly in Order in moving it now. The Amendment attempted to define what was to be a household qualification; and although the Attorney General had stated, and with great emphasis, that there was great difficulty in attempting a definition, he did not think this was a particularly abstruse definition. It was based on the contention of the Prime Minister himself as to a "capable citizen." There might be Members of the House who might have some hesitation in expressing an opinion as to what was or was not a "capable citizen;" but he was not afraid to say that a man was not a capable citizen who inhabited one room with his family for all purposes. He knew he should be told that this Amendment might have a disfranchising effect; but he should be quite ready, in the event of the Committee accepting the Amendment, to propose words subsequently which would protect against its operation any persons who now enjoyed the franchise, and who otherwise would be excluded from that enjoyment by this Amendment. He had no wish to make this Bill the means of disfranchising a single elector; but, after all, he did not think the individual rights of a particular elector were of so much moment as the stability of the State; and he thought extreme scrupulousness had been shown for individual interests more than for the interests of the country at large. He did not wish to detain the Committee by arguing this question at any length, because it seemed to him that it lay in a nutshell. Something of this kind, he thought, was intended by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) just now, when he proposed to modify the provisions of the Bill by limiting its operation to tenements that were suitable for human habitation. He could not help thinking that the words he proposed were a better way of explaining what was meant; and he was very anxious to repeat what he had already said—that he had no wish by this Amendment to interfere with existing or vested rights; but he could not consent to see the destinies of this great Empire in future committed to people living in the unfortunate and unhappy way in which he regretted to see a large class of people were compelled to live; nor to give them an equal voice in determining the affairs of an Empire like this with those who were more qualified by the surroundings of their life, and by such leisure and intelligence as they might possess, to deal with questions of Imperial affairs. He confessed that it seemed to him that when they talked of giving this boon to constituencies, nearly half of which consisted of persons inhabiting single room tenements, as was the case in Ireland, houses which not only contained but one room, but which were largely occupied by the live stock belonging to the head of the family, they had reduced the question of the franchise almost *ad absurdum.* He earnestly hoped the Committee would pause now that this matter was before them, and would give itself an opportunity of acting on the principle that was laid down by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government when he brought in this Bill, by fixing some sort of definition of a capable citizen. If the Committee considered that persons in the unfortunate position and circumstances to which he had adverted were capable citizens, he should very humbly bow to the decision; but he was bound, at the same time, to take this opportunity of giving the Committee a chance of deciding upon this clause and this Amendment, whether or not they considered that all citizens were equally capable, whether they were persons enjoying all the ordinary privileges and advantages hitherto regarded as belonging to citizenship, or whether they were persons who had not had an opportunity of obtaining the experiences of civilization, so as to fit them for the exercise of those duties.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 2, to leave out all the words after "Ireland" down to the end of the paragraph, in order to insert "the occupation of a dwelling house containing not less than two inhabitable rooms."—(*Mr. Raikes.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman is, of course, within his right in moving this Amendment. It is true that we objected to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), on the ground that it was out of place; but it is also true that we argued the question upon its merits, and I shall, therefore, be very brief in dealing with it. We are utterly opposed to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman; and I cannot say too strongly that our decision is to resist it by all the means in our power. In our opinion it is doubly out of place. It would be the introduction in a great enfranchising measure, which I admit this is, of a very large and sweeping disfranchising proposition. Recollect this, that the Party to which the right hon. Gentleman belongs went into the towns, where it is thought most of these objectionable one-roomed qualifications are found, and enfranchised the occupiers without the smallest question, and in no point has that been productive of any ill. I absolutely demur to the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman that those who live in these one-roomed tenements are unfit for enfranchisement. I will refer to Scotland, and I would like any Member of this House to go among those one-roomed houses in Glasgow, or in Aberdeen more particularly, and get into some argument with the occupiers, and see whether they are not tolerably well able to hold their own. In my opinion, Members of this House would come off second best.

Mr. RAIKES: The Amendment does not apply to Scotland. I have applied it only to England and Ireland.

Mr. GLADSTONE: As a Scotch Member, I think I may express my gratitude for that; but I must protest against this invidious distinction which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to establish between the three countries. But I am not prepared to admit that even with regard to the North of Ireland the misfortune of having to live in one room constitutes, or should constitute, a disqualification; and the right hon. Gentleman does not deny that, as regards great towns, this would be a sweeping disqualification, not of persons at present on the Register, but of the classes to which they belong. I will refer again to Scotland, and quote a most remarkable and interesting illustration of the doctrine I am endeavouring to lay down. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman knows a most interesting and curious book written by Dr. Arthur Mitchell; that gentleman made a searching examination of the tenements in the extreme Highlands, and he found there that the dwellings were of most primitive, and even what would be called barbarous construction. They were houses in the erection of which it was evident that no cutting instrument had been employed. They were, in fact, houses of the lowest order of construction, and yet Dr. Mitchell observed that the people inhabiting those houses were not inferior to the rest of the population. That was the conclusion he came to as a careful and impartial observer, and not at all as a person examining the matter from an interested point of view. We demur to the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman in this. We do not admit that those persons whose circumstances are, no doubt, very limited are unfit to exercise the franchise. We protest against introducing a disfranchising provision into a Bill of this kind, aimed at a large class of people for no fault they have committed, and without the allegation of any fault; and on that account we cannot consent to entertain, in any shape, the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON mentioned that what Dr. Mitchell stated was that the waifs and strays of a population were always to be found in the great cities, and one of the remarkable facts of civilization was that there were always persons who were perfectly unfit to maintain the ordinary character of civilization, and that most of them were to be found in the immediate neighbourhood of great cities. The right hon. Gentleman's argument was for manhood suffrage, not for household suffrage.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, he thought the *sequitur* of the argument of the Prime Minister was that the more unfit a house was for habitation the more fit was the occupier of it to have a vote. It was either better or worse, more fortunate or more unfortunate, that a man should live in one room with his wife and children of both sexes, many of them growing up to manhood and womanhood, or it was not. He had always assumed that all the efforts they were making to improve the dwellings of the working classes were intended, if possible, to get rid of those uncivilized and barbarous dwellings. Certainly, the speech of the Prime Minister would have great effect in encouraging the continuance of residences, not only a disgrace to civilization, but which would be considered indecent, inhuman, and improper, even in barbarous countries. The right hon. Gentleman had again used only one argument, if it could be called an argument—namely, that any restriction would be a disfranchising measure. But if they were to go on the principle of enfranchising the largest numbers without restriction of any kind, without considering whether the new element was good or bad, why had not the right hon. Gentleman the courage to say that every man should vote because he was a man, and every woman should vote because she was a woman? He did not say that. He said—"No; I will select my own future constituency;" and he hugged to his breast what most people would say was the worst element that could be admitted in any country. He admitted the unilocular voter, and he kept out the educated man. Were they to encourage people to live in those places by dignifying them with a vote? He must protest against that. The alternative was to enfranchise everybody, and then the great mass of good elements would overcome the bad; but the Prime Minister said—"No; we will have these men who live wholesale in one room with their families, and all kinds of beasts beside; we will make them citizens, dignify their abodes by the franchise;" and so he would perpetuate what was one of the greatest curses of the country.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that this was not a Bill dealing with sanitary subjects, and did not aim at improving dwellings; but it was an enfranchising measure. He must say a word in reply to the extraordinary speech they had just heard from the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin). The hon. Baronet wished to make the Bill a disfranchising instead of an enfranchising one, and contended that those who lived in one room should cease to have a vote. How did the hon. Gentleman wish to effect that object? By improving the condition of the people; but was it by telling them that because they lived in one room they were degraded, and were not fit to have a vote, that he would improve their condition? He would deprive them of the vote in order to assist them to get better dwellings. The hon. Baronet wished to be considered a friend of the people, and a Gentleman anxious to elevate the people, and lift them out of any condition of degradation that they might be in. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) said he had made his protest, and had asked hon. Members opposite to give him their assistance in his efforts to put a stop to the degradation of the people. That was the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, and the Committee had heard the assistance he had received from the hon. Baronet; but he (the Attorney General) must confess that if they allowed themselves to be guided by this alliance, instead of putting the people in a better position, they would be doing something that was eminently calculated to degrade them. They would be marking poor people who were confined to the occupation of one room amongst their fellows as unfit to have the vote. It was proposed to leave these people without the means of raising themselves from their degradation; and if the Government adopted the principle, instead of helping them, they would be perpetuating that degradation.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he was very much surprised to hear the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. The hon. and learned Gentleman forgot that it was impossible to improve the condition of the people by giving a premium to those who were in a worse position. Amongst school children they did not reward the worst simply because they were so; but they first gave them 1*d.* banks and such like, and afterwards gave them a treat. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) was that the worse the people were the less trouble they took to get from one room to two and live in a more healthy and decent state; and why the Government were to reward these people who were content to live in degradation, by giving them that which ought to be the prize given to energy and decency, he did not know. As he had understood them, the remarks of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) had been directed to the development of that idea, and he certainly thought those remarks, and also the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge, did not deserve to be treated in the cavalier fashion in which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had dealt with them, though there might be difficulties in the way of carrying out the Amendment in some cases. It could not be denied that very intelligent people were often found living in one room—immediately after marriage, for instance. A man, under such circumstances, was as much entitled to vote as his neighbour who lived in two rooms; but he would soon acquire the vote, because it would not take him long to attain the position of his neighbour.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was very much astonished that they had not heard anything from the Prime Minister in the course of his speech with regard to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had studiously avoided all reference to that country in his observations.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg pardon—I distinctly mentioned it.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the right hon. Gentleman might have mentioned Ireland incidentally; but he had been referring mainly to Scotland, stating that he was a Scotch Member, and was glad to say that even in the poorest houses in that country they were all "capable citizens"—capable of taking part with any Gentleman in that House—as he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had understood the right hon. Gentleman—in the consideration of matters of policy. The right hon. Gentleman did not say that with regard to Ireland, because he knew perfectly well that of those who occupied the 435,000 houses which were rated below £1, 40 per cent could not read or write; and he also knew that these were not capable citizens, and were liable far more than others to be influenced by those whose object was to disturb the peace in that unfortunate country. [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman might shake his head and quarrel with that view; but he was aware of the condition of things in Ireland, and must know that he was about to add tremendously to the difficulties that he would have to encounter if he were Prime Minister when the Bill came into operation, or that any other Prime Minister would have to encounter by adding 435,000 persons, taken from the lowest strata of society in Ireland, to the electorate. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would venture to say that if the right hon. Gentleman had stated accurately what he knew with regard to this clause he would have put them in a very different category to the class of Irishmen to whom he had referred. Many of the dwellings occupied by the people who would be enfranchised in Ireland were not houses at all; but the right hon. Gentleman was so determined that they should have 2,000,000 voters of any kind and of any sort that he did not think it necessary to inquire whether or not it was right that any part of them should be enfranchised. The right hon. Gentleman's great point was to say "these men are deprived of their rights." He would venture to say that if these men were required to be in a better position, to live in better dwellings, and if they were better educated, they would be much more fit to use the franchise than they would be found when it was given to them by the right hon. Gentleman.

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH said, he wished to add the words "except in so far as repealed by this Act," to the definition of a house qualification in Scotland as the qualification enacted by the 3rd section of the Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868. His object was, by a subsequent Amendment in the Schedules, upon which the present Amendment was consequential, to strike out from the Act of 1868 the provision that the payment of poor rates against a certain specified date should be a necessary condition of electoral qualification for the occupation franchise. This was a most important matter with regard to the Highlands. The Prime Minister had stated, over and over again, that this was a great enfranchising measure, and he was quite willing to take it that that was so; but it would be a very considerable disfranchising measure indeed if the prior payment of poor rates was necessary to enrolment. In Glasgow alone the numbers disqualified could be counted by thousands, and the same thing would occur amongst the small householders in the counties. In 1832, at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill, there was no such disqualification as the non-payment of poor rates, because those rates did not then exist. There was, however, a disqualification at that period —namely, the non-payment of Queen's or assessed taxes, and that disqualification had since been removed. But in the Act of 1868, with regard to Scotland, the disqualification of non-payment of poor rates by a certain date was introduced. There was no reason for extending the disqualification, as it would be extended under the Bill if his Amendment were not carried. There was no particular virtue in the payment of poor rates by a fixed day compared with the payment of any other tax; and if it were necessary that disqualification should apply in the case of non-payment of poor rates there was no reason why it should not apply in regard to the non-payment of other rates. He should very much like the Lord Advocate to explain, if he could, why this clause was to be adopted in its present form.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 31, after the word "qualification," to insert the words "except in so far as repealed by this Act."—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that though, as a matter of fact, the Amendment now proposed was a very small one, it was intended to prepare the way for a much more important proposal which was to be made later on. The hon. Gentleman quite frankly avowed that what he proposed to do was to make inapplicable to the county voter that which was made a condition of the franchise conferred on the burghs in 1868—namely, that a person should perform one of the first duties of citizenship—pay the taxes which were required of him. In the Act of 1868 it was provided, not only that the failure to pay poor rates should be a disqualification, but that the circumstance of persons being exempted from the payment of poor rates on the ground of inability to pay, and also the circumstance of having been in receipt of parochial relief within 12 months before the date of registration, should form a disqualification. The hon. Member did not propose to remove either of these two disqualifications; and yet where persons were liable to pay poor rates and did not pay them, the hon. Member would enact that they should be enfranchised. That seemed to be directly in the teeth of the elementary principle that representation and taxation should go together. The principle of the Amendment, it must be borne in mind, would not apply to Scotland alone, but would be of general application.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH pointed out that small owners in counties in Scotland were not disqualified by reason of non-payment of poor rates. The disqualification was a most anomalous one altogether, not applying in Ireland, for instance, to any qualification; and, under the circumstances, he felt compelled, in justice to those he represented, and the great body of small householders in the Highlands proposed to be enfranchised, to take a Division on the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 9; Noes 194: Majority 185.—(Div. List, No. 111.)

Clause 8 (Definition of "Representation of the People Acts" and "Registration Acts").

SIR JOHN HAY said, the Amendment of which he had given Notice, and which he considered necessary to make the Bill suitable to Scotland, had, he believed, been accepted in principle. He should not, therefore, detain the Committee further than to say that he would leave it to the Lord Advocate to explain the object of the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 4, after the word "boroughs," add "Provided, That no change shall be made in the mode of making up the register of county voters in Scotland."—(*Sir John Hay.*)

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that a difficulty had been experienced in consequence of the different modes of making up the valuation roll in counties and burghs in Scotland. As it was desirable that the matter should not remain in a state of ambiguity, he proposed to bring up an Amendment on the Report which, although it might not be in the same terms as that placed upon the Paper by his right hon. and gallant Friend, would meet the object he had in view, to the extent of making it clear whether the county or the burgh method should be adopted.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Definition and application of Rating Acts).

MR. CUBITT said, he had to apologize to the Lord Advocate and hon. Members for Scotland for rising to move an Amendment which, at first sight, appeared only to affect Scotland; but the Amendment was in connection with another to the same effect on page 6 with regard to England and Ireland. He asked the serious attention of the Committee to what were the Penal Clauses of the Bill. He believed the Prime Minister, on introducing the Bill to the House, said that it was the intention of the Government to bring in a self-acting Registration Bill; and he thought the Committee would agree with the right hon. Gentleman that if a measure of the kind with regard to the occupation franchise could be arranged and carried, it would greatly improve the present system, and that if Parliament decided that a great mass of new electors should be placed on the Register, it was also bound to provide means whereby those electors could be registered with the least possible trouble to themselves and expense to the State. He had, on a former occasion, asked both the Prime Minister and the Attorney General, how this was to be effected; but, up to the present time, the House had not been treated to any information on the subject He, therefore, again appealed to the Government to state to the Committee in what way they proposed to carry out the change, or to omit this clause as having no direct connection with the Bill, the Government laying their whole scheme of registration before the House on a future occasion. Pending that Bill, he was only able to get an inkling of what was in the mind of the Government from this paragraph relating to Scotland, and that upon the next page which applied to England and Ireland. In both these a new penalty was applied. There was a penalty in the case of Scotland of £5 upon the occupier, and in the case of England and Ireland a penalty of 40*s.* upon the occupier and overseer if they omitted to do what was required of them. He should, no doubt, be told that Parliament had already made enactments of the kind. He found the first instance of this in the Act known as the Poor Rate Assessment Collection Act of 1869, which provided that the owner should deliver to the overseer a list containing the names of the occupiers of the hereditaments for which he was rated, or liable to be rated; and that if such owner wilfully omitted to deliver such list when required to do so, he should, for every such omission or mis-statement, be liable, on summary conviction, to a penalty not exceeding £2; and another section of the Act made the overseer liable to the same penalty. It did not appear that there was any great discussion in the House upon that clause of the Act; but he believed he was correct in saying that, when the Bill was brought in by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), then President of the Poor Law Board, that the right hon. Gentleman explained it by saying that the Act permitted an agreement to be made between the owner and the occupier in consideration of a definite commission being paid to the owners in reduction of the rate; and he excused it on the ground that it was proposed, in the first place, that the owner would lose the commission he would otherwise get if he omitted to give a list of the tenants. There was a sort of *quid pro quo*, and on that ground he believed it passed through the House. The point of the wedge having been introduced, the principle was afterwards extended, and he found in the present Bill two paragraphs, both of which inflicted new penalties; and he believed that many hon. Members would agree with him when he said that there were some points in them which made the penalties much more stringent than those formerly introduced. The penalties, as the Committee would observe, in the case of the Act he had cited, were only to be inflicted upon those who wilfully omitted to deliver a list of occupiers, whereas in this clause they were to be inflicted upon those who merely made default—in other words, failed to do so—and, therefore, he said that it was much more severe. Without any pretence on his part to legal knowledge, he believed the Attorney General would at once allow that there was a great distinction between these two acts of omission. He observed on the Notice Paper that the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had put down an Amendment bearing on this subject; he should have thought the hon. Member knew enough of pains and penalties to cause him to desist from endeavouring to inflict further penalties on the people; but he found that he also had fallen into the snare, and was prepared to move a clause that would have that effect if it were agreed to by the Government. The subject was, undoubtedly, one which demanded the serious attention of the Committee; and he asked the Government at once to tell the Committee how this boon, in the shape of a self-registration Act, was to be conferred, or to say that they would postpone the present clause until they could bring in a complete Bill to provide for registration.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, to leave out from line 22 to line 35, inclusive.—(*Mr. Cubitt.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR JOHN HAY pointed out that he had an Amendment to move in lines 26 and 30.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cubitt) would excuse him if he did not enter then into the provisions of the Registration Bill, which would, of course, stand alone. He believed the Committee would see that this part of the clause was absolutely necessary in order that persons entitled to vote should find their names upon the Register. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the Act of 1869; but the clause he had cited had been found in practice to be insufficient, inasmuch as the overseer had no means of ascertaining the names of the different occupiers of tenements separately held. The present clause, therefore, was intended to remedy that defect in the Act of 1869, which was due to the fact that the overseer was entirely dependent upon the voluntary action of the owner for a list of the occupiers. In the present case, instead of leaving the matter to the voluntary action of the owner, the Bill said that the overseer was to deliver a request to the owner for the names of the persons occupying. The owner was called upon to answer that application, and he was, of course, more likely to do so if he were liable for a penalty than would otherwise be the case. The clause had been drawn with great care, and was the result of suggestions coming from overseers in the Provinces; showing that a large number of occupiers would be in the circumstances described — prevented from exercising the franchise. That being so, hon. Members who were desirous of seeing the franchise exercised by those upon whom Parliament conferred it would, of course, allow the sub-section, which was the subject of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, to remain part of the Bill.

MR. WARTON said, there ought, in his opinion, to be some words introduced into the clause which would compel the overseer to inform the owner that he would be liable to a penalty if he made a mistake, or was inaccurate in any one of the particulars he was called upon to give.

Amendment *negatived.*

SIR JOHN HAY said, he was informed, on competent authority, that the term "rated in respect of" used in the clause was not sufficiently precise; and that, as it would apply to a considerable number of persons, it was desirable that the words which he was about to move should be substituted in their place. He believed those words covered the whole class contemplated in the clause, and at the same time provided against the evils which might result from the retention of the words which he proposed to strike out.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 26, to leave out the words "rated in respect," and insert the words "being a proprietor, or reputed proprietor, or tenant, or occupier."—(*Sir John Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he must give the same answer to this Amendment as he had given in the case of the last one proposed by his right hon. and gallant Friend. He found there had been some difficulty throughout different rating areas as to the manner in which this provision was to be worked out; and he proposed on Report to bring up a clause giving effect to this and some other Amendments, which, he believed, were generally desired throughout Scotland, for making the method of referential registration more clear and effective.

SIR JOHN HAY: Does that apply also to the second amendment standing in my name?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I cannot accept my right hon. and gallant Friend's second Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, there was one point in the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) which had not been replied to by the Attorney General. His right hon. Friend pointed out that by this clause the Government was imposing a severe penalty on the owners of property coming within the definition in the clause; but the Attorney General had merely explained to the Committee why it was that the defect in the Act of 1869 rendered it necessary to make further provision for obtaining an accurate list of occupiers entitled to the franchise. His right hon. Friend spoke of the stringency of the clause as against the owners of property occupied by persons entitled to be registered. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was bound to say that it was a very stringent provision indeed to compel an owner to give an accurate list of occupiers under a penalty not exceeding £5. He knew the danger of inserting the word "wilfully;" but in the present case he should venture to move its insertion. He had no objection whatever to the owner being called on by the overseer to do his best to furnish the necessary information; but he certainly did object to his being liable to a fine of £5 for any inaccuracy which might be found in his statement, in view of the strict interpretation which the Revising Barrister was always obliged to place on an Act of Parliament in the case of application for registration.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 31, after the word "he," insert the word "wilfully."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'wilfully" be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government could not accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman. In requiring an owner to make a Return of the occupiers of his property, they were not imposing a very difficult task upon him. It was the duty of the owner to make the Return, and the insertion of the word "wilfully" would be saying, in effect, that he should find some excuse for the non-performance of that duty.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he thought that the hon. and learned Attorney General had not quite correctly stated the case. It might very well be that the owner of a house perfectly *bonâ fide* gave a list of occupiers which was not accurate. Then he was to be fined £5; not for any default on his part, but perhaps owing to the dishonesty of persons occupying his houses. There was nothing in the clause which would protect him under such circumstances; and as he understood that the word "wilfully" appeared in the Act of 1869, he was unable to perceive why its omission should be allowed to increase the penalties under the Bill.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he thought the hon. and learned Attorney General had made a very curious statement with regard to this clause. He was not aware that any penal clause in any Act of Parliament could be enforced against a man for what was the result of an accident. There must be wilful disregard of the duty imposed by the Act. He had no adequate information as to the operation of the clause with relation to Scotland; but in the present case he did not think there was any necessity for the Attorney General to depart from the ordinary acceptation of the law, and therefore he considered the Committee were entitled to further information.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the question to be considered was not the intention of the individual, but whether he had performed the duty imposed upon him by the Act. It would have to be proved affirmatively if the Amendment were adopted that such duty had been wilfully neglected before the penalty was imposed, whereas under the clause as it stood it would depend upon the circumstances of the case whether the maximum sum of £5 or the minimum fine of one farthing were inflicted. They must look at the common sense of the matter, and he believed the Committee would see that if this Amendment were admitted it would be in the power of every owner to disfranchise every one of his tenants. An owner might say, for instance—"I have let these houses to 10 different tenants; you must come to me; I refuse to give you any information; I do not care what consequences will follow; you must prove affirmatively that I acted wilfully, but you will only be able to prove omission, and that will not carry the penalty." That being so, he could not accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he entirely disclaimed the imputation cast upon him by the hon. and learned Gentleman that he desired to allow the owner of property to escape from the performance of his duty. But he objected—and he should feel it his duty to divide the Committee on the question—to the imposition of a fine upon an owner of property for what might very well be an unintentional inaccuracy, but which might be an inaccuracy sufficient to deprive a person on the list of his title to be registered as a voter. It seemed to him, however, that the word "wilfully" hardly raised the question in the manner in which he should like it to be raised; and therefore, if the Committee would allow it, he would withdraw his Amendment, in order to move the insertion, in line 31, after the words "and if he fail to do so," of the words, "with such accuracy as may be reasonably possible." Those words would show the intention of the Committee; but, of course, if the Attorney General would propose better words on Report, they might be agreed to.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 31, after the words "do so," to insert the words "with such accuracy as may reasonably be possible."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could not accept the Amendment, because it was impossible to say what it might lead to. A man might say that he could not make inquiries into the affairs of his tenants; and who, then, was to judge whether his return was made with all the accuracy that was reasonably possible?

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he could not quite agree with the words suggested by his right hon. Friend, although he was strongly of opinion that the clause in its present form was one which ought not to be accepted by the Committee, because it imposed a serious penalty upon that which might be a mistake, and therefore reasonably excused. He would, therefore, propose to substitute the words "without reasonable excuse" for those put forward by his right hon. Friend. The clause as it stood made it incumbent on a magistrate to inflict a penalty for an inaccuracy which was the result of accident, and might therefore be reasonably excused, and against that he altogether protested. He suggested that the words he had just mentioned were words which the Attorney General might very reasonably accept. They were words one was not unfamiliar with; they were words which would remove the difficulty with regard to the clause.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS pressed upon the Attorney General the acceptance of some such words as these. It was quite impossible that the clause could stand as at present. It was not fair to the Committee that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General should simply say to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)—"I object to your words on account of a legal technicality." [The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I said just the contrary.] That made his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) case all the stronger, because, if the hon. and learned Gentleman accepted the principle of the Amendment, it must lie upon him to accept words, or find words, to get out of the difficulty.

MR. GORST said, that if they were going to divide, it would be better they should divide on the words of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke), to which words he (Mr. Gorst) was not aware that any objection had been raised by the Attorney General. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would assent to those words, or any other similar words, it would save the Committee going to a Division.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not wish to put himself in competition with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) as to the best phrase for insertion in the clause. He was quite willing, therefore, to withdraw his Amendment in favour of the words suggested by his hon. and learned Friend.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. EDWARD CLARKE then proposed to insert, after "So," the words "without reasonable excuse."

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 31, after the word "So," to insert the words "without reasonable excuse."—(*Mr. Edward Clarke.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 95; Noes 192: Majortiy 97.—(Div. List, No. 112.)

MR. WARTON proposed, in page 5, line 32, to omit the words "five pounds," and insert the words "forty shillings." He had two reasons for moving this Amendment. First of all, the previous penalty was only 40*s.*, and why it should be increased in this case he did not know. Again, if they looked at the next page of the same clause they found that—

> "Both in England and in Ireland where a house is let out or occupied in separate parts, ... the overseers shall within twenty-one days after the *first of March* in every year give notice in writing to the person rated or rateable in respect of such house requiring him . . . . to furnish . . . . an accurate list containing the name of the occupier of every such part which constitutes a separate dwelling-house."

And in case of default of duty, either on the part of the overseer or the person rated, a penalty not exceeding 40*s.* might be imposed. He did not see why in the case of Scotland there should be a different penalty; and therefore he proposed to omit the words "five pounds," and substitute for them "forty shillings."

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 32, to leave out the words "five pounds," and insert the words "forty shillings."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'five pounds' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he believed there was a different estimate of the value of money in England and Ireland as compared with Scotland, and that it was thought necessary that a greater penalty should be imposed in Scotland. In order, however, to produce assimilation, he would agree to the substitution of the words "forty shillings."

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. WHITLEY proposed, after "is," in page 6, line 15, to insert "wholly." The Amendment had reference to the service franchise, and he hoped he should be able to induce the Government to accept it. In establishing the service franchise it ought to be made clear that the owner must not be resident in the house. He had no doubt he would be told that this Bill was a Bill for enfranchisement, and not for disfranchisement; but he could not help thinking that this clause was open to great objection. A boarding-house keeper would be able to exercise great influence over the inhabitants of his house, and in order to guard against such a state of things he contended that the Government ought to agree to the Amendment he now proposed. His Amendment really carried out the Government's own view of the service franchise. He was the Representative of a large number of the working classes, and in their interest he considered some such Amendment as he suggested necessary. He had heard a great deal that night from the Prime Minister with regard to the duty of protecting voters in the exercise of the franchise, and with regard to the importance of bearing in mind that this was a great enfranchising measure. But, at the same time, they must take care that in enfranchising the multitude they gave them complete liberty of action. A clause like the one under consideration was, however, utterly at variance with that freedom which it was essential should be given to the new voters, and he believed it might be made the occasion of acts of tyranny and oppression. He hoped he had said enough to induce the Government to accept in this instance the principle they had accepted in a previous clause, and to provide that it was only where a house was "wholly" let out that the persons should be enfranchised; to provide that in all cases it must be a *sine quâ non* that the owner did not live amongst his tenants, in which position he might coerce them in the matter of voting. He hoped he should receive an assurance from the Prime Minister that he would accept the Amendment, which clearly was in accordance with the right hon. Gentleman's view of the service franchise.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 15, after the word "is," to insert the word "wholly."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'wholly' be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he thought his hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) had not quite realized the effect of his Amendment; the hon. Gentleman evidently intended the Amendment to go much further than it really did. Was he to understand that the hon. Gentleman meant that if a landlord lived in one room of his house, and let to separate occupiers other portions of his house, those separate occupiers should not have a vote? [Mr. WHITLEY assented.] That was the hon. Gentleman's intention. Then he must see that the Amendment did not carry that object into effect, because it did not say those persons should not have a vote, but merely provided that the machinery to bring them on the Register should not be brought into operation. All that the Amendment did was to provide that if a house was wholly let, the machinery by which the overseer should require the owner to make an accurate list of the separate occupiers should apply; but if the landlord occupied a room himself, the machinery provided by the Bill should not apply. To be consistent, his hon. Friend should go a little further and say they should not vote. If they were to have a vote, and to remain on the Register, why not give them the best machinery to get on the Register? His hon. Friend would not take separate occupiers off the Register, but would simply provide that the machinery of making a Return should not apply to them if the owner lived on the premises. He, on the part of the Government, must look at the matter as one of substance, and he could not see the difference between the landlord living under the same roof and living next door.

Amendment *negatived.*

MR. WHITLEY proposed, in page 6, line 17, after the words "dwelling house," to insert the words—

> Separately rated to all poor rates laid during the twelve months previous to the fifteenth of July."

Right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite were inclined to enfranchise people who themselves paid no rates at all, on the ground that they might, nevertheless, be capable citizens. They had heard a great deal that night about the working classes. After a very long acquaintance with the working classes, he ventured to say that the vast majority of the working classes of the country would prefer that some gauge of respectability was placed upon them. He believed that if the working classes were polled, it would be found that the greater number of them were in favour of their rights being safeguarded. He could not help feeling that many of the arguments he had heard during these debates had been rather in favour of putting the working classes against the other classes of the country. They had heard a great deal about disfranchisement. It was a singular thing that if two men held property worth £5,000 a-year, only one of them could vote in respect of it, while, if there were 10 men living in one house, the whole of them should be entitled to vote. That, he thought, was transferring power in the country to mere multitude. The stability of the country depended upon all classes being represented, and he believed the working classes were as sensible of the fact as any Member of the House of Commons. He had no doubt it would be said that he, as the Representative of a working class community, should be the last man to say that; but it was because he was the Representative of the working classes, because he understood their feelings, because he was satisfied they did not want to have the whole voting power transferred to them, that he considered it would be a very unwise course if Parliament transferred all the voting power to mere multitude. Was it not inconsistent? It deprived gentlemen of the vote who might hold property as joint tenants. That was to say, it would only allow one to possess it, and yet in a small house of 10 rooms of the annual value of only £10, they might have 10 voters. He acknowledged the intelligence of the working classes, and agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that they were worthy of the fanchise; but, at the same time, in their interests and in that of the country, he must say he did not think they were doing a wise thing by giving them that power which they denied to the wealth and property of the country. He did not ask for personal payment of rates. He was one of those who believed that if the measure of the late Lord Beaconsfield had remained intact, and there had been payment of rates, they would have been saved from the difficulties in which they now found themselves. It was not right to taunt the Conservatives with having taken away the personal payment of rates. Of course, his Amendment would be rejected. Still he believed that it was one which would meet the wishes of the working classes, and which was a statesmanlike proposal.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 17, after the words "dwelling house," to insert the words "separately rated to all poor rates laid during the twelve months previous to the fifteenth of July."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could only believe that the cheers with which the speech of the hon. Member was greeted were due to the hon. Member's personal ability. He could not believe that they were in any way due to the merits of his proposal. The Amendment was open to the objection which had already been stated by the Attorney General. It would not disfranchise the class in question, but would only have the effect of depriving them of the same facilities of being put on the Register as other people. As to the terms of the Amendment, and the speech in which the hon. Member recommended it, he might point out that the measure was one which was mainly intended as an Enfranchising Bill, and that the Amendment would make it in a high degree, so far as certain boroughs were concerned, a Disfranchising Bill. It could not be the intention of his hon. Friend to bring forward this Amendment as a means of undoing the work of the Acts of 1868 and 1869, which enfranchised the persons whose unfitness for the franchise had just been proclaimed to the Committee. The effect of the Amendment would not be to disfranchise them, although the effect of his speech would be to deprive vast numbers of his own constituency and of the constituencies in all large places in the country of the right of voting. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could not think that such a proposal was seriously made, and he was sure that if it were put to the vote, it would not be supported by the majority of those who sat on the other side of the House.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he was not sure that the Committee would be willing to accept what the right hon. Gentleman had said on this matter, because it was not so long since the Bill of 1878 was passed, and passed in a large measure on the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman himself that it was only a Registration Bill, and, therefore, that it might be allowed to go through the House helter-skelter without any great examination of its provisions. The result was a larger extension of the franchise in some parts of the country than had even followed from the Act of 1867. But without going into the larger question which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested in his speech, he (Mr. E. Clarke) would point out to the Government the curious position they were placed in by, he would not call it the obstinacy, but at any rate the stiffness, on the part of the majority which had led them to resist the Amendment on which the last Division had been taken. It was proposed to insert words which provided that the dwelling-houses to which the clause referred should be separately rated to the relief of the poor. That might or might not be a good proposal; but, supposing that it were not a good proposal with respect to its disfranchising effects, it was absolutely necessary for the purpose of working this particular clause, because, if the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee would look at the rest of the provision, they would see that it imposed a duty on the overseer to give notice in writing to the person rated in respect of premises at a particular time to give a list containing the name of the occupier of every such part which constituted a separate dwelling-house. But how was the overseer to serve any such notice unless he himself had notice that there had been an under-letting of the premises? Was he to be called on to serve this notice in respect of every house within the parish with which he was connected in order to ascertain whether it were or were not let out in tenements? He did not say that this was a conclusive justification of the proposal before the Committee; but, at any rate, it was a conclusive answer to what the Attorney General had said with regard to the last Division they had taken. Because here they proposed, if these words were not inserted, to call on the overseers to give notice with regard to the sub-letting or otherwise of the premises, and, although the circumstances he was required to state might be altogether beyond his knowledge, to inflict a fine of £5 upon him if he did not give the notice. Unless some such words as were suggested a little time ago were inserted as to these penalties, the clause would become a simple absurdity.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether the Attorney General accepted the views of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that if he had accepted them he should have said so.

MR. GORST said, he did not think the Government were treating that side of the House at all courteously. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) brought forward a proposition which clearly, if true, showed the existence of a very distinct blot on the Bill, and which, if it was not true, those who were anxious to support Her Majesty's Government in carrying the Bill had a right to have refuted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. He had understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to state, in a very curt manner, that he did not agree with the statement of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. Would he rise and say why he did not agree with the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and what it was that was fallacious in the statement of the hon. and learned Member? What the clause said was—

> "Where a house is let out or occupied in separate parts, and any of such parts constitutes a separate dwelling house within the meaning of the Representation of the People Acts, the overseers shall within twenty-one days after the *first of March* in every year give notice in writing to the person rated or rateable in respect of such house requiring him within fourteen days after the service of such notice to furnish in a form to be supplied by the overseers an accurate list, &c.,"

and inflicted upon the overseer a penalty of 40*s.* if he failed to carry this out. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth had pointed out that the overseer had no particular means of knowing what house came under the conditions of the requirement. In the case of the house of the occupier to which he had not served the notice, if it was let out in separate tenements, was the overseer to be fined for his failure to serve the notice?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the reason he had not replied to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) was that the hon. and learned Member's observations had really gone back to a subject which had been disposed of. The speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman really had no reference to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley). The Amendment now moved would, in point of fact, cause this clause only to apply where portions of houses were separately rated. They never were separately rated, and therefore it could not be made to apply. The Government could not accept the Amendment for the reason given by his right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—namely, that it would have the effect of disfranchising a great many people in boroughs. One point which the hon. and learned Gentleman had raised had been raised before, and it was one which should be dealt with. He (the Attorney General) would endeavour to deal with it, and try, if possible, to meet the objections which had been taken. He would promise to confer with the Prime Minister in the matter, and see what could be done.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, the hon. and learned Gentleman might have said that before.

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to leave out "to be supplied by the overseers," and insert the words "contained in the Third Schedule hereto." Whereas the clause only provided that notice in writing should be given—

"To the occupier of every such part which constitutes a separate dwelling house,"

he wished to take care that the list should contain not only the actual names of the occupiers of the parts constituting separate dwelling-houses, but should show that they were properly qualified in respect of the premises. He should like to have a statement as to how long they had been in occupation of the premises, so that there might be something to show that they had been the requisite 12 months according to law in the occupation of the premises.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 22, to leave out the words "to be supplied by the overseers," and insert the words "contained in the Third Schedule hereto."—(*Mr. E. Stanhope.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought it would be better that there should be one uniform form, leaving it at will to be determined by each particular overseer, and he, therefore, accepted the Amendment proposed. As to what the form was to be, there was no Amendment at present on the Paper. If it was understood that a form should be given, he had no doubt, if the hon. Gentleman would prompt him, he would be able to draw up an Amendment to meet his views, and they would have an opportunity either in Committee or on the Report of considering the precise details.

Mr. GORST said, he thought it would be rather hard to ask the overseers to make out their own forms. Therefore, he would propose that the words "to be supplied by the overseers" should be left in, and that after "overseers" the words "contained in the Third Schedule hereto" be inserted.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he had no objection to the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst), and would accept it if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had no objection.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he quite approved of the proposed alteration.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 22, after the word "overseers," to insert the words "contained in the Third Schedule hereto."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. ELTON said, he had put an Amendment on the Paper to leave out the following words:—

"And if any overseer makes default in giving such notice as last aforesaid, or any person rated or rateable as aforesaid makes default in furnishing the list so required to be furnished by him, such overseer or person shall on summary conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding *forty shillings.*"

He had intended to propose this, because the words seemed to have the effect of creating a new offence with a certain ambiguity as to whether a man would be punished for that which he had done wilfully or not; but after the declaration of the Government on the subject, and after the suggestion which had been adopted, he did not wish to take up the time of the Committee by arguing the question over again, therefore he should refrain from moving the Amendment.

Clause 9, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Saving).

Mr. ELTON said, he had proposed to move, in line 42, after "borough," to insert "or by reason of any purchase or descent is entitled to be so registered," but this Amendment fell with the other, and he should not propose it.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to leave out the words—

> "Provided that where a man is so registered in respect of the county or borough occupation franchise by virtue of a qualification which also qualifies him for the franchise under this Act, he shall be entitled to be registered in respect of such latter franchise only."

He brought forward this Amendment in consequence of an opinion which had been submitted to him from certain people in Scotland, an opinion which he had submitted to the Lord Advocate. He would not express an opinion as to how the Bill would affect England or Scotland or Ireland.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, to leave out from line 1, to line 4, inclusive.—(*Sir John Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that he was afraid that he could not agree to the Amendment, because the omission would practically amount to this—when the Bill was read with existing Acts of Parliament the same person might be possessed of several qualifications. The substance of the provision was that every occupier as well as householder would be qualified as a householder. Where a person had two qualifications, it was right to make it clear in respect of which of them he should be registered.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Construction of Act).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he had given Notice of an Amendment with reference to a matter on which he had already addressed some observations to the Committee in the early part of the evening, when the Committee were dealing with the clause which related to the assimilation of qualifications arising from the occupation of land. He had called attention to the words "clear yearly value." The last paragraph in Clause 11 said the expression—

> "'Clear yearly value' as applied to any land or tenement means in Scotland the annual value as appearing in the valuation roll, and in Ireland the net annual value at which the occupier of such land or tenement was rated under the last rate for the time being, &c."

This, so far as he could gather, related simply to the 5th clause, in other words, to the £10 occupation franchise which was proposed to be given in counties and boroughs after the passing of this Act irrespective of residence upon the land. There was no such definition of the meaning of clear yearly value in England, and his object was to secure that there should be in the Three Kingdoms the same definition of these words. He wished now to move, after the word "means," to insert "in England rateable value." That portion of the clause would then run as follows:—

> "The expression 'clear yearly value' as applied to any land or tenement in England means rateable value, in Scotland the annual value as appearing in the valuation roll, and in Ireland the net annual value at which the occupier of such land or tenement was rated."

In that way he would place England in this matter on the same footing as the other two Kingdoms. This would define clearly what the value should be, instead of leaving it to be proved in evidence on one side or the other before the Revising Barrister, on whom it would rest to decide the value of the qualification. That had been found to lead to great difficulty and waste of time, in the different views that were taken pro and con on such a subject. He was anxious that the clause should be in as great a degree as possible self-acting. If his proposal were adopted there would be no difficulty in deciding what the value of property might be.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 27, after the word "means," to insert the words "in England, rateable value." —(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was unable to accept the Amendment, as he had stated at an earlier period of the evening, for the reason that it would really have a disfranchising effect. The term "clear yearly value" was a well-known one, and was to be found in the Act of 1832. The right hon. Gentleman said he wished to establish a uniform value throughout the Three Kingdoms, and he wished to do that not by raising the Irish qualification to that of England, but by lowering the English valuation to that of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had made a mistake, because the valuations of Scotland and Ireland were not the same. In Scotland the valuation was a rental value, which might be either a clear yearly value or a rateable value; but in Ireland it was a rateable value. Therefore, the Amendment would not secure the uniform franchise that the right hon. Gentleman desired, because, although the franchise of England and of Ireland would be assimilated, Scotland would stand in the middle position. If the Government wished to adhere to what they had proposed, they must object to this Amendment. The £12 rateable value was equal to about £16 of rental value, and the Government were now proposing to reduce the qualification to £10 clear yearly value. The Revising Barristers had experienced no difficulty in regard to this matter hitherto.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman was introducing a difference between the Three Kingdoms that did not at present exist, because what he was doing by Clause 5 was carrying the present county franchise into boroughs. They were introducing in the English counties a franchise of £10 dependent upon clear yearly value instead of rateable value. The hon. and learned Gentleman might lower the qualification if he liked below the figure of £10; but he was clearly creating the difference pointed out. Under the words of the clause as they stood a good deal would depend upon the Revising Barrister, and the matter would be subject to very conflicting evidence not taken on as fair grounds as the valuation was arrived at for other purposes. A good deal of difficulty would thus be imported into the registration, and a very unfair means of arriving at the valuation of the tenant.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, there could be no difficulty in the matter. Clear yearly value existed in boroughs now, and all that was now being done was simply to introduce it into counties. In Ireland the valuation was uniform; in England it differed in every Union, and, therefore, it was thought better to get rid of the differences which existed in the various Unions of a county by bringing into the counties the clear yearly value.

Mr. GREGORY said, nothing would be more difficult than to ascertain in the agricultural districts not what was the rental value, but what was the clear yearly value. In the case of an agricultural holding it was very difficult indeed to ascertain this. It was proposed to change what at present was certain for something that was quite uncertain and wholly undefined. That was to be done for the purpose of the agricultural franchise under this Bill, and it would lead to great confusion and uncertainty and to very conflicting decisions.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he must apologize to the hon. and learned Attorney General for interposing again; but he wished to point out that there was no such expression as "clear annual value" known to the Registration Courts. It might be known in Ireland; but in English counties and boroughs that which was ascertained by the Assessment Committees was the "gross, estimated rental." Clear yearly value was something new in the English counties.

Mr. CLARE READ said, he wished to point out to the hon. and learned Attorney General that whatever might be the different meaning that was attached to annual value on the valuation roll in Scotland, and to net annual value as it appeared in Ireland, in both those instances there was a sort of public document to which reference could be made; whereas in the case proposed to be dealt with by this Bill there was simply an agreement between the owner and the occupier as to what might be the rent, and it was very possible that for the purpose of creating a vote a larger rent might be paid. It was surely much better to avoid contention before the Revising Barrister as to what might be the annual value. It would be better to produce the rate-book, which no doubt might show a slight difference between the different Unions, but which after all was a public document from which there could be no appeal.

Mr. RYLANDS said, the valuation for rating purposes varied very much in counties, and it frequently happened that in one borough it would be very much below another, the rateable value in such cases being very much lower than the annual value. It would be very much better to have the clear rental value than the rateable value.

MR. PELL said, the Bill had nothing to do with boroughs, but with counties; and the question was whether they should introduce an imperfect and unacknowledged estimate of value from the boroughs into the counties, or retain there a system which was thoroughly well known, even though in many cases it was imperfect, and not entirely in harmony throughout the country. The question was whether it was best to retain an understood system which answered its purpose, or to introduce a new one which would be extremely unsatisfactory in determining the method of valuation. He would like to make one further observation. They had heard from the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) an admission, which was true, with some correction—that there was no true standard of valuation, neither would there ever be one, if, in Bills brought into that House, and especially in a Bill so important as this, the Government of the day proposed to introduce fresh terms, and a fresh method of valuation. He would venture to say that if the Government would admit the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had just proposed, and accept the term "net rateable value," this Bill would be the means of correcting the valuation and bringing the rating more into harmony with the facts. It was well understood in the country what was meant by "net ratable value;" but "clear yearly value" would be an altogether new thing. The Amendment of the right hon. Baronet would, at all events, remove a difficulty, and be much better than the Bill as it stood at present.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was admitted that the valuation was uniform in boroughs. Why should it not be so in counties?

MR. R. H. PAGET said, the hon. and learned Attorney General did not seem to have seen what was the real difficulty. The proposal was now made for the first time to introduce a fresh definition which was not understood in the rural districts, where there was no such thing as the phrase "clear annual value." Objections would be raised before every Revising Barrister—"Is this, or is it not, the clear annual value?" The phrase "rateable value," or "gross rental," did occur; but the term "clear annual value" was not known, and there was no legal definition of it. It might be known in the boroughs, but it was not known in the counties; and it was a matter which would be sure to give rise to constant disputes, which would have to be raised before every Revising Barrister, and which would produce innumerable difficulties. Why in the world should the Government go out of their way to introduce a term which had no acceptation, and which was not understood, instead of acting upon the plain and simple admission that the rate-book might be commonly accepted?

MR. HENEAGE said, he thought that if it was necessary to raise the question at all, it ought to have been raised on Clause 5. That clause dealt with the occupation qualification. Speaking for his own county (Lincolnshire), he was afraid it would disfranchise a very large number in the best-regulated Unions in the county; and because some Unions were highly rated, he did not think it fair that many of the people should be disqualified who would be voters in other Unions with a lower assessment.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought the Attorney General was under some misapprehension with regard to this term, "clear yearly value." It was a term not known in boroughs as a term of valuation at all. The local authorities had no right whatever to take up the valuation roll—it was for the Union. There might be some which had a separate valuation as being Unions within themselves. The whole of the valuation of the Kingdom was conducted by the Union authorities, and they knew no such term as "clear annual value."

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 81; Noes 176: Majority 95.—(Div. List, No. 113.)

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Repeal of certain superseded sections) *agreed to.*

MR. GLADSTONE: As we have now arrived at the end of the clauses, and as the new clauses will come before the

Schedule, I move that you, Sir, do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 167.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he did not propose to detain the House, because all who were interested in the subject were well aware of the provisions of the measure, speaking generally. It was a consolidating and amending Bill. They had had in Scotland a succession of Bills directing, regulating, and governing the police administration in the urban communities; and in the year 1862 a well-known Statute was passed by which the legislation down to that day—all that experience had proved to be wise—was formulated. They had now had 20 years' experience of the working of that Act, and while a great deal in it had been found to be extremely good, it was also found that there were a number of amendments which seemed to be fitting and desirable. The purpose of the present Bill, therefore, was to consolidate the existing provisions of the various Acts and to make the necessary amendments. The Bill was one of considerable bulk, and therefore he proposed, not to ask that it should be considered in Committee of the Whole House, but, if the House would grant the second reading, that it should be referred to a Select Committee upstairs, thereby not occupying any considerable time in the House itself. The general nature of the Bill was so well known to Members from Scotland that he would not be justified in detaining the House any further.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS had only to say that he was very glad to hear the course which the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate proposed to take. They had the experience of many years as regarded the Bills already passed and of the Act of 1862, and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) should certainly not object to the second reading of the Bill which the right hon. and learned Gentleman now brought forward. All the remarks he had to make were upon details, upon which he might have some observations to make at a future stage, and he was very glad indeed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had consented at once to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, because he was sure it was a Bill with which a Select Committee would be much more competent to deal than a Committee of the Whole House.

MR. ANDERSON said, he had a Notice on the Paper against this Bill; but it was not his intention to take up the time of the House by making a speech, because in reality the fault he had to find with the Bill was much more one of detail than of principle. There was a Bill on this subject last year; but the present Bill contained a very important change as regarded his constituency. Glasgow was unfortunately surrounded by a number of very small burghs, and there was a clause in this Bill by which those burghs might be enabled to clasp hands round Glasgow and so shut her in that it would be impossible for her ever to expand at all. That was the chief and the strongest objection he had to the Bill, but he should reserve his opposition till the Bill came before a Select Committee.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he thought the hon. Member had exercised a wise discretion in his decision; but with regard to the hon. Member's statement as to the small burghs round Glasgow, he must point out that one of those burghs had a population of 50,000, and another a population of 40,000. Whatever questions or differences might be involved, he hoped they would be discussed in an amicable spirit, and that they would be reserved for the Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE BILL.

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

[BILL 139.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Rent of £17,500 to be paid out of fees in respect of Royal Courts of Justice).

MR. GREGORY said, this clause raised a very important question. It was proposed that there should be paid annually a sum of £33,500, which was to be raised by additional taxation on the suitor. The grounds for that were said in the Bill to be the necessity for providing for excessive expenditure on the Royal Courts of Justice. By the Act of 1865 a certain amount of money was provided for the construction of these Courts—namely, £1,500,000, and that was to be provided in this way. First of all, by a Treasury grant to be recouped by a certain amount of Consols standing to the credit of the Suitors' Fund, and the proceeds of the sale of the old buildings, which would be rendered useless by the construction of the New Courts. The sale produced £200,000, the Consols realized about £800,000, which the Treasury received, and the balance of the £1,500,000 was paid by an increase of the fees paid by the suitor. That was the contract under the Act of 1865, and the Treasury undertook that the buildings should be erected for that amount. But a much larger sum had been expended, and there was something like a balance of £800,000 or £900,000 to be provided for by increased taxation of the suitors. That had been expended under a contract between the builders and the Treasury, and in regard to that contract suitors had had no voice. But it was now sought to throw upon them the increase which had been so incurred, and for that purpose an Order had been issued increasing the fees of the Courts to a considerable amount. In many cases the fees had been doubled, and nearly in all raised from the lower to the higher scale. He did not wish to detain the Committee at that late hour; but he did think that the suitors ought not to be called upon for a further contribution under any circumstances. The construction of the New Courts was not only for the benefit of suitors, but for the public generally, and the administration of justice and the contribution of the suitors ought not, in any case, to go beyond the extent provided by the Act of 1865. He also thought the suitors in Chancery and in the High Courts were already fully penalized without the additional taxation now imposed upon them. They contributed something like £400,000 a-year for the administration of justice—a very heavy tax—and, as a matter of principle, he was prepared to contend that the administration of justice was a matter of right, for which the suitor ought not to be called upon to pay at all events. He protested against suitors being made liable for expenditure incurred by the Government for public purposes; and he hoped the Committee also would take the view that this should be a public charge, and would not consent to putting this increased charge upon the suitors. He did not say this expenditure was unnecessary, but it was incurred by the Treasury, and they ought to provide for it. In order that this matter might be fully discussed, he begged to move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

MR. COURTNEY said, that the hon. Gentleman, of course, knew that on the Motion he had made it would be irregular to discuss this matter; but he would consent to report Progress.

MR. W. H. SMITH wished to suggest that the Secretary to the Treasury should place on the Table a Return showing the proposed rate of fees compared with those hitherto exacted. He thought the House ought to be in possession of that information.

MR. COURTNEY replied, that there was no proposed new scale of fees. The scale of fees had already been authorized and was now law.

MR. GREGORY said, he believed a Return had been moved for by the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), which, if printed, might be useful to hon. Members.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE asked whether there was to be any understanding as to a day when this matter could come on for proper discussion? This case, he thought, was a valuable illustration of the Half-past 12 o'clock Rule, and, as a good many hon. Members were anxious to discuss the question, they would be glad if the hon. Gentleman could give them some idea as to when they would have an opportunity.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, a great number of members of the Profession had been present, from time to time, waiting for this Bill to come on, sometimes even till 3 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he did not desire to keep hon. Members waiting, and, if it would be convenient, he would propose to resume the discussion on this Bill on this day week; but he could not state at what hour it could be taken.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SHANNON NAVIGATION BILL.

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

[BILL 201.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. COURTNEY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that its object was to take the management of the Lower Shannon out of the hands of the Board of Works, in whom it was now practically vested, and to transfer it to local trustees or other local authorities, provided that local persons were willing to undertake such responsibility.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Mr. BIGGAR said, the hon. Gentleman had fairly and rightly stated the object of this Bill—that was to say, it would give leave to any persons who chose to do so to undertake the control over the lower part of the Shannon, if they would bear the expense of keeping the river in order. The Bill, however, was little more than waste paper with that condition in it, for there was not the slightest chance of any trustees accepting such a liability as keeping in order the piers and the river generally, which were now kept in order at the expense of the Government. The people of the locality would be very glad to get control over the river if the Government would continue to pay the expenses, but not at their own expense; and he, therefore, should move that the Bill be read that day three months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would explain the point raised by the hon. Member for Cavan—namely, whether the expense of keeping the river and the piers in order would be handed over to the local authority with the control?

Mr. COURTNEY said, he thought the piers were for the most part self-supporting.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

MARRIAGES LEGALIZATION BILL [*Lords*].

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

[BILL 237.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its principal object was to meet a difficulty which had arisen through a person who was not in Holy Orders having represented himself as a clergyman and obtained a position as a licensed curate, and in that capacity had solemnized a considerable number of marriages. His own opinion was that those marriages were valid; but it was important not to have any question about them, and the object of this Bill was to remove any doubts as to their validity. He appealed to the House not to offer any unnecessary opposition to the measure.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Bill *considered* in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL.—[BILL 186.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, I intended to move that you do now leave the Chair in order that the House might go into Committee on this Bill; but my right hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. J. G. Hubbard) having given Notice this afternoon of some remarks which he wishes to make on that Motion, and being unable to remain here to-night for the purpose, I ask you to put down the Bill for Thursday next, when, as the Bill is one of very great importance, I trust there will be no delay in dealing with it in Committee.

Committee *deferred* till *Thursday*.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

[BILL 206.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, with the intention of going into Committee on this Bill *pro formâ* only, I beg to move that you do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would not consider it reasonable to introduce into the Bill a provision for the relief of persons surcharged under Schedules A and B with excessive duties which, by the indulgence of the Department, had not been collected during the agricultural depression, otherwise a great hardship would be sustained by persons whose farms had deteriorated and by those who had large tracks of land out of cultivation and who had, in consequence, been deprived of their incomes?

MR. COURTNEY said, that since the right hon. Gentleman had spoken to him upon the subject, he had arrived at a conclusion adverse to the view the right hon. Gentleman took of this question. He was happy to say that during last year the number of farms in the condition described by the right hon. Gentleman had very greatly diminished.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3 *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

POST OFFICE PROTECTION BILL.

(*Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Courtney.*)

[BILL 161.] BILL WITHDRAWN.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. FAWCETT: Sir I beg leave to move that the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill be discharged. It is a Bill of details, and I think time will be saved by the adoption of that course in order that it may be introduced in the House of Lords.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order for Second Reading be discharged."—(*Mr. Fawcett.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Order *discharged;* Bill *withdrawn.*

FISHERIES (OYSTER, CRAB, AND LOBSTER) ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Sykes, Colonel Dawnay.*)

[BILL 208.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. SYKES: I hope the House will not think I am unduly trenching on their kindness when I ask them to listen to the reasons which exist for bringing forward this Bill, which deals with a matter of considerable importance to the class of persons engaged in the fishing trade of the country. I have the honour to represent a large coasting constituency (Yorkshire, East Riding), and the fishermen engaged on that part of the coast greatly complain of the serious diminution during the last three years in the take of crabs. It is essential that hon. Members should bear in mind that two classes of crabs are distinguished—the young and the old. The fishermen complain that nearly 60 stone of under-sized crabs are frequently brought ashore to keep up the supply of bait, or perhaps wasted there. It is in their protection I ask the House to agree to the second reading of this Bill, and, in doing so, I wish to call attention to the fact that it does not affect the Act of 1877, except when complaints are made, and in that case the fishermen who feel themselves aggrieved may petition the Board of Trade, which Department, if it thinks fit, may appoint an Inspector to examine into the subject-matter of that Petition, when, if the Board of Trade are satisfied that there is cause for interference, the Bill, the second reading of which I beg to move, will come into operation.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Sykes.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I can only say, in assenting to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, that I believe the Bill introduced by him will prove to be a valuable amendment to the existing law. The Act which he proposes to amend was intended for the protection of the shell-fish which the hon. Member has taken under his care; but it has proved to be defective, because it contains a clause which permits them to be taken for bait, and it is complained that under that pretext the fisheries are seriously injured. I shall have to propose in Committee some verbal Amendments which I think will assist in carrying out the object in view; but the principle of the Bill I have no reason to dissent from.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

IRISH LAND COURT OFFICERS (EXCLUSION FROM PARLIAMENT) BILL.—[Bill 89.]

(*Mr. Brodrick, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. Macartney.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. BRODRICK said, he thought the position of the Government with reference to this Bill was most unfortunate. The Bill was intended to remove an evil which everyone desired to see redressed; and he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he would not allow the Bill to go to the Committee stage, on which he (Mr. Brodrick) would endeavour to meet the Government views in this matter?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, it was a monstrous thing to bring this Bill forward at a quarter past 1. He had no objection to the principle of the measure, and he thought the hon. Gentleman who introduced it might make his mind easy on the subject it dealt with, because there was no chance of any official or ex-official of the Land Court being returned in Ireland as a Member of Parliament.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Brodrick,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Thomas Dickson.*)

[BILL 104.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the Government would assent to the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, on the understanding that some sections in the Bill should be withdrawn and others inserted.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 23rd June.

QUESTION.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE COINAGE BILL.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform us when the Coinage Bill will be taken?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): We shall not be in a position to decide that point until, at least, the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill has passed through Committee.

MOTIONS.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 8) (ABERAVON, &C.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local

Government Board relating to the Borough of Aberavon, the Local Government Districts of Brighouse, and Denton and Haughton, the City of Manchester, and the Local Government Districts of Shipley, Skelton and Brotton, Sowerby Bridge, and Sutton-in-Ashfield, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 242.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) (NO. 14) (PARISHES OF DAWLISH AND KENTON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, Bill to confirm an Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," and "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1882," relating to the Parishes of Dawlish and Kenton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 243.]

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. COURTNEY, Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation, or Coalisland Canal, from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company, and to amend the Acts relating to the Lagan Navigation Company; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 244.]

SHERIFF COURT HOUSES (SCOTLAND) ACT (1860) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, Bill to amend "The Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Act, 1860," *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE, Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 245.]

METROPOLITAN POLICE [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise any increase of expenditure which may be incurred by the appointment of an additional Assistant Commissioner of Police, and by the payment of allowances to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the appointment of an additional Assistant Commissioner.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 10*th June*, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*—Eastern Bengal Railway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15) Saint Luke (Middlesex) * [246].

First Reading—Settled Land * [247].

Second Reading — Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order * [222]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) * [232]; Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * [227]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (the Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) * [236]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (Ennis and West Clare Tramway) * [233]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) (Clogher Valley Tramway) * [234].

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (*New Clauses*) [Seventh Night]—R.P.

Re-committed—Committee—Report—Third Reading—Metropolitan Police * [209], and *passed*.

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) (Belchalwell, &c.) * [150], and *passed*.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

SMITH'S TRUST ESTATE BILL [*Lords*].

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he wished to say a word or two before this Bill was read a second time. Hon. Members who remained in the House up to the close of last Session would recollect that, in the month of August, the Prime Minister made a statement which led the House to entertain the hope that in future some alteration would be made in the mode of presenting these Bills. He begged to give Notice that on Thursday, the 19th of June, in reference to Bills of this sort, he would put the following Question to the First Lord of the Treasury:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in pursuance of his statement on August 8th, 1883, that with regard to the Private Estate Bills—'We ought to look to the aid of the House of Lords, for these Bills are made the subject in the House of Lords of a regular reference to Judges. From that source we may possibly obtain some assistance which will be a guide to the House of Commons, and which, at any rate, will secure our giving due

> bably the attention of my noble and learned attention to these important measures. Pro- Friend the Lord Chancellor has been called to the subject, and I am sure he will be ready to consider whether anything can be done in that direction.' — Her Majesty's Government will propose, by a new Standing Order, to instruct the Chairman of Ways and Means to report to the House in the case of a Private Estate Bill containing provisions for extending the term or the area of any settlement of land?"

As the Bill now before the House did not propose any extension of the term or the area of settlement of land, he had no objection to offer to it; but, in regard to the remarks which had been made by the Prime Minister on the general subject, he might call attention to the fact that the Bill dealt with a new lease of the Scilly Islands, and involved the interests of more than 2,000 of Her Majesty's subjects. In consequence, however, of the manner in which it was presented to the House of Commons, it was not, in any manner, within the knowledge of hon. Members, as he was of opinion should be the case where lands belonging to the Duchy of Cornwall which were of a *quasi*-public character were dealt with.

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

——o——

COMMISSIONERS OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PROFESSOR CURTIS.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Professor Curtis was appointed to be a Secretary of Intermediate Education, at £1,000 a year, within a few years of the age at which public servants are encouraged to retire on pension; did his then health incapacitate him from discharging the duties of his Queen's College Professorship, except by deputy; and, did his length of service at the time entitle him to a substantial pension; would his superannuation now, as if he were still a Queen's College official, and the extinction of the second secretaryship, relieve the Intermediate Education Fund of an unproductive charge of £1,000 a year; and, will he recommend this till the organisation of the Department is remodelled by legislation?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, Professor Curtis was appointed as an Assistant Commissioner of Intermediate Education between four and five years ago. He had not then, nor has he yet, reached the minimum age at which a public servant can retire on pension on the ground of age. That consideration, however, was of comparatively little importance in this case, as he was being appointed to a position which carries with it no claim to pension. It is not the case, as stated in the Question, that his state of health was such as to incapacitate him from discharging in person the duties of the Professorship which he held prior to his present appointment, and that he had to do so by deputy. On the contrary, he discharged his duties without interruption for a period of 17 years, with the exception of a few weeks, when he was suffering from temporary illness. Dr. Curtis cannot now be superannuated as if he were still a Queen's College official.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ESTABLISHMENT AND EXTRA POLICE FOR CO. WATERFORD.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state what is the complement of police for the county of Waterford; what was the number of extra police imposed on the county last year, and for the payment of which a presentment of £1,469 15*s.* has been sought; where were the extra police stationed; and, why were extra police imposed on a county which is, and has been for several years, almost wholly free from crime?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The strength of the Parliamentary free force is 219 for the county of Waterford. Of that number, the average of extra men chargeable to the Grand Jury during 1883 was 102. They are stationed throughout the county. This number has since been reduced by 40 men. It is not correct to say that the county is, and has been, almost wholly free from crime for several years past. On the contrary, outrages were from time to time committed which rendered extra special patrols and protection necessary. During this period these legitimate charges for extra police were distributed fairly over the county.

Mr. LEAMY gave Notice that he would put a further Question on Monday.

THE DYNAMITE CONSPIRACIES—THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If any representations have been made to the Government of the United States, suggestive of the duty of friendly Powers in regard to dynamite conspiracies, and with what result?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir. Representations on the subject to which the hon. Member has called attention have been addressed to the Cabinet of Washington. Their reply to the last communication made to them has not yet been received.

Mr. ANDERSON: I beg to ask the noble Lord, will all the Correspondence on the subject be laid upon the Table?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot give any pledge upon that subject at present.

TURKEY (EUROPEAN PROVINCES)—THE GOVERNOR GENERALSHIP OF EASTERN ROUMELIA.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have given their assent to the appointment, in the place of Aleko Pasha, of M. Crestovitch, the Russian candidate for the Governor Generalship of Eastern Roumelia, to that office; and, whether the Russian candidate has been appointed to the command of the Roumelian Militia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have agreed to the proposal of the Turkish Government, that M. Crestovitch should be appointed Governor General of Eastern Roumelia. The officer appointed Commander of the Eastern Roumelian Militia in April last is Drigalsky Pasha, aide-de-camp to the Sultan and a Lieutenant General in the Turkish Service. He is a German subject.

MADAGASCAR — RUMOURED FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have any confirmation of the statements that the French Forces invading Madagascar are to be increased by troops from Tonquin, and that a march on the capital is to be undertaken; and, what steps are being taken to protect the rights of British subjects in Madagascar, and to obtain compensation for the heavy losses they have sustained owing to the French operations?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have no such information. An efficient Consular Staff is watching over the interests of British subjects. Claims for compensation cannot be settled till the conclusion of hostilities.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With regard to the reply of the noble Lord, as to the losses of British subjects, I may remind him that he made a similar reply three months ago. I would ask him what is the date—if he is able to give it—of the last communication from Her Majesty's principal Consul at Madagascar; and, whether any progress whatever has been made in paying compensation to British subjects?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It would be much better if the hon. Member would put the Question on the Paper. I do not wish not to reply altogether to the Question; and may say, however, that the communications which passed were not communications made by the Consul.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I shall call attention on the Diplomatic Vote, or on some other Vote, to the inaction of the Government in regard to this important question.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—MEDICAL INSPECTORS—APPOINTMENT OF DR. WOODHOUSE.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How soon after the death of Dr. Roughan Dr. Woodhouse was appointed to his position; whether Dr. Woodhouse has had any experience as a dispensary or union medical officer, or as a medical officer of health, and, if not, how he became entitled (other than by acting for a short time as temporary Inspector) to be placed over the numerous efficient Poor Law medical officers of Ireland, who have acquired a practical knowledge of the duties of such a position by passing through these different grades of the service; whether Dr. Woodhouse is a member of the secret society of Freemasons, and, how many members of the Local Government Board, and of their inspectors, are members of that society; whether there is any reason why officers occupying the higher grades of the service, in preference to deserving officers, if eligible, should not have a prior claim to positions of the kind over outsiders; and, whether there would be any objections to making a rule that, before important appointments of this kind are made in future, twelve days' notice should be given by advertisement, as is essential in the case of minor appointments?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Dr. Roughan died on the 7th May, and his successor was appointed on the 15th. Dr. Woodhouse has not been a dispensary or Union medical officer, or a medical officer of health; but he has the highest professional and personal qualifications for the post of Inspector; and, on the several occasions when he has been temporarily employed under the Local Government Board, has discharged his duty in an able and efficient manner. There are other qualifications necessary in a Medical Inspector besides previous knowledge of the technical details of Union work; and the Local Government Board cannot recognize any obligation to limit the choice to medical men who have served as Union officers, or admit that such service entitles them to a preference over other men of high standing in the Profession. I am not aware, nor is the Vice President of the Board of Trade aware, whether or not Dr. Woodhouse is a Freemason; nor can I say how many members of the Board, or of their Inspectors, belong to that society. Nor do I deem it any part of my duty to make inquiry into a matter which in no way concerns or affects the discharge of these gentlemen's duties, and has no bearing on Dr. Woodhouse's appointment. The course suggested of advertising vacancies amongst the Inspectors would be unnecessary, inconvenient, and wholly without precedent.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—DISORDERLY CONDUCT OF A DETECTIVE AT KNOCKBARRON RACES, CO. GALWAY.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. O'Brien) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that, at the Knockbarron (county Galway) Races, a detective policeman was drunk and brandishing a revolver in the refreshment room under the standhouse, to the danger of the bystanders, and had to be deprived of the weapon by one of the attendants: and, if so, what steps have been taken in the case?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, a constable employed on detective duty at Knockbarron Races got drunk at the refreshment bar. He had a revolver, which was taken from him by a head constable; but it did not come to the knowledge of the local police that he had been brandishing it. He has been punished for his offence—having been fined £2, and removed to a distant station at his own expense. He has also been removed from the detective force.

NAVY—ASSISTANT DOCKYARD CONSTRUCTORS.

Mr. A. F. EGERTON asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, What has caused the delay in filling up the existing vacancies for ten first class Assistant Constructors at the Dockyards, provided for by the recent reorganisation scheme; and, why the Foremen of the yard, some of whom have charge of the most important work, are only made second class Assistant Constructors, thereby placing them at a disadvantage in comparison with the Admiralty Draughtsmen, who were made first class Constructors and eligible for Dockyard appointments, whereas formerly the Foremen ranked next below the Constructors at the Dockyards?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The reorganization of the Constructive Staff at the Admiralty and the Dockyards can only be worked out gradually. In recommending the appointment of 10 first-class assistant constructors to the Dockyards, the Committee contemplated that some of the designing work now done at the Admiralty should be transferred to the Yards. This change cannot yet be carried out. With regard to the second part of the Question, those Admiralty draftsmen who have been appointed first-class assistant constructors were employed on work demanding the highest scientific qualifications, which had, under former arrangements, been inadequately recognized. The Admiralty do not admit that this argument applies with equal force to the foremen of the Yard, highly as we value their services.

They have accordingly been appointed, in the first instance, second-class assistant constructors, with the prospect of further promotion without the ordeal of examination.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, whether any decision had been come to as to the inspectors of shipwrights?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he could not announce any decision on that subject.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, whether the decision would be announced this year?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he would make inquiry into the matter.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL—INVESTMENTS BY TRUSTEES.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is his intention to introduce into Parliament a Bill having for object the relaxation of the stringent provisions found in numerous trust deeds, which confine trustees in the investment of funds to such securities as are now in process of undergoing a reduction of interest thereon; and, whether he can now state the intentions of Her Majesty's Government in regard to a corresponding reduction of one-half per cent in the rate of interest allowed to depositors in the Trustees and Post Office Savings Banks?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, in reply to the first Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that the occasion for considering any such plan as he suggests does not arise until a proposal for compulsory redemption of Three per Cent Stock is brought before Parliament. As to the second Question, I have already stated that it is altogether premature.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—NUMBER OF SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state to the House how many Sub-Commissioners are now employed under the Irish Land Act of 1881; how many of such officials are employed for seven years, and how many for a shorter period; whether the employment of the temporary Sub-Commissioners last named would cease on the 31st July; and, whether it is then intended to appoint any more of such temporary Sub-Commissioners; and, if so, how many, and for what period?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, there are at present 81 Sub-Commissioners employed; 12 of them hold office for seven years from the date of their original appointments. The present term of office of the remainder will expire on the 31st of July. It is intended to continue some of them in office beyond that date; but final arrangements have not yet been made.

MR. GIBSON said, that some little doubt existed upon this question. He understood that it was intended to retain 10 Sub-Commissioners in all—not three or five, as had been stated.

MR. TREVELYAN was understood to indicate to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that that was correct.

MR. BRODRICK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would give the House an opportunity of discussing the subject by giving an undertaking that the Vote for the Sub-Commissioners would be taken before the 31st of July?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he could not give any undertaking to that effect, as the matter must depend on the progress made with Business.

MR. BRODRICK asked that the right hon. Gentleman would do something to enable the House to give an expression of opinion.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he certainly would do his best to promote the progress of the Business of the House.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACTING MAIL GUARDS.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Postmaster General, If he has yet completed his inquiries in the case of the three mail messengers at Dublin, and when they may expect a refund of the money which he stated they should have received between the years 1881 and 1883; if he would explain why all the Irish acting mail guards were not dealt with alike, as was the case in England when a similar class was abolished there, by appointing the whole staff to the sorting class as vacancies occurred; and if, as this new class of three mail messengers is the only one on the strength of the Dublin or London offices which does not receive an increment from the date of appointment, will he grant them a scale of pay by increment equal to that now paid to indoor messengers and hall porters?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, as promised in my reply to the hon. Member's former Question, I have now considered whether it would be feasible to let these three mail messengers have arrears of pay from July, 1881, and I am glad to have been able to decide in the affirmative. As they have now been incorporated into the class of postmen and the postmen's scale rises by annual increments, the Question put third by the hon. Member does not arise. It is right to state, however, that these three men, being already above the maximum of the postmen's scale, will not receive any further advance. In Ireland the acting mail guards have been treated exactly as they were in England. Some—these being the better qualified among them—received appointments as sorters, and the others did not.

UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION AT ANTWERP—A BRITISH COMMISSION.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Belgian Government has officially addressed the British Government on the subject of the Universal Exhibition, Antwerp, 1885; and, if so, whether the British Government propose to constitute a Commission or Committee, as in the case of previous foreign exhibitions, to represent British interests on that important occasion?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the Exhibition appears to be promoted by certain influential inhabitants of Antwerp, and not by the Belgian Government. The Belgian Minister at this Court announced that this Exhibition would be held; and the communication was referred, in the usual course, to the Treasury, who considered that no sufficient reason was shown for Her Majesty's Government to incur the expense of taking part in the undertaking, and an answer to this effect has been returned to Baron Solvyns. The Colonial and India Offices have, however, been informed, in case the Government of any British possession should wish to take part.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked, if there had been any official communications?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, there had been none.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—EMPLOYMENT OF TURKISH TROOPS.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON, who had given Notice that he would ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is in a position to contradict the statement to the effect that Her Majesty's Government are entering into an arrangement under which a body of Turkish troops will be sent to pacify the Soudan, said, that, in consequence of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock being about to ask a similar Question, he should not put his.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as in the case of negotiations with France, he will undertake to place before the House any negotiations or communications which have passed or may be passing between Great Britain and Turkey with respect to the despatch of Turkish troops to Egypt or the Soudan, before any action can be taken by Turkey upon such negotiations or communications?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in answering the Question of the noble Lord, I must premise, as a general observation, that in the present disturbed condition of the Soudan, I cannot undertake, on all occasions with regard to measures which might appear to be necessary with respect to that condition, to communicate them previously to Parliament, which would, of course, be communicating them to the world, the effect of which might be injurious. But, in the present instance, that difficulty does not arise in a practical form, because this Question of the noble Lord appears to be based on a supposition, with reference to rumours which have gone abroad, that we have made a proposal to Turkey to send troops to Egypt, or into the Soudan, for the purposes indicated in the Notice of a Question put upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). There is no foundation for that supposition. The fact simply is that there have been some communications on a subject that is mentioned in the Blue Book now before the House with regard to certain ports on the Red Sea; but they have not made any progress.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—MISSION OF SIR WILLIAM HEWETT TO THE KING OF ABYSSINIA.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) asked me yesterday, a Question about Admiral Hewett, which I said I would answer to-day. A message was received at Massowah on the 3rd instant from Admiral Sir William Hewett, in which he stated that he had had an interview with the King on the 27th of May, and that it was very satisfactory. The Admiral was expected to leave on his return journey to Massowah on the 1st instant.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 9th June.*]

[SEVENTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clauses.

MR. ECROYD, in proposing, as an Amendment, to insert, after Clause, 3, the following clause:—

(Enfranchisement of owners of copyhold and leasehold estates.)

"Every man who is the owner of a copyhold estate, or of a leasehold originally created for a term of not less than forty years, in any land or tenement in the United Kingdom, of a clear yearly value of four pounds or more, shall be entitled, after the passing of this Act, to be registered as a voter, and, when registered, to vote at an election in like manner as a freeholder,"

said, its effect would be to widen the limits of enfranchisement. He did not pretend to any legal knowledge, and he had no doubt that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) could, if the Government accepted the substance of the proposal, put it into a more effective and better shape. He should like to explain, as briefly as possible, what his object was in moving the clause. The tenures upon which small cottage properties were created, especially in the industrial districts of the North, were very varied; and in many localities, his own included, there were three kinds of tenure — the first, absolute freeholds; the second, copyholds, which, in the case of the great Northern manors, were practically equivalent to freeholds; and, third, leaseholds for 999 years, which for all practical purposes were also equivalent to freeholds. He had not ventured to ask that the ancient 40*s*. limit should be extended to these copyhold and leasehold tenures, though he should be extremely glad if it could be. He had desired to avoid even the appearance of proposing that which might be used for the extension of fagot votes; and, therefore, he had fixed the limit with regard to leaseholds and copyholds at £4, the value of the humblest tenement and garden of which any labouring man could become the owner. His desire was not only that a small measure of enfranchisement should be granted in this direction by lowering the present limit of £5 to £4, but also that there should be such simplicity in the law as would enable owners of these small properties, who might have very little legal knowledge, to comprehend their position, and without perplexity to claim and exercise the franchise. He could not but believe that this was an object which would commend itself to Her Majesty's Government as much as it did to himself. He hoped, therefore, that he should have the sympathy and assistance of the Government in carrying it into effect. He did not wish to occupy the time of the Committee needlessly; and therefore he would only say, in conclusion, that if what he proposed were adopted, it would be cause of great satisfaction to one of the most deserving and capable classes of citizens in the industrial districts of the North.

Clause (Enfranchisement of owners of copyhold and leasehold estates,)—(*Mr. Ecroyd,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ecroyd) hoped to have the assistance of the Government in carrying the object he had in view into effect. The Government were absolutely precluded, by all the declarations they had made on the subject, from entertaining a question of this kind. No doubt there was a multitude of subjects in regard to the franchise, some of them small. and some of them great, which might be entertained by Parliament at its discretion. This was one of the very small questions. In the first place, it proposed to reduce the value of the copyholds from £5 to £4, and that might be regarded as a very minute change; and, in the second place, many of these copyholders would be householders, who would already be entitled to vote. This appeared to him to be an Amendment which ought to be introduced into the present law rather than in a Bill of the kind under notice. The Government had considered the matter carefully; and they were distinctly of opinion that it would be unsafe, and extremely unwise, for them to entertain new questions of this kind, which they thought ought to be raised, and no doubt would be raised, on their merits from time to time.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had adopted a rather summary mode of disposing of a clause of this character. Sometimes the Committee were told that Amendments went too far; and now they were told this was too small to be considered. It seemed to him that the Government had said to themselves—"The franchise contained in this Bill is the only one we will recognize in any form or shape; and if you attempt to modify it in any way, the only answer we will give is, that we have decided otherwise. That was not a fair way of treating his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), or of treating the Committee. That hon. Gentleman had stated that that would affect a large number of probably the most industrious classes in Lancashire, especially in that division of the county in which he resided; and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought the Committee ought to have some better reason given to them than had been given by the Prime Minister before this matter was disposed of.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not quite understand the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), when he complained of the Government having said they were indisposed to accept the introduction of questions of this kind in the Bill. What he (Mr. Gladstone) said was founded upon a calculation they had made as to the prospect of the Bill passing, if all the different Amendments proposed were adopted by the Government. It was on that account, and not from any want of respect to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Ecroyd), that he (Mr. Gladstone) declined, so far as the Government was concerned, to entertain the proposition of the hon. Gentleman. The Committee, of course, was perfectly free to act as it thought fit. He had previously observed that the change proposed was one of a minute character, and one which would hardly have any practical operation, inasmuch as the great bulk of the persons contemplated by the clause would, in the present state of the general law, be voters as householders.

Mr. ECROYD said, he did not complain of the course which had been taken by the Prime Minister; but he disagreed with the view expressed by the right hon. Gentleman, that this was only a small question, because most of the persons affected by the Amendment would already be enfranchised as householders. The object of the Amendment was to protect their right to a second vote for the county, and it was the possession of that vote which these people valued. He maintained that the proposal would in that way have a very considerable effect, and that it was not only a just, but an important proposal.

Mr. WARTON said, it appeared to him that the Committee, instead of being, as many supposed, under the control of the Prime Minister, was really unquestionably under the control of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). A few weeks ago, the hon. Member advised the Prime Minister not to listen to any Amendment of any kind which might come from the Tory side of the House. Although it was extraordinary for the majority of the House to be subservient to the Prime Minister, it was very much worse for the Prime Minister to be subservient to the hon. Member for Northampton. It was all very well to say that the Bill must be rushed through the Committee, and, therefore, that the Government would not listen to any proposal that was made. When the Prime Minister spoke of having made a computation, he would ask him if he had made any computation whatever as to the number of leaseholders who were affected by this proposal; or whether he had made the smallest computation with regard to the number of copyholders who would come under it in various parts of the country? He (Mr. Warton) ventured humbly to submit that the right hon. Gentleman had done nothing of the kind; but the Bill had been submitted in a most rugged and crude state, without any statesmanlike consideration whatever of the rights of large classes who held different tenures and enjoyed different privileges.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the Government, as far as he understood the matter, had urged two reasons against the acceptance of the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Ecroyd); but those two reasons were obviously inconsistent with each other. In the first place, they said that the Amendment was so small a matter as hardly to be worth consideration; and the other reason was that the Amendment would so overcharge the Bill with matter as to imperil its progress. One of those reasons might be true, but hardly both. Surely the Government could not be serious in saying that the progress of the Bill would be imperilled by adopting the Amendment of his hon. Friend. He did not deny that the Bill had perils to fear in the future; but those perils had not yet been reached. He could not help thinking that the Government were proceeding on wrong lines when they said that the proper course in a Bill of this kind was not to try to make it a perfect measure, but to leave to future legislation the burden of introducing all remaining improvements into our representative system. When a definite improvement was suggested, and when not a single argument was urged against it, he was certainly unable to understand what was the motive which induced the Prime Minister to crush it by his mere *fiat*, without adducing any argument upon the merits of the question at all—simply saying that he would have nothing whatever to do with it. He must say that unless they had some better reason advanced from the Government Bench against this Amendment than any which the Government had yet urged, he hoped his hon. Friend would go to a Division, and, at all events, place on record his conviction of the importance of enfranchising the class which he wished to benefit in the matter—a class which formed no unimportant portion of the constituency which his hon. Friend represented.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is entirely wrong in asserting that I have adduced two arguments which are inconsistent with one another. My argument was that the introduction of such an Amendment would overcharge the Bill, and run the risk of imperilling its passing; but that it is easy for those who wish to oppose the Bill by indirect means so to clog the measure as to endanger its passing, and that it is one of a class of Amendments which, if passed, would be inconsistent with the objects of the Bill.

MR. A. F. EGERTON, in supporting the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), said, that the argument that persons who held leases for 999 years were provided for as leaseholders was beside the question. As all persons connected with Lancashire knew, there were a very large class of persons living in the towns in that county who had invested their money in that kind of property, and who, consequently, if this clause were passed into law, would become county as well as borough voters. He did not think the argument—that they were provided for as householders — had anything to do with the matter. They were inhabitants of boroughs who would by this clause obtain votes for the county; and he ventured to think that they were a class of persons who were entitled to consideration. He failed to see what was the objection to them. A good many of these leaseholders did not hold leases for 999 years, but were leaseholders for ever. Of course, the landlord had a right of re-entry in the event of the non-payment of rent, and that was the only safeguard he had. He was certainly unable to see why this class of persons should not have votes.

MR. GLADSTONE: There is an important and fundamental objection to the Amendment. We are not prepared on principle to introduce into this Bill any enlargement of the existing property qualification, as we are asked to do by this clause. We propose to preserve, but we do not propose to enlarge.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he thought that the decision of the Government to refuse an Amendment of this kind would be received with great dissatisfaction in Lancashire. A considerable amount of property was held on long leases by respectable people living in that county, and he knew that a county vote was very much valued by them. Moreover, he was of opinion that it was desirable in every way to encourage this kind of investment, because it would help to carry out that which they professed to be for the advantage of the labouring classes, and would introduce into the county constituencies the most respectable of the working classes. He ventured to hope that the Committee would support the clause of his hon. Friend and Colleague, and he hoped that it would be pressed to a Division. It was a proposal which only did adequate justice to one of the most respectable classes of the community.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, that, whatever distinction the Government might draw, it was perfectly clear that the objection was one of three classes—either the objection was that some Bill or other should be passed; or else it must be that this Amendment was one which the Government chose to say, without the slightest particle of proof, was introduced with an indirect and sinister purpose; or a still more ingenious line of argument was that the clause could not be accepted because it was not already in the Bill. He looked upon that declaration as a practical admission that the Government meant to pass some Bill this year, even although it might be a bad Bill. He was glad to have had that fact established, because it justified what he had said all along about the intentions of the Government in introducing the Bill.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, he could quite understand the objection of the Prime Minister to the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd); but he maintained that the clause would only modify to a slight extent that which was the existing law at the present moment. The Reform Act of 1867 contained a similar clause, the only difference being that the qualification was £5, and the number of years 60. The present proposal reduced the qualification from £5 to £4, and the number of years from 60 to 40. Therefore, there could not be any objection to the clause on the ground of principle, and it was only right that they should go fully into the matter and consider it fairly. He quite admitted that the clause formed part of the larger question which would be raised by the 2nd clause, which had been placed upon the Paper by his hon. Friend, and by the clause of which he (Mr. Grantham) had also given Notice. He would admit at once that he did not feel any great amount of interest in the present proposal, because the difference was so very small between the existing law and that which his hon. Friend proposed to substitute. At the same time, if his hon. Friend decided upon going to a Division, he should support his proposal.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham) was labouring under a mistake. It was true that, with respect to counties, the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) would only reduce the property qualification of existing copyholders from £5 to £4, and the number of years from 60 to 40; but the adoption of the Amendment as it stood would give a £4 copyholder a vote, and it would create a vote for the boroughs in regard to property within the boroughs, or within a certain distance of them. Therefore, it would enfranchise a new class of copyholders, possessed of property valued at £4 per annum and having 40 years to run; and the vote would be given not to the person who occupied the property, but to the owner. Now, that was a departure from the principle that the only person upon whom the Government intended to confer the vote was the occupier. He would remind the House that the old borough franchise had always been one of occupation. It was an ownership franchise in counties, and an occupation franchise in boroughs. This proposal was also a departure from the principle that the borough franchise was an occupation one, and would amount to an increase of the property vote.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, he wished to point out that the interests of the leaseholder, as well as the freeholder and copyholder, were undoubtedly guarded; and therefore the fact that the voter held a leasehold was a secondary question.

MR. HICKS said, that, drawn as this Bill was, to increase the franchise to an enormous extent—an extent which he thought would create great danger to the institutions of the country, he, for one, could see no objection to the Amendment proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. Ecroyd); and he was quite at a loss to understand the arguments of the Prime Minister, or of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the old franchise in the boroughs was an occupation franchise. He (Mr. Hicks) believed that that was correct, although in some boroughs, previous to 1832 and 1868, there might have been exceptions; but if the hon. and learned Gentleman was so fond of the old traditions of the country, why did he seek to destroy the great distinction between the county and the borough, and to hand over the property of the county to the tender mercies of the occupier? ["Oh, oh!"] He would repeat, to the tender mercies of the occupier. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had told them that the Bill would increase the franchise by something like three to one, and that the increase would come entirely from one class. After that statement, would any hon. Member in that House venture to deny that the object of the Bill was to hand over the power of the counties to the occupiers? Nevertheless, when a proposal was made to make property, to a certain extent, powerful in the boroughs, they were told that they were not to expect it, because it was contrary to the old traditions of the boroughs; while the old traditions of the counties were to be scattered to the winds. He believed that the Bill was bad in principle from beginning to end. He believed that the old principle, which recognized the freeholders and possessors of property in counties and the householders in boroughs, was the best principle to go upon in regard to the electoral franchise. He believed that the Act of 1867 was right in adopting that principle, and he thought that it ought to be adhered to in the present Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had, however, let the Committee into the secret He had told them that he was opposed to any increase in the influence of property. He (Mr. Hicks) hoped that that declaration would be remembered by every Member of the House, and he was sure that it would be remembered by the owners of property.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 76; Noes 168: Majority 92.—(Div. List, No. 114.)

MR. ECROYD moved, as an Amendment, after Clause 3, to insert the following clause:—

(Provision in respect of county and borough voters.)

"Every man qualified to be registered as a voter in respect of the ownership of any freehold, copyhold, or leasehold estate in a county or borough shall, after the passing of this Act, when duly registered, be entitled to vote in respect of such qualification at an election for the county or borough wherein such estate is situate, whether he be or be not also entitled to vote at such election in respect of an occupation or lodger qualification; subject always, in the case of boroughs, to such conditions as to residence within, or within a certain distance thereof, as are now by statute or shall be under the provisions of this Act prescribed; Provided however, That no man shall, after the passing of this Act, be entitled to be registered as a voter for a county, or to vote at any election for a county, in respect of the ownership of any estate situate within a borough."

The hon. Member said that the clause must, of course, be taken subject to the alterations made in it by the decision at which the House had just arrived; but in moving it he should certainly not lay himself open to the objection raised by the Prime Minister to the previous clause—that the proposal raised a very small question; for it raised one of the largest questions it was possible to consider in connection with a Franchise Bill. He felt himself perfectly justified in raising it on the present occasion. In introducing the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman told the House that, although the measure dealt with only one branch of the subject of Reform, it dealt with that one branch exhaustively and completely; and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), in a speech which he delivered shortly afterwards, told the House, with equal emphasis, that the Bill was a just and complete settlement of the Franchise Question, which might be expected to endure for one or two generations at least. It would, therefore, be right to treat the present measure as one involving the whole consideration of the amendment of the franchise. What was more, the people themselves understood it to be nothing less. Now, the Bill gave to capable citizens who happened to live in boroughs a very great political advantage over those who happened to live in counties; and he had with regret taken special note of the observation made by the Prime Minister, that he entirely objected to the introduction into the Bill of any enlargement of the property qualification. That declaration, he (Mr. Ecroyd), believed would be received with great discontent by the highest and most deserving class of working men, especially after the disposition which the Government had evinced to create, possibly, 10 or a dozen votes out of a single lodging-house. That formed a marked contrast to their indisposition to give a second or property vote to a working man resident in a county who had become the possessor of property after 20 or 30 years of earnest industry and self-denial. He thought the Bill displayed a desire on the part of the Government to depend in future on the votes of the ignorant and improvident, and to reduce as far as possible the political influence of the more capable and intelligent working men. On that account, he should press to the very utmost the proposal he had now to make, believing that this was the occasion, and the only occasion, on which the question could be satisfactorily discussed. The position in which the class of voters who were both owners and occupiers would be placed was, he believed, strictly speaking, this—Under the Bill every householder, whether he resided in a borough or a county, would have one vote founded on his occupancy. So far, all were equal, and to his mind that was a perfectly satisfactory state of things. But when they went a step further they were confronted by a state of things neither just nor rational. A householder residing in a borough might, if he possessed a freehold either in the borough or in the county, which he did not himself occupy, have a second vote for the county. That second vote exercised by the same citizen gave him a double share of political power, no matter where the vote was given. But the householder who lived outside the borough and possessed a freehold either in the borough or county would have no such second vote. Now, that fact appeared to the minds of unsophisticated and plain men to be a gross practical injustice. They did not exercise their minds upon mere verbal subtleties in regard to what might be called a dual vote, and what might not be called a dual vote. All they understood was that to a man in the borough was given a double share of political power as compared with his neighbour occupying exactly the same position in life, but who happened to reside in the county and not in the borough. The freeholder who lived in the county would only have one vote, notwithstanding the fact that he possessed a far better property qualification than that which gave his more fortunate neighbour in the borough a second vote. No amount of subtle distinctions and phrases would alter that fact, and it would become profoundly impressed upon the minds of the people affected by it when once they had realized it in practice. He had discussed it with working men of both political Parties, and he knew that the greatest dissatisfaction would certainly result if the Bill were to come into operation in the form in which it was now proposed. The object—the only object—of his Amendment was to remedy that injustice, and to put these two classes of voters in that position of equality which justice required. It contained no proposal whatever inconsistent with the principle of the Bill, for it only extended to the owner resident in a county the same share of political power which the Bill secured to the owner resident in a borough. It gave no new kind of franchise whatever. It established equality in the only way in which, without disfranchisement, it was possible to establish equality. There were two courses open to the Government for the permanent settlement of the franchise—either to give one vote to one man everywhere, or to give a second vote to the owners in boroughs and counties alike. They had reduced the county qualification with regard to occupiers to the same level as that in the boroughs; they had done away with the distinction which had heretofore justified a vote being given to one class and not to the other. They had reduced the two constituencies to sister constituencies under the same occupation franchise; and it would be a gross absurdity to give preferentially to persons residing in the boroughs one vote for the borough and one for the county in this altered condition of things. It was quite clear that unless exactly the same privilege were extended to voters living in the counties this settlement could not last long. Indeed, he had no doubt that in the minds of certain supporters of the Prime Minister below the Gangway it was one of the merits of the Bill that it left matters in a position which inflicted such gross injustice upon a large section of the most capable citizens amongst the working population, that they knew it must almost immediately breed a new and powerful agitation, and re-open the whole question. The Committee had now to decide, in point of fact, whether they would leave ground for such an agitation, founded on a sense of injustice, in regard to the manner in which property owners outside boroughs were dealt with by the Bill; or whether they would, once for all, establish the matter on such a basis of equity and reason as would leave no rankling sore in the minds of the people of this country. It was objected that his proposal amounted to the establishment of the dual vote. He was not going to argue a question of mere words and names. If a man living in a town had one vote by reason of occupancy and one by the possession of property, it did not matter into which urn the voting paper was dropped, nor whether in the county or in the borough polling booth. The man himself would possess a double share of electoral power as compared with his neighbour in similar circumstances residing in the county; that was a plain and incontestable fact. Then let them get rid of those narrow ideas which rested entirely upon words and names, and look honestly in the face the fact that the Bill would give a double vote and a double share of political power to persons who were both owners and occupiers in boroughs. The question, then, was, how could they give the same share to those in exactly similar circumstances who lived in the counties? They could only give it in one way—the way proposed in this clause. He knew how great a proposal it was; but it was no innovation upon the principle underlying this Bill to give a county voter the same privileges which were conferred upon the owners of property in the boroughs. Her Majesty's Government admitted that property was entitled to a second vote, and they were now only discussing the question in which polling booth the vote should be given. The Government, in the present Bill, proposed to admit to the franchise the whole of the householders in counties, which would entirely change the aspect of the county representation. At the same time, it was manifestly their intention to leave some representation to the owners of that property which was responsible for the debts and obligations of the country, who by that very fact were bound over to a policy of wisdom and prudence in national affairs far more effectually than those who had no fixed property at stake. Now was the time, therefore, to give on equal terms to the owners of property resident in counties that legitimate influence which the Government declared the owners of property in boroughs were justly and properly entitled to. He believed this to be at once the most just, the most truly liberal, and the most truly Conservative settlement of the franchise, and he said so as one who had frankly maintained for very many years past the principle of a vote for every householder, whether living in town or county. He desired the insertion of this clause, not because he distrusted those who were only householders, but because he desired to give to dwellers in the county, as well as in the borough, exactly that fair representation of the interests of property which the Bill proposed to give to residents in the boroughs only. There were very substantial reasons in favour of adopting that course. It would, in the first place, give their just influence to a very large class of capable citizens—a class who, under circumstances of the greatest possible difficulty, had succeeded in becoming owners of property. It would affect scarcely at all the wealthier classes, who had votes, perhaps, in half-a-dozen counties, and were sure to be represented. It was the working man residing in a county who, by the savings of a lifetime, had acquired rateable property at or near his home, to whom this clause would give the right to exercise the one property vote he possessed, dear to him in proportion to the labour and self-denial it had cost, and by this Bill most cruelly and unjustly withheld from him. Therefore, it was a question which specially affected the very best class of working men. He had no desire to obtrude his own experience upon the House; but he had taken a deep interest for many years in this class of persons. He had earnestly tried to persuade men, who were grey-haired now, to save money in their youth; and he knew, to some little extent, he had been successful. And he contended that to deprive such persons, if they happened to live outside the limits of a borough, of a property vote, which was given to those in exactly the same position who happened to live within the borough, would be a grave discouragement to them in the practice of that steadfast industry and self-denial which had distinguished them from their fellow working men. His clause was not open to the charge of giving a disproportionate representation to property. It simply provided that every possessor of rateable property, whether resident in county or borough, and whether such property was worth £5 or £20,000 a-year, should have a second vote in right of that property, and should exercise it in the constituency in which he lived. His proposition was not made with a view to protect the interests of the wealthy classes against the poor, but to maintain a wholesome and necessary distinction between the improvident, the careless, and the irresponsible, and those who were provident and responsible; and, in his opinion, that was a distinction which it behoved the country to maintain. But it was not merely a question of recognizing the provident and industrious, and of conferring special political power and distinction upon them, but also of enabling them to safeguard their most material interests. There was a great difference between the two sections of the labouring population—those possessing fixed and rateable property, and those who had none—a difference as important to poor men who had property to guard as to the richest men in the country. The Committee must bear in mind that one of the most alarming facts of recent times in the eyes of the thrifty and careful among the working classes was the great increase of local taxation levied on rateable property. A good deal of that increase had been brought about by the action of Parliament, which had compelled the local authorities to incur vast expenditure. He did not dispute the useful purpose of that expenditure; but it necessarily increased the local burdens, and the debt which was incurred became a permanent charge upon all fixed property. They had heard, and he thought it would be in the remembrance of the Committee, the remarkable speech delivered in that House some time ago by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), in which the hon. Member declared, quite plainly, that he did not wish for a reduction in local expenditure; but that, on the contrary, he desired to see in future an increase in local expenditure for the common benefit of all the inhabitants. That was to say, that the hon. Member was anxious for an increase in the expenditure on gratuitous education, upon public parks and gardens, on public museums and libraries, and on many other objects which, no doubt, were excellent in themselves, but which, when paid for out of the rates, were purchased for the advantage and pleasure of those who had not saved out of the savings of those who had. What must be the feelings of a working man who, for 30 years, had been habitually denying himself those indulgences which his improvident neighbour had enjoyed, when he saw these enjoyments and benefits provided for that improvident neighbour by the taxation of his own savings? These were very serious questions. They were questions which were largely exercising the minds of the thrifty portion of the labouring classes, and especially of those who had become the owners of rateable property—questions much more interesting to them than any mere abstractions about the extension of the franchise, such as were now put in the forefront, and made to occupy the attention of the House to the exclusion of matters of vital import to the people. No one would pretend that the possession of rateable property was a perfect test of a man's character or worth as a citizen; but it was the best and only practical test that could be applied. The more respectable among those who, through misfortune, did not happen to be the possessors of property, so far from looking with jealousy upon such a distinction as this, would themselves be the first to value and enforce it. There would be no feeling of injury, and no desire to complain, on the part of that unfortunate and deserving class, in being excluded from the second vote which was given to those who were more fortunate than themselves; because the respectable and provident had always the hope of becoming members of that more fortunate class; and if they were unable to obtain that position themselves, they had strong hopes that their children, by means of good education and good conduct, would some day win it.

He had felt bound to speak at some length of this practical distinction between the provident and the improvident; and he felt that it was just as important to maintain it outside the borough as inside. Those who had any experience of the rural population would fully endorse his opinion. He rejoiced to see an agricultural labourer in possession of his own cottage and garden, and he believed that one of the most direct ways of enabling that class to reach such a position was to maintain a wholesome political distinction between the holders of fixed property and those who did not possess it. Why should they be so anxious to create a dead level of absolutely uniform Democracy amongst the county population any more than the borough population? Why should they restrict the county population to one vote, depending on occupation, while they allowed the dwellers within the boroughs largely to influence the county representation by their votes? He believed that the true solution of the difficulty was that which he had now proposed. Of course, after the language already used by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, he had not the faintest hope that the Government would accept the clause; but he thought the Committee were bound to discuss it fully and freely. He believed that this solution was, upon every ground, a wise and prudent one; that it would be incomparably better and safer than the establishment of any fancy franchise. He believed it would do far more to maintain the solidity and character of that House than any direct provision for the representation of minorities. He did not, for one moment, disparage the consideration of that question; but he contended that in this proposal they had a more legitimate, a more universal, and a more complete means of assigning to those who had given proof of their responsibility as citizens a somewhat fuller representation than to those who had given no such proof. He could not help feeling that whilst any fancy franchise—any specific or positive arrangement for the representation of minorities—might prove short-lived, and might soon be swept away by some popular impulse, the extension of that just and fair representation of property which, under the Bill, was given to the dwellers in towns, to dwellers in the county districts also, would be the safest, the most truly Conservative, the most unobjectionable, and therefore the only permanent settlement. He was exceedingly obliged to the Committee for the patience and kindness with which they had been pleased to listen to his arguments. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government that he (Mr. Ecroyd) was not one of those who had had the faintest desire at any time to obstruct a measure for the extension of the franchise to the county population. He believed that the adoption of such a proposal as this would smooth the path of such a measure, by making it more acceptable to the Conservative Party, and certainly more acceptable to the working classes. He could not help thinking that so far from proving a hindrance to the progress of that measure of Reform, which the Prime Minister told them was designed to settle the question of the franchise for a long time to come, it might, on the contrary, be the means of greatly promoting it, and of effecting a reasonable, satisfactory, and permanent settlement.

Clause (Provision in respect of county and borough voters,)—(*Mr. Ecroyd,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall certainly not take any objection to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ecroyd) on the ground that it refers to a matter of small importance and extent. On the contrary, the hon. Member, in his speech, has referred to matters of great extent; and certainly the words of the clause refer to matters of even much greater importance than the Committee could have inferred from the speech of the hon. Gentleman. The speech of the hon. Gentleman has consisted of complaints against the present Bill, because he says it gives to the voters in boroughs a disproportionate share of voting power, compared with the voters in counties. But the present Bill does nothing of the kind. The present Bill does nothing to increase any disproportion which now exists between the voters in counties and boroughs on that score. The old system of voting in these constituencies has always recognized the fact that boroughs are parts of counties; but counties have never been made parts of boroughs. The borough has a connection with a county, according to our Parliamentary system, which a county does not possess with a borough. The Government, in looking at the question of the property franchise, has come to the conclusion—and I think the House has approved of that conclusion—that the best and proper course is to leave things as they are, and with them that inequality which the hon. Gentleman so much complains of, and which, he says, excites so much bitter feeling throughout the country. Now, in the course of a long life, the speech of the hon. Gentleman is the very first indication I have ever heard of any painful sentiment on account of that inequality, if it be an inequality, existing in the minds of any portion of the community. The hon. Gentleman does not keep this point in view—that the borough is part of the county; and if the borough is part of the county, the hon. Gentleman will have great difficulty in proving that this power of voting, which has so long existed, is an anomaly. It follows from the fact that the borough is part of the county that some portion of the voters residing in the boroughs should possess county votes. With regard to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, if it were carried, it would excite a strong feeling of indignation throughout the boroughs of the country, that county voters, altogether cut off from the cities and boroughs, should have a borough vote. Such a feeling of indignation would be raised that I do not believe any borough Member who voted in favour of the hon. Member's proposal would stand the slightest chance of being again returned to represent it. [Mr. WARTON: Oh!] I do not say that that would be the fate of the hon. and learned Gentleman who says "Oh!". He may have such strong faith in his own charms and blandishments and power as to believe they would secure his return for any place in which he happened to present himself. But what I say is, that the chance of any hon. Member, who voted in favour of the hon. Member's proposal, of being returned for a borough, would, in the event of that proposal being carried, be very much diminished and impaired indeed. Of course, the Government cannot assent to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, even on the comparatively modest footing upon which he puts it, of the creation of a supposed anomaly between the county and borough, which anomaly, if it exists at all, flows out of the natural fact that the borough is part of the county. Even on that ground, we could not accept the proposal, because we cannot assent to make this Bill a vehicle for the augmentation of the principle of property qualification. The clause of the hon. Gentleman is the complete establishment of what is known as the double vote. Am I right in that? [Mr. ECROYD assented.] I am very glad to find that I am. Well, then, what is the history of the double vote? It is a double vote for the man who has an occupation qualification and a property qualification. He is to have a vote for each in the place where his qualification lies. Very well; and the hon. Gentleman proposes this on behalf of the working classes. [Mr. ECROYD: Hear, hear!] Yes; on behalf of the working classes. But I would like to undress that proposal; so that we may see it in its natural lineaments, and not as it has been clothed by the speech of the hon. Gentleman. Let me look for a moment at the history of the proposal of a double vote which we have now got as the simple description of this clause. Never to my knowledge, except once, was the double vote offered in the shape of a serious proposal. In the year 1867 there were three different efforts made by the Conservative Government of that day to settle the question of Parliamentary Reform. In one of those three proposals, but I think it was the most short-lived of them all, and that it never came even under a regular discussion—in one of those three proposals, there was included a plan for a double vote; or a proposition, at any rate, declaring that a double vote ought to be given. Why, Sir, the mere exposure to the open air of that proposal froze and killed it in a moment; and the most firm Conservative Member in the House at that time—Mr. Henley, the Member for Oxfordshire—rose in his place, and said, in regard to the proposal of the double vote, that it was a proposal more unmixedly for evil, without compensating good, than any proposal he had ever heard. Under such circumstances, I doubt whether the Committee will feel inclined to entertain the proposal now made. And now let me say a word in regard to the reference made by the hon. Gentleman to the working classes. I have no doubt that the interest of the working classes has presented itself prominently to the mind of the hon. Gentleman in regard to this double vote. But, speaking of the working classes generally, the number of persons who, having an occupation qualification, have also a property qualification, would be infinitesimally small; but I gather from what the hon. Member has said, and as I read the clause, that supposing a man to have acquired a house under a building society, and at the same time to occupy that house, he would have under this clause an occupation vote, and would likewise be entitled to a property vote for the same house.

MR. ECROYD: No; I did not say that.

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a most important point; because I beg to submit to the hon. Gentleman that, if that is to be the operation of the clause, it would, undoubtedly, in certain parts of the country, give a large enfranchisement to the working classes, because a large number of them will be found inhabiting their own houses. But that I understand not to be within the view of the hon. Gentleman, and not to be within the words of the clause.

MR. ECROYD: I should very much like to make that my proposal; but I have not ventured to go so far as that.

MR. GLADSTONE: Very good. Then let me take the hon. Gentleman's proposition to be this. He does not propose to enfranchise a working man who is an occupier in respect of the property he holds, and which he has acquired by his industry, and to whom all the touching remarks of the hon. Gentleman respecting the virtuous character of this class are applicable, and who really are a worthy class of themselves, and certainly, in some districts, a very numerous class. These persons the hon. Gentleman does not propose to enfranchise. If that be so, then I must say that the objection to the plan of the hon. Gentleman is very much greater than I had supposed it to be; because, while I supposed it to be an arrangement for the enfranchisement of the working classes, it excludes the vast majority of those who, belonging to the working class, have got both an occupation and a property qualification, that qualification being the house in which he resides; and the scheme, in point of fact, being an undisguised plan in its operation for giving a double vote on behalf of all the possessors of property in towns. It is a proposition to generalize that influence which has been allowed under our Parliamentary Constitution, subject to certain limitations and conditions. Subject to those limitations and conditions, it is still open to a great deal of argument. We leave that property qualification untouched; but it is really too much, when the hon. Gentleman comes down to the House with a portentous innovation, and, in the name of the working classes, proposes to invest every man with a double vote for the property he owns, as well as for the house he occupies in the constituency in which he lives, and, at the same time, he so frames his proposition as to exclude the vast number of the working classes who occupy their own houses. I am afraid, moreover, that very few indeed of the working classes are the owners of any houses of their own. How, then, would this proposition operate in the rural districts? It would be to double the power of every man who has property against that of the householder. The proposal is one which it is quite impossible for the Government to accept.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he was glad to hear one observation which had fallen from the Prime Minister—namely, one vote to each Member of a constituency in every constituency that returns Members to Parliament—which meant that each elector should be confined to a single vote. He had a proposition to that effect upon the Paper; and when the new clause he intended to propose came up for consideration, after what he had heard from the Prime Minister, he hoped to receive the support of the right hon. Gentleman in adding the clause to the Bill. They were now discussing, not the clause exactly as it stood, but whether the clause should be read a second time; because, if the clause were read a second time, it would then be capable of being amended or extended; and, of course, the fact that the Committee consented to read it a second time did not shut out the widening the application of it. He was prepared, therefore, to give his vote in favour of the clause being read a second time, although he went much further than the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd); because he thought that a man who occupied his own cottage in a town ought to be equally entitled to have a dual vote as if he himself lived in one house and his tenant occupied the house next door to him. He knew that, under the present law, a man inside a borough might occupy a house worth £100 a-year and own it and have no vote; whereas the owner of a small cottage of 1*s.* a-week, who did not occupy it, had one vote for the borough and one for the county. That was a state of things which, he thought, ought to be rectified; and he was satisfied that the hon. Member for Preston would consent, if the clause were read a second time, to extend the scope of it, by abolishing the restriction placed in 1832 upon the votes of owners inside represented towns, which took away from them a power which belonged to every other owner of property in such towns. No doubt, this was a dual vote, and as such it had his support. It was an indirect way of giving to the more thrifty among the working classes a second vote. They would have one vote in right of their occupation; and if they had bought a cottage, or an allotment garden, such as his hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell) was anxious to give them, they would enfranchise the peasant proprietor and give him a second vote. He had not himself that faith which some hon. Members had in what was called the educating effect of giving men votes. He did not think that, as a rule, men were inclined to become thrifty from a desire to increase their political power. He did not believe that people cared very much about the vote. The general opinion of the ordinary elector was that both political Parties, whether Blue or Yellow, were equally bad, and behaved equally disgracefully, when they obtained a seat in that House. That was the popular notion among the constituents. But this proposal, as far as it went, seemed to him to be an admirable proposal. The Prime Minister said that when a similar proposal was made some years ago, it was received with the most withering sarcasm by the late Mr. Henley. ["Oh, oh!"] He (Mr. Thomas Collins) did not mean that that right hon. Gentleman was not now alive; he hoped that he was, and in the enjoyment of excellent health; but, in referring to the right hon. Gentleman as the late Mr. Henley, he merely alluded to the fact that he had given up the seat which he formerly occupied in that House. Now, Mr. Henley, with all his shrewdness and sagacity, was about the biggest Radical who ever sat on either side of the House, and he was the author of many famous expressions — among others, of the "ugly rush." The country was also indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for household franchise. Therefore, to claim Mr. Henley as an exponent of Tory principles and the Representative of property was to presume on the ignorance of the Members of the House who had not the honour of a seat in it when that extremely shrewd and capable Gentleman was a Member. He believed that Mr. Henley was a North-countryman, and North-countrymen were proverbial for their shrewdness. Looking at the clause in a proper light, he was quite prepared to give a double vote for occupation and ownership, whether a man's property was inside or outside a borough, or inside or outside a county. When they were altering everything, why should they sweep away 99 out of the 100 distinctions which existed between the boroughs and the counties and leave one still remaining? At present the voter residing inside the borough had a privilege which the voter outside the borough did not possess. He had a dual vote, and was able to put his ballot paper into two different urns — one for the county in which the borough was situated, and the other for the borough in which he resided. The borough voter had a dual vote already; and all the Committee were asked was to extend the principle, and to put on the same level the man who owned and occupied property, whether that property was within the limits of a borough or not. He thought the clause had been brought in for the purpose of carrying out the principle of the dual vote in a proper and legitimate manner; and on that point, if the hon Member for Preston pressed it to a Division, he should give to the clause his warm support.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he could not say that he entirely agreed with the remarks which had been made by the Prime Minister. In his argument the right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that the character of the county franchise would be altered by the Bill. The whole object of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was to show that, for a considerable number of years, he had never heard it suggested that there was any inequality between the county and the borough voter, in consequence of persons living in the borough being also entitled to votes for the county. That being so, it was strange that, at that late hour of the day, the matter should be first suggested by one who professed to speak on behalf of the working classes. As he (Mr. Grantham) had said, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Government entirely forgot that by this Bill he was altogether altering the character of the county franchise; and, that being so, the question of the freeholder living in the borough became a matter of importance, because the Bill, as it stood, would give him an advantage which a freeholder in a county would not possess. That was what his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) objected to, and what other hon. Members desired to correct in the new clauses which they had placed on the Paper. But it was an objection which had been touched upon by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had entirely ignored the fact that, by this Bill, the different qualifications which now existed in the borough and the county would be assimilated, and that, in future, there would be uniform household franchise, both in the boroughs and counties. That being so, the position of the county voter and of persons living in the counties would be entirely different from what it was before. Up to the present time, a voter living in a county had a *quid pro quo* for not possessing the same power of voting as a person residing in a borough, because the county constituencies were limited to the representation of property—not land, but property; and therefore the vote of the county voter, whatever it was, had been looked upon as being worth more than the vote of a person living in a borough, because in a borough it was only persons and population that were represented, whereas in the county the property a man possessed was always understood to be represented. In the discussion which took place upon the Reform Bill of 1832, the Leaders of the Liberal Party made it their boast that the county franchise would still continue to represent the land of the county. In the discussion which took place upon the Reform Bill introduced in 1858 and 1859, exactly the same principle was adopted. In 1867, the same principle was actually carried out; and it was because Parliament desired to maintain the distinction between the county and borough vote that a reduction of the franchise was made to £12 in the counties, instead of making it a mere household franchise, as in the case of the boroughs. Therefore, he submitted that there had always been this broad distinction between the counties and boroughs—that the voter in the county was a man of a higher class, and that his vote, by comparison, was worth more. He thought that was equivalent to his not having the dual vote which persons residing in boroughs had. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister seemed astounded that the hon. Member for Preston should seek to establish the principle of the dual vote in counties; but the principle of the dual vote had certainly existed ever since the Reform Bill of 1832; and if hon. Members would read the speeches of Liberal statesmen in the discussion which took place in 1859—the speeches of Mr. Bright, Lord John Russell, and others —it would be found that they all defended the absolute right of the dual vote to everyone who lived in a borough.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): But not for the same constituency.

MR. GRANTHAM: No; not for the same constituency; but it was not a matter of importance whether it was for the same constituency or not. The principle was whether a man was entitled to vote, and to enjoy the same privileges, whether he lived inside or outside of a borough. He (Mr. Grantham) would go even further than his hon. Friend, and would say that if a man had property he was entitled to have that property represented, as well as the house which he might occupy. If they could not get as far as that, he would certainly do his utmost, by the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name, to limit the vote to people having property in the borough. He thought that was unanswerable. The Bill assimilated the county qualification to that which existed in the borough; and, as a borough voter would be entitled to vote for property he possessed in the county, it was impossible to argue that persons residingin the county, and having property in the borough, should not enjoy the same privilege. His contention was that as they were now reducing the qualification in the counties they ought to give to the counties the same right of voting as was given to the boroughs. Why was it that the Bill did not carry out this principle; and why was it that he and other hon. Members were doing their utmost to secure an alteration? It was for this reason. By the Bill they were entirely altering the whole system of the representation of the country. The argument during the last 50 years in reference to the representation of the people was that it was desirable, in reducing the franchise as it was reduced by the Act of 1832, and again by the Act of 1867, to maintain a distinction between the qualification for the borough and the county. It was always considered that there was a make-weight in the character of the county franchise, because the great majority of the people voting in the counties were voting for their own property. That was the ground upon which persons who lived in the boroughs and owned property outside the boroughs were given county votes. There had never been the slightest objection to that principle; because, so long as the county representation was that of property, and so long as the borough formed part of the county, it was quite right that the borough voter should have a county vote; but when they assimilated the franchise in the borough and in the county, there could be no excuse for saying that, because a borough was included nominally in the county—persons residing in the boroughs had a right to vote in the counties as well as the boroughs. It was well known that with regard to questions of rating, magisterial jurisdiction, and the business of quarter sessions, the county had a distinct autonomy of its own; and, that being so, the boroughs had no right, abstractedly, to interfere in county arrangements. Under the Bill as it stood, the following case of hardship would occur. Take two partners carrying on business in a borough, but having property partly in the borough and partly in the county. The one who lived on the premises in the borough, and who might probably not be so well to do as his partner living in a better house in the county, would have two votes, one for the house he occupied and one in respect of the partnership property in the county. Whereas the other partner, who was much better off than himself, and able to live in a much better house, really got only one vote for the property in the county, being unable to vote for the borough unless he occupied premises there. That was an example of the anomalies existing at the present time, which the supporters of the clause wished to get rid of. In regard to the effect the Bill would have in altering the representation of the county, and in doing away with the distinction which now existed by which the county voter was of a higher class than the voter in the borough, he would point to the fact that there were at present 3,000,000 of electors, of whom something like 2,000,000 represented borough voters who voted in respect of occupation, and 1,000,000 who represented the owners of property and enjoyed county votes in respect of that property. Therefore, at the present time, the proportion of voting power enjoyed in respect of occupation compared with the voting power enjoyed on the ground of property and ownership was as 2 to 1. But this Bill would add 2,000,000 at once to the electorate, the whole of whom were to be added for occupation; and, therefore, the proportion in future would be 4 to 1 instead of 2 to 1. He contended that a change so great and sweeping, altering as it did the entire representation, should be accompanied by the provision proposed by his hon. Friend for the purpose of creating, in some way, a counterpoise. He believed they would only find three countries in the whole of Europe which had adopted the principle of household suffrage—namely, France, Greece, and

Italy. If they went to Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, or Norway, they would find that some other qualification was required—either the payment of direct taxes, or some higher qualification than that which was required in France, Greece, or Italy. He thought he had shown the Committee why it was that, up to the present time, an objection had not been taken to the dual vote in the boroughs, which the altered circumstances of the case now justified them in making. It was to be hoped that that anomaly would now be redressed. The Prime Minister, in 1869, speaking as to the necessity of freeholders being represented, made use of the strongest language in describing the great value and importance to our system of representation of this class being represented, and said that they would complain most seriously if anything were done to destroy the right which they previously held. In his speech that afternoon, the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the effect which the Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston would have upon the borough voters, and he described their indignation as being probably so great that any borough Members who voted for it would never be returned to represent their present constituencies again in Parliament. But there was no reason for supposing that such would be the result, because the borough electors would not lose their votes, or be, in any way, prejudiced; whereas, on the other hand, there was this strong argument in favour of the Amendment—that those who had votes for the county would be practically swamped by the votes of the occupiers who were to be introduced. They had heard a great deal lately of the inducements held out to the working classes to become more thrifty in the future than in the past; about their spending less money upon beer; and about their investing their savings in Government and other securities. But if that were so, surely there could be nothing more likely to induce them to adopt provident habits, and gradually to purchase houses for themselves, than to give them the vote in boroughs in respect of their property. The possession of it would at once raise them to a higher social position. Therefore, he thought that that argument of his hon. Friend (Mr. Ecroyd) was most important and valuable with reference to the proposed franchise. With regard to the general question as to the way in which the future constituencies would be affected, he might, in concluding the few observations he had to make upon this subject, refer to his own constituency. There were something like 3,000 or 4,000 freeholders who voted in his county. He was glad to see them; but he wanted to know why it was that 4,000 freeholders living in Norwood, Streatham, and adjacent places should not have the same right to vote as the occupiers in boroughs? The anomaly was, in his opinion, too great to be allowed to continue; and he, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would press his Amendment upon the Government as much as possible.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) would go to a Division on this very important question. If he did, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would support him. His hon. Friend had placed the matter so clearly before the Committee, especially with regard to the position of the working classes, that very few words were necessary on his (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) part. But he would like to call the attention of the Committee to one or two remarks which had been made by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had just argued that the county had nothing to do with the borough, but that the borough had very much to do with the county. But they occasionally heard another argument from him. It was asked how they could refuse to extend the borough vote to the counties, when, in many instances, boroughs were made up of considerable portions of counties? It was difficult to reconcile these conflicting arguments on the part of those who advocated the Bill and condemned the Amendment; and he should be glad to know, if the latter argument was correct, whether the counties had not also a very large interest in the boroughs? If the borough was in the county, then, as he understood it, the county must have a large interest in the borough. Then, why was the property vote not to be given to men who had property in the counties? For his own part, he was ready to go further than his hon. Friend the Member for Preston, and take up the suggestion of the Prime

Minister—that a man who had acquired a house under a building society, and was, at the same time, occupying that house, should have both an occupation vote and a property vote. It would seem, from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, that he would not object, under the circumstances described, to the individual having a double vote; but then came in the bugbear that property must not have any increased power. The right hon. Gentleman said if they were going to give a double vote to property, the newly-enfranchised classes would be out-voted by the property class; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) said that that would be by no means the case; and, moreover, that if they gave a double vote in the circumstances proposed, it would be an additional encouragement to perseverance on the part of the thrifty. They had heard much of the one-side-of-the-street argument. Why, then, when a man living on one side of the street had two votes, should not the man living on the other side of the street, so to speak, have two votes also? He could see no injustice in such an arrangement; and it was upon that ground, and also upon the belief that it would be an incentive to thrift and an encouragement to the best class of working men in the country, that he should give his vote in support of the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

Mr. ANDERSON said, this was an Amendment evidently intended to extend the system of dual voting. He had learnt, in the course of discussion, with considerable surprise, that there was in England a system of dual voting, but of which nothing was known in Scotland. He was informed that if a man had property inside a borough in this country he was entitled to have a vote for the county; and, therefore, there was no sharp line drawn in England as between boroughs and counties. He said that that was a very absurd anomaly, and he would like to do away with it by taking one of the votes away from the man who had two. In Scotland, a man who had a property in a Parliamentary borough could not, in respect of that property, have a vote in the county. Under the existing law in England, a man might have property situated in Finsbury, for instance; and in respect of that property, which was within a Parliamentary borough, he might have a vote in the county of Middlesex. He repeated that that was a great anomaly, and one which ought to be done away with; and, as he had said before, they had nothing of that kind in Scotland. In Glasgow, the borough he had the honour to represent, he would not have a vote in Lanarkshire, which was the county containing that borough, in respect of property held in the borough. The Scottish arrangement appeared to him to be the better of the two; and if the hon. Member for Preston would put his Amendment into such a form that it would abolish the dual vote which existed in England and put it upon the Scotch system, it would be a great improvement, and he should be inclined to support it, which in its present form he was of course unable to do, inasmuch as it would work a great extension of the system of dual voting.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had stated that the dual vote was a great anomaly, and yet that he was going to vote for it. [Mr. Anderson: No, no!] The hon. Member described dual voting as an anomaly. If that was so, why not do something to cure or diminish it? The Prime Minister said this was an anomaly which had always existed; and, therefore, as it was proposed to disfranchise nobody, it was necessary to maintain it. But what had the Committee been doing during the greater part of yesterday? The right hon. Gentleman told them that they were defending the property qualifications which had hitherto existed; but the fact was, they had been destroying some of the oldest property qualifications. When the right hon. Gentleman told the Committee that he must maintain all the property qualifications as they existed, he was for maintaining that which, according to the hon. Member for Glasgow, was a most absurd and anomalous qualification; and he (Lord John Manners) ventured to say that the argument had been used in total forgetfulness of what he had been doing during the greater part of yesterday. This Bill, when it was introduced, was recommended to the House principally on the ground that it was to terminate a system of anomalies; the principal anomaly to be abolished by it being that of the working man, who was a householder living inside the boundary of a borough, finding himself in possession of a vote; whereas his fellow working man outside the borough was not in possession of one. That was understood to be the anomaly which it was the intention of the Bill to get rid of; and his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) now turned to the Government, and said—"If you pass the Bill as it stands, you will be perpetuating an anomaly which my Amendment proposes to get rid of." What harm would be done by the adoption of the Amendment of his hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman had not pointed out anything in the nature of an inconvenience that would result; he simply said with his usual dexterity—"You are going to give the double vote to the working man who is the owner of the cottage in which he lives outside the borough." He believed his hon. Friend might be right in the interpretation of his own clause; but, as he (Lord John Manners) read it, he thought that the man living in his own cottage outside the borough would be able to obtain two votes, and he thought it a good thing that he should have them. Therefore, if the clause was read a second time, he should support the Prime Minister by formulating a clause which would undoubtedly give the franchise to men of the deserving class referred to. But what the Prime Minister really wished to do was to maintain every anomaly in the existing system which could operate against property, while he was indifferent to the representation of property, whether it was held by a working man of industry and intelligence, or by a large-acre'd squire. The property qualification was evidently a disqualification in the eyes of Her Majesty's Government; and so this Bill would go from the House with all its sins of omission and commission upon its head, and yet not in a form which would remove the anomalies which at present characterized our electoral system.

MR. HICKS said, he thought that the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) must have satisfied every Member of the Committee that the Bill was not likely to be acceptable to the people of Scotland. But if he understood the hon. Member correctly, whilst he objected to the freeholder in the borough having two votes, he did not object to his having one—he understood him to say that freeholders in the Scottish boroughs voted for those boroughs. Now, he asked the Government, seeing that they resisted the very reasonable Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), whether they would adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for Glasgow, and allow those freeholders who were not occupiers to vote for the borough?

MR. TOMLINSON said, there was one point which had been almost disregarded throughout these discussions, and that was how the country was best to be represented? They had had an argument that he thought went beyond those which had hitherto been put forward by hon. Members in support of this Bill. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Anderson) said that he was in favour of the one-vote principle; but such a principle would never obtain acceptance on that side of the House. A House of Commons elected on such a basis could not fairly and properly represent the interests of the country. He had been told by several Englishmen who visited the United States last year that responsible and influential people in all parts of the United States deplored the fact that numbers alone formed the basis of representation in that country; and said that it would be worth a great deal to devise some kind of representation which did not depend entirely upon numbers. If they laid down the principle that every householder was entitled to be represented as an occupier, they ought, at the same time, to adopt the corresponding principle that every man who had property should have a vote in right of his property. He believed that by amending the Bill in the form proposed by the hon. Member for Preston, they would be doing something to postpone the arrival of the day when numbers alone would overwhelm the Representatives of all other interests in the country.

MR. ECROYD said, he was advised that his Amendment, as it stood, would really give a double vote to the man who was the owner of a house in which he lived. And he entirely and gladly adopted that principle, because it must be evident to all who had heard his previous remarks that it would more effectually realize what he had at heart than the more limited effect of the Amendment as he had understood it. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) spoke of the abolition of an invidious anomaly; but he would like to point out that what the hon. Member proposed was to abolish an invidious anomaly, as he called it, by sweeping away absolutely the broad distinction which existed between provident and improvident persons. That would be to go against the view taken by most intelligent men in this country, and in those foreign countries which had, unfortunately for themselves, tried the experiment. It happened to him, since he had the honour of a seat in that House, to meet a distinguished American Judge, who said, in conversation upon a matter germane to the present question—"Abolish, if you will, all distinction between rich and poor in your political system; but never abolish the distinction between the provident and improvident classes." He felt bound to go to a Division upon the clause, which he believed to be in the interest of a large and important and most worthy class of working men. He could not for one moment agree with the assertion of the Prime Minister, that it would have a very small effect even had it given no ownership vote to a man in right of a house occupied by himself, because he had always observed that when a man became owner of one house, he almost always went on saving money and became the owner of more than one.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT said, it was impossible for him to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd). The argument he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had used throughout the discussion on this Bill, to which he greatly objected, was that, if possible, they ought to extend the influence of property in such a manner that the great addition to the electorate in counties under the Bill should be in some measure corrected. The Amendment of his hon. Friend was a proposal to transfer the property qualification from the county to the borough. It proposed that a man who was an occupier in a borough and who was also an occupier in the county should have a double vote for the borough and lose his vote for the county. Now, he could not consent to a proposal by which the influence of the county in which he had an interest would be in any way diminished. They were likely to be overwhelmed in counties by an enormous addition of household suffrage votes; and, therefore, he held that they were bound to see that the influence of property was in every way protected. The Amendment of his hon Friend would tend to weaken the county influence; and, therefore, he regretted to be compelled to withhold his support from that Amendment, which his hon. Friend, no doubt, brought forward with the very best motives.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* Ayes 122; Noes 236: Majority 114.—(Div. List, No 115.)

The CHAIRMAN: I have considered the next clause, which is in the name of the hon. Member for Penryn (Mr. Brett), and which proposes that a degree at a University shall not confer a vote. There is no graduate of a University who votes by reason of a degree except for his own University; and therefore the effect of this clause would be to disfranchise the University. The clause is, in my opinion, clearly out of place here, and would more properly find its place in a measure for the redistribution of seats. The next clause stands in the name of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson); and it proposes that a constituency shall have a claim on the services of the Member elected, and that such Member, if absent for three months, may be summoned to attend, and on failure for one month more a new Writ may be issued. It seems to me that that Amendment has no reference whatever to the question of franchise, and is therefore out of Order. The next new clause in the name of the hon. Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper) would repeal the Ballot Act, and that is also out of Order.

Mr. BRYCE, in moving, as an Amendment, after Clause 7, to insert the following Clause:—

(Term of residence to be six months.)

"In sub-section two of section three, and in sub-sections two and three of section four, and in sub-section two of section six of 'The Representation of the People Act, 1867,' and in section twenty-seven of the Act of the Session of the second and third years of the reign of King William the Fourth, chapter forty-five, and in sub-section two of section three, and in sub-sections two and three of section four, and in sub-section two of sub-section six of 'The Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868,' and in section eleven of the Act of the

Session of the second and third years of the reign of King William the Fourth, chapter sixty-five, and in sub-sections two and three of section four of 'The Representation of the People (Ireland) Act, 1868,' and in sections one and five of the Act of the Session of the thirteenth and fourteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter sixty-nine, the words 'six months,' shall be substituted for the words 'twelve months,'"

said, it did not require many words of explanation. It proposed that the term of residence necessary to give an electoral qualification should be reduced from 12 to six months. This restriction was imposed by many statutes; but, without going through them, he would ask the Committee to take it from him that in all those Acts the term of 12 months was fixed as the term during which premises must be occupied in order to give a man the franchise. He wished to ask the Committee what was gained by having that term of 12 months? It rendered the acquirement of the franchise much more difficult than a term of six months would; it raised a number of difficult questions, and it gave rise to great dissatisfaction. It served no useful purpose; it did not operate to keep off the Register any incapable citizens. It merely took away, so to speak, at random, from certain persons political rights they would otherwise enjoy; and he could not find that, in the various discussions that had taken place on the subject, it had ever been alleged that any principle was involved in the period of 12 months. Then it had the further disadvantage of making the time required for gaining the franchise much more than 12 months. Practically, in most cases, it made the time two or two and a-half years. Suppose a man entered into the occupation of premises as a householder or lodger in this present June, he would not be entitled to be put on the Register until July, 1885, and would not be entitled to vote at any election held before January, 1886. Therefore he would be a year and a-half on the premises before he could exercise the franchise. That was putting the case in the most favourable way; but if, instead of entering the premises in June, he entered in August, he would not be able to vote until January, 1887, and therefore he would have to wait two years and six months before he could vote. He submitted that there was no reason for requiring such a long term of residence. The period must be a year and a-half, and might be two years and six months, and nothing was gained by requiring such a long period. Then, again, that provision, while it applied equally to householders and lodgers, imposed a greater hardship on lodgers than on householders, because they were under other disadvantages from which householders were exempt. A lodger had to make a fresh claim every year; but the householder had not; hence there were very few lodgers on the Register compared with the number which should be on. Speaking for his own constituency, in which there were 43,000 voters, there were only about 300 lodgers on the Register, instead of, as there would be with a self-acting Register and a six months' residence, some 4,000 or 5,000. In Glasgow he was informed that there were, out of 68,000 voters, only 1,300 lodgers; and in Edinburgh, out of 20,000 voters, only 52 were lodgers. The same thing, he believed, would be found true of nearly all the large towns. In fact, the lodger franchise was a delusion at present, and there must be a totally different machinery for putting lodgers on the franchise if that franchise was to be a reality. He submitted the clause to the Committee on these grounds, and finally on that of the inconvenience the present system caused to county voters; because in the counties the tenancies frequently commenced early in August, and the effect of that was that the county voters could not come on the Register for two and a-half years. This formed a special reason for dealing with the matter in the present Bill. It might be contended that this was a matter belonging to registration; but the Committee would observe that all the Acts in which 12 months' residence was required were not Registration Acts, but Acts of the class to which this Bill belonged. He hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would raise no objection, because they had so often professed themselves during these debates to be in favour of extending the franchise. At the same time, although he felt bound to urge this Amendment in the interests of a large constituency in which this evil was keenly felt, he should not be surprised to find that in the view of the Government the matter had better be left to be dealt with as part of a Registration Bill. But he hoped, at any rate, to get some explicit declaration from the Government as to the present system, and some admission that they would recognize it to be their duty, on the first possible occasion, to deal not only with this question, but with the other difficulties connected with registration, so as to make registration, if possible, self-acting, and to extend the franchise really, as well as nominally, to a large class of Her Majesty's subjects.

Clause (Term of residence to be six months,)—(*Mr. Bryce,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) has said there is a determination on the part of the Government not to accept any Amendments from the other side of the House. Considering, however, that the Government yesterday accepted Amendments from the hon. and learned Member himself, and from the hon. and learned Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton), I felt that that was a cruel and cutting remark coming from that hon. and learned Member. What he seems to desire is, that we should make good our consistency by refusing some Amendment from this side of the House; and that is what I am about to do. My hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce) has shown, unanswerably, I think, that the lodger franchise is inefficient, owing to the provisions of the law; and he proposes to mitigate the case by reducing the term of residence from 12 to six months. I think my hon. and learned Friend has indicated that, in his own mind, he is not prepared to argue very strongly that this question is one for a Franchise Bill, so much as for a Registration Bill. I hold that it is a question for registration. I agree with my hon. and learned Friend —and I am prepared to go even somewhat further than he does, and to say it is very difficult to justify so long a term as 12 months, even with regard to the ordinary voter. Therefore, this is a very proper question to be considered when we come to consider registration. I am told by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who has considered this question very much, that he conceives that it can be shown that the average term of provisional qualification to get on the Register is two years and one month over a whole constituency. It is clear, therefore, that the apprenticeship must be a very long one before voters are allowed to proceed to the discharge of the duties for which we have chosen them. All that is most proper matter for consideration when we come to deal with the subject of registration; but my hon. and learned Friend will not, I hope, press us on the present occasion. We adhere to the view we have laid before the Committee, and we are most reluctant to overcharge the Bill with extraneous matter; and both on that ground, and because we are able to offer no grudging or churlish reception to the arguments of the hon. and learned Member, and also because we hope registration will soon offer an opportunity for dealing with the subject of his proposal, I hope he will not press the Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was quite true the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had kept his word to the letter as to what the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had urged, and had not accepted this Amendment; but, after all, what did he say? He had given a shadow to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, and the substance to the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce); and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) should like to know exactly where they now stood. They, on that side of the House, had always contended that they ought to know the whole scheme of the Government, and that the whole matter practically lay in the redistribution of seats. Now he saw why it was, when, at the commencement of this Bill, the Prime Minister, in answer to an Amendment he had proposed, said he would introduce no registration into this Bill; but that that must be a matter for consideration at some other time. Now he could see why Registration Clauses were not introduced. It was because they would have revealed the new extension which the Government contemplated, and something of which the House had no notion when the Bill was introduced. No one had the slightest notion that the Prime Minister contemplated not only an extension of the franchise, but also a reduction of the term of residence. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had opened out a new view altogether. It had totally changed the aspect in which the Bill had stood before the Committee; and the speech of the Prime Minister would, he ventured to say, be read with great astonishment by the country to-morrow morning. If one might judge by the cheers with which the speech was received by hon. Members below the Gangway on the other side, it appeared that they, too, were unprepared for the announcement of the Prime Minister. They were cheers of surprise, as well as gladness, at finding that the Prime Minister contemplated anything of the kind. Probably, before they had done with the Bill, the Committee would find that eventually they were to come to manhood suffrage, because they would be told that the numbers of voters on the Register would be so enormously increased that it would not be worth while to stop short of manhood suffrage. But there was one question of fact he should like to ask the Prime Minister. They were told, when the Bill was introduced, that it would enfranchise 2,000,000 of people. He would like to know whether, in making that calculation, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister took into consideration the reduction in the term of residence, or whether, by the reduction of the term of residence, from 12 to six months the 2,000,000 was to be increased by another 1,000,000? That was a question to which the Committee had a right to demand an answer.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he did not think it made much difference whether, when they were going to enfranchise 2,000,000 of people, they enfranchised persons after six months, or one, two, or three years' residence. The proposed reduction of the term of residence would not add more than 10 or 15 per cent to any constituency in the Kingdom. He was not in favour of the Bill; but he thought that, when they had degraded all the constituencies of the country by having adopted so low a suffrage as household suffrage, it would be like straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel if they were to make much ado of this proposal. He remembered that, in the Bill of 1867, one of the so-called security clauses was that providing for a two years' residence. That bubble, however, had since burst. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that this was not the time or the place to consider this very important question, because it ought to be considered with a much larger question — the question of the municipal suffrage. At present, there was the same suffrage for both Parliamentary and municipal purposes—a man was required to be of 12 months' residence before he could vote at either a Parliamentary or municipal election; and, therefore, it was at once seen that a large question was involved, which ought to be kept totally distinct from a Bill of this kind.

MR. ANDERSON said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), in discussing this Amendment, was very careful to abstain from saying whether he approved or disapproved of an extension of the lodger franchise. He (Mr. Anderson) would like to hear what was the opinion of the Conservative Party upon this question. Were they prepared to say that the lodger franchise was now in an unsatisfactory state; were they prepared to say that the large mass of the lodgers of this country were not a class who ought to be enfranchised? In his opinion, and he believed in that of his constituents, they were a class eminently deserving of the franchise. A very large number of them were young men, from 21 to 30 or 35 years of age, the very men who would be the backbone of the constituencies in a few years' time. At present, the law placed a great many difficulties in the way of lodgers enjoying the franchise; and, therefore, it ought to be amended. He was quite satisfied with the views of the Prime Minister on this question; the right hon. Gentleman was all right upon it; he wished they knew that the Conservative Party held the same views. Seeing, however, that it had been decided by the Government that the question was not a suitable one to discuss on the present occasion, as it might dangerously load the Bill, he thought his hon. aad learned Friend (Mr. Bryce) would do well to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. GRANTHAM said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) had scarcely done justice to his subject. Assuming that, at the present time, men were disfranchised for the time they had to wait until they got on the Register, the hon. and learned Gentleman had forgotten that when once on the Register, although they might have left their qualification, they were entitled to vote for a considerable time. According to the Act of 1867, if a man was entitled to be put on the Register, and was put on the Register, he was entitled to vote during the whole of the next term, though directly after he was registered he might have given up his residence and gone to live hundreds of miles away. The only question put to him when he presented himself to vote was—"Are you A. B., whose name appears on the Register as entitled to vote for such and such a place?" An occupier could vote in respect of his old residence during the time that he was kept off the Register in respect of his new residence. If the Amendment were accepted in the Registration Bill, it would make little difference, so that the objections of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) were, to a certain extent, groundless.

Mr. BRYCE said, he was quite aware of the fact pointed out by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Grantham). Having regard to the general sense of the Committee, and especially to what had been said by the First Lord of the Treasury, he thought he would best consult the wishes of the Committee if he asked leave to withdraw the Amendment. He desired, at the same time, to express his satisfaction at the declaration of the Government, which would be received with pleasure in many large boroughs as a pledge on their part to reduce the present term of residence at the earliest possible moment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *negatived.*

The CHAIRMAN: The next two new clauses stand in the names of the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Coleridge Kennard) and the hon. Member for Plymouth (Mr. Stewart Macliver), and they propose to enfranchise constables. Now, the matters which are involved in these clauses are matters of public policy; and they cannot, in my opinion, be properly dealt with in Committee on this Bill, which is a Bill for the assimilation of the borough and county franchise, unless the Committee were instructed by the House to deal with them. I am confirmed in this opinion by the consideration that the Acts of Parliament which these clauses, or rather the clause of the hon. Member for Plymouth (Mr. Stewart Macliver) proposes to repeal, are not Acts of Parliament which relate at all to the representation of the people. I would, however, remind both hon. Members that they will have an opportunity of bringing up these clauses on Report.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I think you stated, Mr. Chairman, that this Bill is a Bill for the assimilation of the county and borough franchise. I beg to draw your attention to the title of the Bill, which is, "Representation of the People Bill." It is quite clear that persons holding office under the Crown, whether they be constables or Ministers of the Crown, are a portion of the people of the United Kingdom.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: On the same point of Order, may I point out that not only is the Bill called the "Representation of the People Bill," but it is entitled "a Bill to amend the law relating to the representation of the people of the United Kingdom." There is no Preamble.

The CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) have correctly stated what is the title of the Bill. But under the present Rule we have to consider the subject-matter of the Bill, and not the title only; and that subject-matter is the assimilation of the county and borough franchise. I have carefully considered this matter, and it is needless to assure the Committee that I have had the advantage of advice upon it. I am of opinion that this question ought to be raised on Report rather than in Committee.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD: May I express the disappointment which will be felt——

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry I cannot allow the hon. Gentleman to speak upon the clause.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS: Upon the point of Order, may I ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether the House would not have the power, when the Speaker returns to the Chair, to ask him to pronounce an opinion on this question—to say whether these clauses were not within the province of the Committee to consider?

THE CHAIRMAN: As far as I am informed, the Speaker would not undertake the duty of differing from the decision I have felt it my duty to give.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: You have said, Sir, that these clauses deal with a matter of public policy, and that the subject-matter of the Bill is merely the assimilation of the county and borough franchise. On those grounds you would not allow questions affecting the representation of the police force to be brought into the Bill. I ask you, Sir, whether, under your ruling, it is not absolutely impossible for the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) to move his new clause, because it is quite clear that that clause deals with one of the most grievous matters of public policy that can be imagined. It is not in the least involved in the assimilation of the county and borough franchise; and, therefore, I submit that, according to your ruling, the hon. Gentleman cannot move his clause.

MR. WOODALL: On the point of Order raised by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), perhaps I may be permitted to say that I took the opportunity of consulting Mr. Speaker on this question, and he informed me that it was not necessary to instruct the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am of opinion that the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) will be in Order in moving the clause which stands in his name. I would point out to the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) that there is a great difference between the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke and the clauses suggested by the hon. Member for Plymouth (Mr. Stewart Macliver) and the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Coleridge Kennard). They propose to deal with the disqualification which the State has imposed on certain persons; but the hon. Member for Stoke proposes, on the contrary, a clause for the enfranchisement of a large number of persons.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I point out to you that the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) proposes also to deal with the disqualification which, at present, attaches to a certain class of persons?

MR. GLADSTONE: The decision of the Speaker has been distinctly given on this question. The Speaker has been asked by the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) whether he should bring his Motion forward as an Instruction to the Committee, and my hon. Friend was told that he need not bring his Motion forward as an Instruction, because it was competent for him to propose it in Committee.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I should not have raised the objection at all had it not been for the ruling of the Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: The disqualifications under which the persons contemplated by the clauses of the hon. Members for Plymouth and Salisbury (Mr. Stewart Macliver and Mr. Coleridge Kennard) labour are disqualifications imposed by a series of statutes. The hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) proposes a clause to confer the franchise on a large number of persons. I am of opinion, therefore, he is in Order.

MR. WOODALL, in rising to move the following clause:—

(Extension of suffrage to women.)

"For all purposes connected with, and having reference to, the right to vote at Parliamentary elections, words in the Representation of the People Acts importing the masculine gender include women."

said: I have to ask the indulgence of the Committee while I submit the clause of which I have given Notice, though I do not think it will be necessary to trespass long upon that indulgence. I feel I need the indulgence of the Committee, because, while I am very strongly impressed with the justice of the case I am about to urge, I am aware I have to submit it to the Committee under peculiar and exceptional difficulties, which are attributable to the reluctance of many of those who, for many years, have earnestly supported the proposal, to do anything opposed to the strong desire of the Government to pass the Franchise Bill as originally brought in. I do not think that any of us can reasonably find fault with the Government for not having incorporated in their own Bill the proposal which I am about to submit. They are very properly the best judges of tactics and procedure; but, on the other hand, I feel that those who take an earnest interest in this subject have no alternative before them but to bring it under the notice of Parliament at the present moment. Foes and friends alike would reproach them if, upon an occasion like this, they failed to assert that which they believed to be perfectly consistent with the fundamental principle of this Bill. The supporters of this question have made that belief very clear for some time past. Twelve months ago 110 habitual supporters of the Government signed a Memorial, in which they stated that no Bill of this kind would be complete which did not recognize the rights of female as well as male householders. It is perfectly true that in the Division taken upon the abstract Resolution submitted to the House shortly afterwards a majority of the House voted against the Resolution. That majority, however, it must be remembered, was a very small one—namely, 16; while, in the previous Division on the same question, there was a hostile majority of 116. May I refer also to the fact that the Conference of Liberal Associations held at Leeds, under the presidency of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), a Conference which has been repeatedly referred to in the course of these debates as being peculiarly influential and representative, and a Conference whose decisions have been in the main adopted by the Government, passed a resolution strongly in support of the Motion I am now submitting to the Committee. Under these and other circumstances with which I need not trouble the Committee, as I have said, there has been in the minds of those who feel strongly upon this question no alternative but to press it as earnestly and as zealously as they can, in spite of the discouragement with which they have been confronted. This question has really been before the country for a comparatively short period. I suppose its Parliamentary history may be said to date no further back than the discussion on the last Reform Bill, when that distinguished man, Mr. John Stuart Mill, submitted Resolutions which, if adopted, would have had the effect that I now desire to bring about. No one who has watched the course of public opinion on this subject will hesitate to say that there has been a remarkable and very strong growth of public opinion in its favour. The time has long since gone by when the proposal to enfranchise women was received with derision. There is no longer any necessity for me to trouble the House with abstract or philosophical reasons in favour of the proposal. We have heard from the very highest authority in the House that it is within the scope of this Bill—that it is not extraneous to the proposals before the House—and I was particularly gratified to hear that that was the case, and to find that there was no necessity for troubling the House with a Motion by way of an Instruction to the Committee, or of taking any action during the progress of the clauses for which the Government themselves are directly responsible, since that might have seemed, in some degree, hostile to the Bill itself. I rejoice, as do all those with whom I am in the habit of acting, and all those who are earnestly anxious to see the franchise extended, at the progress made last night, and that we to-day are free to make suggestions without being open to the charge of wishing, in the slightest degree, to impede the conduct of the Bill in the hands of the Government. Indeed, everyone who has followed the arguments by which this large scheme of enfranchisement has been commended to the House must have felt that those arguments were, all of them, equally applicable to women as to the men whom it is proposed to enfranchise. Every axiom that has been quoted has had, at least, equal force in that direction; and the very terms in which the Bill was specially commended to the House in that remarkable speech in which the Prime Minister introduced it has strengthened, as it appears to me, the case in favour of my Motion. The Prime Minister reminded us that the principle and central idea of the Bill was to give to every householder the franchise. He said—"The householder is just as much a householder, and has just as much the responsibility of a householder, whether"—and I wish he had gone on to say—"whether male or female." It will be my duty this afternoon to urge some considerations which I hope will have the effect of persuading the Committee that female householders are essentially "capable citizens," satisfying the conditions which have been so clearly laid down in the definitions of this Bill. In those important debates on this subject which preceded the passing of the Act of 1867, I think in the debate on the Motion of Sir Edward Baines in 1865, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister declared that the onus of proof rested on those who were opposed to enfranchisement; and I think I must, particularly on this occasion, plead that to be strictly the case. But I am endeavouring to address myself to the objections which have been raised. The objections raised to this enfranchisement are, on examination, found not to be numerous, or, if I may respectfully say so, in my judgment not very forcible. We are told that women should be kept to the domestic sphere; that they are impressionable and emotional, and that they are not to be trusted, therefore, to form a deliberate judgment upon public affairs. There is another objection that has been raised, and which I should not venture to give so much significance to, but that it was very forcibly stated in that very eloquent address with which my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General closed the debate on this Motion last year—that address which will be remembered as singularly forcible and eloquent, but which also conveyed to the House a very strong sense of the earnestness with which the hon. and learned Gentleman was actuated. He told us that women could not be soldiers; that they could not serve in the defence of their country, or of public order, in cases of emergency. Well, Sir, I think it would not be difficult to find cases in which women have, in cases of great emergency, shown heroism even in the art and practice of war. I suppose Boadicea, and Joan of Arc, and the Maid of Saragossa, may be mentioned as amongst these. But I should like to know how the principle of the Government with regard to this Bill being a measure of enfranchisement and not of disfranchisement would apply, if they were to require the test of physical fitness for military service to qualify for the exercise of a vote? If that test were applied to many hon. Gentlemen sitting near me, they would be disfranchised. I am perfectly certain of this—that if, in framing the Register, any such test were to be applied, it would be a very large measure of disfranchisement indeed. But, Sir, the irony of the argument appears to me to be that those who are qualified for military service are just those who are not enfranchised. The soldier and the sailor find that a grateful country recognizes their services in various ways, but never by giving them the opportunity, as soldiers and sailors, of voting. On the other hand, the clergy, who are not expected to fight, are commonly and generally enabled to vote. I think, therefore, we may dismiss that consideration of physical unfitness as not worthy of serious argument. Is it not true that, in everything relating to war and defence of the country, women equally with men have their sphere? They pay their share of the taxes, out of which the military service is found. More than that, they play a very important part in wars as non-combatants — in nursing the sick and wounded, and in various other ways peculiarly consistent with their sex, but which, none the less, are valuable and serviceable to the cause. Well, I feel there is great force in all that has been said with regard to the proper position of women in contributing to the comforts and charms and attractiveness of home life; but I think a serious consideration of this branch of the subject will show that that argument may be pressed too far. Women have been too long made to regard marriage as their solitary vocation. [*Laughter.*] I must confess I do not understand the amusement which has taken possession of the Committee. I say women have been too long required to regard marriage as their one vocation, and to neglect that training which would enable them to bear their part in life, when left—as so large a proportion of women are—to fight the battle of life without the aid of a companion. Sir, I am happy to think that this theory, which has led to very many of our most serious social difficulties, is being abandoned. I am glad to think that, in face of the remarkable figures which were included in the Census of 1871, this theory is less popular. If I am right in my information, the Census of 1871 set forth that nearly 3,000,000 of unmarried women in England alone are gaining their livelihood by their own exertions, and managing their own affairs; while 800,000 married women, with their husbands alive, are engaged in occupations by which they earn money. I am sorry that the manner in which the Census of 1881 has been prepared does not give me an opportunity of giving comparative figures bearing upon this; but that Census is remarkable, as it shows how, in many occupations, the number of women earning a separate livelihood has largely increased. The army of female teachers, for instance, has increased in 10 years from 94,000 to 123,000. The number of milliners and dressmakers has increased from 290,000 to 357,000; and, without troubling the Committee with further figures, perhaps the Committee will accept my word that similar statistics might be quoted with regard to a great many occupations, including many of a comparatively novel kind. The Committee must bear in mind that all women engaged in this praiseworthy effort to earn an independent livelihood are seriously handicapped in their competition with men. They are rarely able in the same class of work, or by the same amount of work, to earn anything like the same amount of wages that are given to men. They are generally, of course, physically, or from various other reasons, unfit, or not qualified, to earn as much as men, or do the same amount of work; but where their work is of a comparatively equal quality, they are not able to earn the same wages, and yet they are bound to bear the same local and national burdens without any difference. They are handicapped in earnings with, at least, equal responsibilities. I think it would not be difficult to show the Committee that these women are law-abiding and law-supporting citizens; but, so far, they have no part in the Constitutional theory of our Government in making the laws which they thus so loyally obey. Surely, then, it does not need many more words to show that these women are eminently "capable citizens," and worthy of recognition by the Committee. I have said that 17 years have not been a long time for a question of this importance to have been in progress; but I ask the Committee to look what a remarkable progress it has been. Women have now secured, very much by their own exertions, a better recognition of the necessity of elementary teaching of education in every grade, and they have recently obtained the very highest certificate of recognition from the Universities. May I not, also, in passing, speak of the large number of women who are engaged in literature, and whose writings display a remarkable knowledge of the world, and many of whom contribute largely indeed to our knowledge and to our study of political questions? The House has recently been engaged in the consideration of a very important subject bearing upon the social condition and industrial dwellings of the poor. Lord Shaftesbury has stated that within his own experience the condition of our poorer fellow-subjects, bad as it is to-day, has been enormously improved; and he has stated that, in his judgment, it would have been impossible for that improvement to have been brought about without the active help and the intelligent co-operation of women workers who have given themselves up to it. The mention of the name of Miss Octavia Hill in connection with this subject relieves me of the necessity of saying anything further to the Members of this House, many of whom know that she has secured the services of an army of workers, many of them women of the highest rank, and all of them of refined and cultivated natures. An equally important subject, perhaps, but one not very attractive, is that with regard to nursing, and the sanitary state of our hospitals and of our Army. Miss Florence Nightingale, surely, has rendered services which entitle her to be regarded as a "capable citizen" in this regard. A still less attractive subject is that of the discipline of our prisons and the reformatory agencies, directed to those who have formed habits of crime, with which the name of Mary Carpenter has been identified. Perhaps I may be permitted, in the presence of many hon. Members who feel deeply on the temperance question, to refer to the active work of a woman—Miss Robinson—in promoting temperance among soldiers. I only mention these things, not as being in themselves novel, as they must naturally suggest themselves to those who give attention to the subject; but I want to show the Committee how utterly impossible and impracticable any of these reforms would have been if the ideal of "domesticity" had been accepted by the women who have worked so well, and if there was any truth in the saying that a perfect woman is born to "suckle fools and chronicle small beer." If this ideal of "cloistered seclusion," which is fatal to all public work, were to prevail, not only would there be a loss of "capable citizens," but the general commonwealth would have seriously suffered. It is said — "Why bring women of this kind into the vortex of Party politics?" Well, I think it would not be difficult to show that the addition of the leaven of such "capable citizens" as these would dignify and elevate political life. It may be true, and it is often said, that women are indifferent to this proposal, or are hostile to it. I admit the truth of that, especially amongst women of easy circumstances—of whose opinions Members of this House are most likely to be familiar. But, I should like to ask, how many women in any social position are aware of the operation of laws prejudicial to their sex until they are actually touched themselves, or by some near relatives, by experience of them? How many happy women, for instance, revelling in the pleasures of their comfortable homes, know that they are not entitled to the custody of their own children? How many such women know that, even after the death of their husbands, the control of their children may be taken away from them? I venture to think that when the attention of women is called to some of these subjects, they will reconsider their hostility in regard to their power of determining legislation affecting their own sex. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), speaking on the second reading of this Bill, referred to the actual disadvantage which the agricultural labourers and the poorer population have suffered from the fact of their not having had any voice in the election of Members of Parliament. He spoke of the manner in which common lands, and lands bordering on the public highways, have been filched from them; and he spoke of the diversion of educational and other charities to aims other than those to which they should have been devoted. I will not enter into a consideration of the policy of recent educational schemes bearing upon old endowments. I should not, perhaps, altogether agree with the view expressed by the right hon. Gentleman; but I think it will be at least equally easily recognized by the Committee that women have suffered in regard to those old educational charities most shamefully and most conspicuously. In regard to the ancient educational charities of the country, to which boys and girls were equally entitled, the girls have been pushed aside. I do not know whether there has been any change in the policy of the management of Christ's Hospital; but, so far back as 1867, Mr. Mill quoted it as showing a case where boys and girls had equal rights, and yet where 1,100 boys had received a liberal education, and only 26 girls had received an education, which has been acknowledged to be not liberal. With regard to the employment of women under the various Acts relating to factories and workshops, something has been said in reference to the manner in which they have been prejudiced by that legislation. I am not quite clear that such has been the case; I am perfectly willing to admit that it was not the intention of this House that it should be so. Upon another question, which the House has unfortunately had to consider, and with which my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) has been associated, and with respect to such measures as those now under the consideration of the other House for the protection of young girls, however much we may differ from the prevailing opinion attributed to women, surely the Committee must feel these are eminently questions on which women have a right to express their opinions, and upon which their opinions must be of peculiar value. Having said so much, the Committee, I think, may congratulate itself on having a certain advantage in approaching the discussion of this question now, as compared with its position 17 years ago. The case I am about to submit has been constantly strengthening. I am no longer under the necessity of submitting an hypothesis in regard to the manner in which the franchise will be used by women. In a very interesting speech made on this subject last year, the hon. and learned Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick) spoke of women being legally eligible for the office of churchwarden, overseer, sheriff, and certain other functions of a similar character; but he added—

> "I think these offices were allowed them in the past as much for the opportunity of extorting fines from them as for anything else; and if we find, as a matter of fact, that they never do hold such offices, what are we to think?"—(3 *Hansard*, [281] 688.)

But I find that even within the past few months—within the present year—a lady has been appointed to the office of overseer in the parish of Counthorpe, in

Lincolnshire; while another lady, Mrs. Gosset—a name well known and honoured in this House—has been elected churchwarden in a parish in Wales. In 1869 an Act was passed, which removed some existing anomalies, and confirmed, in the main, the partial usage which had anciently prevailed. The Act was extended to Scotland, through the action of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron); but no such provision has yet been applied to Ireland. Under a clause in the Act of 1869, couched in terms practically identical with those I am now submitting to the Committee, women householders, spinsters, and widows, vote exactly as men. There can be no use in my troubling the Committee with evidence as to how that vote has been used. Hon. Members, in the course of the debate, can give their own experience. For my own part, I can only say that I have been a candidate for a School Board, and a candidate for a Town Council; and I frankly state to the Committee that there has been no difference coming within my observation between women householders, as a class, and men householders, as regards the manner in which they have used the vote. The women electors have been actuated very much by the same views and the same prejudices, if you will, as the men electors of their own rank. But the Committee may be spared the time and trouble of any vindication of the women householders in that respect, because I find it most amply and sufficiently afforded in the Bill lately submitted to the House by the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), for the constitution of a Metropolitan Parliament in which will sit the representatives of 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 of people—a nation in themselves—and in the election of which women householders will vote as well as men. I am told also that women may be Councillors, and that we may possibly live to see a woman Lord Mayor. So much for Town Councils and their ever-extending responsibilities—for the Committee will bear in mind how constantly the duties of Municipal Councils have been enlarged, and how they will probably be further enlarged by modern legislation. No less important than the experience we have had under the Act of 1869 is the experience we have had under the Education Act of 1870, which, as everyone knows, gave not only the right of voting to women, but gave them the right to be elected and to sit as members of school boards. Again, no more difficult matter, as it appears to me, requires the careful attention and thought of those who are called upon to act as the representatives of the ratepayers than the administration of the Poor Law. It is full, as we all must know, of the most dangerous and delicate problems. If, then, women are the shallow and hysterical creatures the opponents of my proposal are fond of describing them, surely their position on Boards of Guardians would be most perilous and detrimental. But what is the fact? It is found that their natural benevolence is so much tempered by sagacity and prudence, that they are not only elected from time to time to those offices; but the Local Government Board, on its own responsibility, nominates such qualified women, in some places, to bear their part in guiding and advising and acting with the elected members of Boards of Guardians? Women have always voted for members of Board of Guardians. They can be elected on them, and they have acted, when elected, in the way I have described. What more does the Committee want to show that women are "capable citizens?" I know there are some who have said that, even conceding the right of women to vote and bear a part in the conduct of local affairs, the Parliamentary franchise remains distinct, and is a totally different matter. Now, I may, perhaps, instance, for the benefit of the Committee, some cases where the Constitution has given to women the right of political voting. In some of the territories of the United States, women have possessed and exercised the political franchise. There is, of course, the usual conflicting testimony as to the manner in which they have used it; but, having carefully examined the evidence on both sides, I have come to the conclusion that, on the whole, woman suffrage in the United States has worked eminently satisfactorily. The Queen has signified her gracious Assent to a measure which has given women freeholders in the Isle of Man this right—a right which, I am told, they have, so far, exercised satisfactorily. But we are not accustomed to take our materials from foreign places. I place my reliance much more confidently on the experience we have had in every department of local life. One difficulty which existed when this question was discussed on the Motion of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright), in 1871, has been happily removed. Something was said about the turmoil of public elections; and the Prime Minister on that occasion, in a remarkable speech, spoke very confidently of the change which would come in regard to determining the question of the right and expediency of female voting if secret voting were adopted. Secret voting has been adopted—I imagine to the satisfaction of all those who formerly advocated it. ["No, no!"] Notwithstanding that contradiction, I have not yet heard that anyone who advocated the Ballot is now prepared, after experience of its working, to change his belief. Hon. Gentlemen who contradict me probably never were advocates of the Ballot. Then, we are told this concession is not wanted by those to whom it is proposed to give it. Well, I invite the Committee to say what evidence will satisfy them on such a subject? We have had a very considerable number of perfectly spontaneous and very influential Petitions presented in favour of this proposal. Public meeting have been held throughout the country in its support—meetings equal in number and in the interest they have excited to the meetings held on behalf of any similar movement. Indeed, strongly as I am in favour of giving the vote to the agricultural labourers, and much as I appreciate the zeal and energy with which their agitation has been conducted, I am bound to say that I think the meetings that have been held in favour of woman suffrage have been generally larger and more influential than those held on behalf of the agricultural labourers. Then, you have had resolutions from Municipal Corporations and public bodies of different kinds, and from Liberal Associations. I was told in the Lobby, last night, that a very influential Member of the Government had received Memorials from Associations of both political Parties in the borough he represents, requesting him to support the proposal I am submitting. But these things are small in importance compared with the actual experience of woman suffrage in the Municipalities, and the manner in which it is exercised. Under the Ballot Act, as hon. Members know, we are not now able to give an analysis of such voting; but an analysis made just before that Act was passed went to confirm the view that women vote very much in the same way as men. We heard a great deal in 1867—and remarks of a similar kind have been frequently echoing since—about "an invading army;" but those on whose behalf we are asking for this right are really our own flesh and blood, our mothers and sisters—not to speak of our cousins and our aunts. In the main, they are governed by the same considerations as ourselves. We are told that women are subject to such an extent to clerical influence that they are not to be trusted with the responsibility of a vote. I can bear my testimony to the great influence exercised by the Church of England on the highest and the lowest of society. I also know that there is a rugged and robust kind of life, for which the Nonconformists are responsible, which may be looked to to checkmate, if the occasion should arise, the undue exercise of influence by the Church; but I have lately had an opportunity of seeing something of women who are associated together in conventual institutions; and, surely, in the convents of the Church of Rome, we might expect to find women more docile, and more subject to clerical influence, than in any other part of society. They may be so when no serious occupation is given to them; but if anyone will acquaint himself with the constitution and action of women who have undertaken important work, such as the management of reformatory schools, and industrial schools, and penitentiaries, he will find that these orders of women are Republican in their organization; and, while they recognize the authority of the clergy in their proper functions, they will not allow either the clergy themselves, or the Bishops, to intrude on the conduct of the work for which they are responsible. [Mr. NEWDEGATE dissented.] The hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) naturally shakes his head at that; but I look him straight in the face, and repeat what I have said, and I believe it will bear the test of investigation. I think I have shown the Committee that all these fears and apprehensions as to women, and their admission to the franchise are chimeras, which, like the ghosts of old, only require to be faced by the actual experience of life to be banished as so many delusions. I believe that, in a not far distant time, there will be incredulity that such a proposal as this which I have submitted should have made some hon. Members rage, and the Attorney General imagine the vain things to which he has given expression. Liberals have not been accustomed to ask in these matters how votes will be given. Our line has always been, as it was in the Bill of 1867, and in the Ballot Act, and as it is in this measure, to consider the simple question whether the right is well founded, and whether it is generally expedient for the good government and social order of the country that people should have this vote. Who in this House can answer for the agricultural labourer as to how he will use his vote? Who in this House can express himself confidently satisfied that the Irish voter, who will be brought within the Constitution, will exercise his vote in a manner altogether satisfactory. But we contend none the less earnestly for the enfranchisement of both, and experience has strengthened our confidence and belief that the growth of education and political intelligence will band these people together in intelligent support of every measure for the well-being of the country. I am pleading, to-day, not for people like those to whom I have referred—I am speaking for influential landowners, of whom, according to the Doomsday Book, one-seventh are women. I am pleading for tenant farmers, who, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which women in such a position labour, number 20,000—for those who are large employers of labour, who are influential in many ways, and who will now have to stand by if my Motion is rejected—as I hope it will not be—whilst their humblest dependents are enfranchised. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government made an appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite and to the House generally to put their trust in the people. Surely I may ask the House to trust the women. Speaking in 1871, the right hon. Gentleman, for whom, as my Leader, I have so loyal a regard, and whose words I accept with the greatest sincerity, said—

> "If it should hereafter be found possible to arrive at a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power, the man who shall attain that object, and who shall see his purpose carried onwards to its legitimate consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of our laws bearing upon the condition and welfare of women, will in my opinion be a real benefactor to his country."—(3 *Hansard*, [207] 95.)

I shall be still more gratified if the achievement of this great object should be the means of placing another leaf in the Liberal laurels, and of adding to the well-earned trophies to which the Prime Minister himself has been so justly entitled. I am reproached by some of my hon. Friends with the fact that hon. Gentlemen opposite, on this occasion, are likely to give me considerable support. I think that, although this measure is an eminently Liberal proposal, consistent with and inseparable from the Liberal programme, there may be considerations which, at this time, may specially commend it to hon. Gentlemen opposite. Short as my experience has been, I have often seen Members who sit beside me out-voted by Tory aid, called in by the Government; and I think, perhaps, our Leaders will not reproach us, on this occasion, if we find ourselves supported, to some extent, by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Then we are told that, by the passing of this Amendment, we shall imperil the Bill. Imperilling the Bill is a very serious charge to bring against us who have so long worked for it, and who are sincerely and earnestly anxious to see it pass; but we have no information given us as to where lies the peril. If, as I hope it may be, it be true that we are to receive considerable support from hon. Gentlemen opposite, I cannot imagine peril there. If it is sent to the other House, I require some further information that this Amendment will make the Bill unpalatable to noble Lords. I have endeavoured to show that the Bill is just and expedient, and it is always opportune, to quote again the words of the President of the Board of Trade, "to do the right." One word with regard to the clause itself. That clause is framed, as nearly as possible, in the language of a similar operative clause in the Municipal Corporations Act. I am told that under that clause women householders have alone the right to vote. It is quite true that it may be open to question as to the legal operation of the clause; but all I ask the

House is that, in voting for the second reading of this clause, they shall assert the general principle that no disability shall attach to those who fulfil all other qualifications and conditions by the mere fact of sex; but in Committee I shall be perfectly willing to make the point clear to those who are sceptical upon it, as to lodgers and married women. The usage has always been to accept the principle, and then to consider modifications. I very cordially thank the Committee for its indulgent attention. I have endeavoured to show that the claim I urge is right and just, I believe the concession will be wise and expedient; and I hope the House will accord its approval to my Amendment.

Clause (Extension of suffrage to women,)—(*Mr. Woodall,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: I have listened with very great interest to the speech of my hon. Friend. He has made an eloquent and able speech in favour of the enfranchisement of women, and he has opened a very wide field of discussion. He has told us himself, towards the close of his speech, that he has not made up his mind as to the final form of legislation he proposes. What he wants is that the Committee shall now consent, by assenting to the second reading of this clause, to accept what he has termed the principle of the clause; but this is a different case from a case in which the House is invited to accept the principle of a Bill. When the House accepts the principle of a Bill it has the Bill before it, and is aware of its provisions. My hon. Friend invites us to accept the principle of his clause, telling us, at the same time, that he leaves it open to us to introduce Amendments and alterations in the terms of the clause, which might most materially, even vitally, affect its application. I am not stating this by way of objection to my hon. Friend's proceeding upon its merits; I am only stating it to show that he has invited us to enter upon a new and wide field of separate legislation. There are two questions which must occur, at least to my mind, on this occasion, and which I think the Committee will agree it is our duty to entertain. One of these is the question whether women should be enfranchised; the other is the question whether that enfranchisement should be effected by a clause introduced in Committee on the present Bill. Now, on the first of these questions I have no opinion to give on the present occasion. I shall not follow my hon. Friend through the various arguments which he has made, which may, no doubt, be supported by a great deal of material urged in their favour, and which are equally open to be controverted from the opposite point of view. My hon. Friend has referred to a speech of mine. I have not recently referred to it; but, so far as my memory serves me, I am not aware of having departed from the general sentiments it embraced; and my own opinions on this subject, if I am to describe them in a very rude outline, are that this is a question of immense difficulty; that it is a question upon which nothing hasty should be done—a question which requires to be absolutely sifted to the bottom; a question which ought to be dissociated from every notion of Party, and every element of political consideration, and upon which the House can only by strict adherence to its Rules arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Now, the second question of the two I have named is that upon which I am now about to dwell. Not holding myself the most extreme views as to the first, I certainly entertain myself, and I have to declare on the part of my Colleagues, the strongest conviction that it is not fit, but unfitting, in every sense of the word, to attempt to effect this enfranchisement by the introduction of a clause in Committee on the present Bill. We have been obliged to consider the question in what way we can best serve the cause we have undertaken. My hon. Friend says that he has had no notice that the Bill would be endangered by the mode of proceeding he has adopted. I thought I had given him very distinct notice on the subject by a letter I addressed to him to-day, in answer to one I received from him this morning. Possibly it has not reached him, and I am sorry if it has not.

MR. WOODALL: I said it had not been indicated in what way the Bill would be endangered.

MR. GLADSTONE: The expression I used on the part of the Government was that the view they entertained, and the estimate they had formed, of their position, and of the difficulties by which they were surrounded, and the best means by which they may hope to attain their important end, was that it would be a breach of duty on their part to assent in any manner to the introduction of the clause of the hon. Gentleman. At the outset of the discussion on this subject, I pointed out to the House that we had a great purpose in view; but if there is one duty more than another which belongs to the Government, which it is bound to take into its own hands, and for which it is bound to assert its own responsibility—because, in fact, no one can effectually relieve it of that responsibility—that duty is to consider and determine, to the best of its power, by what means, by what arrangement of enactments, by what division of the subject, by what steps in the arrangement of the Business of the House, with what regard to the action of Parties in the country it can attain the end it professes to have in view; and if the Government, professing to desire the enfranchisement of the great mass of the people, surrenders to others the consideration and decision of all the conditions with which the enfranchisement is to be loaded, the Government betrays its duty to the country. I have said first for myself, and I have said on the part of my Colleagues, that we deprecate the introduction of new matter into this Bill. The cargo which the vessel carries is, in our opinion, a cargo as large as she can carry safely. No measure of this importance ever had one-tenth part of the difficulties and dangers to apprehend which this measure has had to apprehend from its indirect and even unavowed foes. It has been our duty to take into consideration all these propositions; and we have determined in our own mind that to reduce our proposal to a form of strict simplicity, intelligible to the country, not mixed up with a multitude of detailed proposals, not opening up new fields of discussion, which involve the introduction of motives and considerations totally new, was the mode in which we could best, and in which we could alone discharge the serious obligation that is undertaken by any Government that proposes a measure to admit 2,000,000 of persons to the franchise. On that account we have been obliged to adopt a tone which may have appeared to the House almost pedantic in its strictness, and to use every means in our power for the purpose of putting aside proposals, some of which might be meritorious on the whole, some of which might, at any rate, be entitled to full consideration. Is it possible for us to make an exception in favour of the proposal of my right hon. Friend? If we do that, we are bound to enter into a large discussion of the subject he has opened. It is no light matter. It is a very weighty matter; and if we enter into the discussion of that subject we must be prepared to go round the whole circle of topics connected with the franchise, and one by one to go through the whole details which a thorough examination of them would involve. Now, we have to consider one question above all others—the time at our disposal; and, next to that, the advantages that would be given to the avowed or unavowed opponents of this Bill by loading the proposal with regard to the extension of the franchise with matters of an extraneous character. We cannot undertake that responsibility. We will disclaim all responsibility for the measure if my hon. Friend carries the Motion he has in view. Now, at last, I hope we understand fully and clearly in what direction the danger we think lies. But this is no passionate conclusion. It is what I and my Colleagues have been driven to by the eagerness of the opposition of my hon. Friend. There are among us those who are positively friendly to the proposal of my hon. Friend in wishing it well—going, perhaps, as far as my hon. Friend in wishing it well; but it is strictly a judgment of prudence; and we have felt that if we were to maintain our ground, and to put this great proposal singly in such a way as to give it a fair chance of the judgment of Parliament, it was impossible for us to enter upon the multitude of questions which might fairly be raised in connection with the franchise, and, most certainly, it is impossible to make the proposal of my hon. Friend an exception to that. Why should we not make it an exception? In the first place, it is a very large proposal. My hon. Friend did not enter upon the consideration of the number of persons whom he proposes to enfranchise by his Amendment. I have referred to authorities upon the subject. It is impossible to arrive at anything resembling a close estimate; but it does not seem unreasonable to believe that the number of persons in the Three Kingdoms would be little short of 500,000. I am speaking of what I wish to be a moderate estimate. I will not say it will not go beyond that number; but I think I am stating it moderately when I put it at that number. Of course, if there be any truth in the argument, so persistently urged, with some limited amount of reason I admit, with regard to the disproportion of the constituencies which our large enfranchisement is going to create until accompanied by redistribution, the ground of that disproportion, which hon. Gentlemen opposite are treating as a thing totally destroying the value of the Bill, and converting it into a mischief until we have redistribution, all that disproportion would be immensely aggravated by this very large addition. I think it is not a disputable question, but is, in principle, a rule-of-three sum. But this question is one upon which my hon. Friend has exhibited a very strong feeling; and, in my opinion, it is honourable to him that he has exhibited that feeling. Every man who examines it must, I think, have a strong feeling as to the extension; but, then, it unfortunately happens that a large number of those who have examined it entertain a feeling quite as strong as that of my hon. Friend, but in precisely the opposite direction. What is the position in which the hon. Member places the Government; in which he places—I was going to say myself, but that is too insignificant a question—the position in which he places Parliament, which has to deal with this great subject, and which is watched with intense interest by the country as to the manner in which it will deal with it—in fact, the position in which he places the country itself respecting the granting of the franchise; if, in the middle of June, amidst all our difficulties connected with Public Business, he requests us to introduce into this Bill a completely new subject, upon which it is admitted men will differ profoundly, and with regard to which there is only one thing which is clear—namely, that both on one side and on the other they would be entitled to require that it should receive a full and dispassionate discussion and investigation. It is not now practicable to give it that investigation. My hon. Friend has, no doubt, surveyed the position of domestic and foreign politics. He thinks there is not a sufficient burden upon our shoulders, and so he wishes to place this additional burden upon all the rest. It is extremely flattering that he should form such an estimate of our strength; but, for our part, our judgment is more modest. We think our engagements are quite as heavy as we can discharge; and it is on that account, and not at all because I wish, in any way, to disparage either the ability of my hon. Friend or the pleas he has been enabled to make, that I hope that the Committee will decline to entertain the Amendment. This is one of those questions to which, in my mind, a sort of sacredness attaches. This is also one of those questions which it would be intolerable to mix up with purely political and Party debates. If there be a subject in the whole compass of human life and experience that is sacred, beyond all other subjects, it is the character and position of women. It is idle to say, as decisive of the question, that you have given women votes in School Board elections and for Corporations, and that they have discharged their duties well. Nothing could be fairer than that my hon. Friend should use those arguments as far as they go, and he has made very legitimate use of them to-night; but they do not decide or dispose of the question. It is quite a different question from local matters. Women are well qualified, and they have shown that they are well qualified, without derogating from the high prerogatives of their sex, which carry them far above the region wherein our controversies lie for local duties; but it is one question whether these local duties which they discharge without detriment, and with great advantage, should be put upon them; and it is another question how far it is desirable that they should be invited to come upon the same footing with men on the stormy sea of politics. I do not attempt to rule the question; but I say it is the largest social question you can possibly have raised. It is the one which you are most bound to deal with, not in an off-hand manner, but in a manner thorough and workmanlike, and corresponding to the vast responsibilities which it carries with it. It is a question which, of all others, we ought not to mix up with the political and Party issues involved in the fate of the Bill. It is not desirable that the claims of women should be denied, or that they should be adopted, because of the bearing which, at this moment, they cannot fail to have upon political and Party issues. Does my hon. Friend ask me to admit that this question deserves the fullest consideration? I give him the admission freely, and I assert strongly that it is a proper subject for consideration. Does he ask me if I wish to bind the Members of this Government, or my Colleagues in the Cabinet, with respect to the votes which they will give upon the question? Certainly not, provided only that you take the subject from the vortex of political contention. But these social considerations are considerations which cannot be trifled with; they must be dealt with carefully and solemnly, and they cannot be either too carefully or too solemnly dealt with; nor can the mass of details that the principle of this Resolution would involve be settled in a satisfactory manner in conjunction with this Bill. While, therefore, having always thought that this was a question eminently to be considered as an open question, and dealt with on its own merits; having belonged to Governments which have so treated it; belonging now to a Government which so treats it; and wishing it to be decided, when it is decided, by a free, impartial, and dispassionate judgment of Parliament, on its social and moral aspects, and not upon political considerations. I am bound to say, while thus free and open on the subject myself, that with regard to the proposal to introduce it into this Bill, I offer it the strongest opposition in my power, and I must disclaim and renounce all responsibility for the measure should my hon. Friend succeed in inducing the Committee to adopt his Amendment.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Lord John Manners*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday*.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) (NO. 15) SAINT LUKE (MIDDLESEX) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board, under the provisions of "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1867," as amended by "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868," and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parish of Saint Luke (Middlesex), *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 246.]

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes to Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

BOARD OF TRADE—CONSTITUTION AND FUNCTIONS.

OBSERVATION.

MR. MAC IVER rose, according to Notice, to call attention to the constitution and functions of the Board of Trade; and to move a Resolution, when——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock.

[INDEX.

LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

INDEX

TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXXXVIII.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

Explanation of the Abbreviations.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1^a, 2^a, 3^a, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—1*st. Div.*, 2*nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

Some subjects of debate have been classified under the following "General Headings:"—ARMY — NAVY — INDIA — IRELAND — SCOTLAND — PARLIAMENT — POOR LAW—POST OFFICE—METROPOLIS — CHURCH OF ENGLAND — EDUCATION — CRIMINAL LAW — LAW AND JUSTICE—TAXATION, under WAYS AND MEANS.

ABERDARE, Lord
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 403; *cl.* 8, 414; Report, *cl.* 5, 1161
  Public Notaries, 2R. 139

ABERDEEN, Earl of
  Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment, 2R. 146
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. 395; *add. cl.* 401; *cl.* 8, 412

ACLAND, Mr. C. T. D., *Cornwall, E. Div.*
  Customs Department—Promotions, 1774

Africa (South)—Zululand
  Questions, Mr. Guy Dawnay, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 12, 28; Questions, Sir Henry Holland; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 19, 656; Question, Sir Donald Currie; Answer, Mr. Gladstone, 676

Africa (South)—Zululand—cont.
  Native Hostilities, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 6, 1681
  Sir Henry Bulwer, Questions, Mr. Guy Dawnay; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 22, 996

Africa (West Coast)
  Administration of the British Colonies, Question, Mr. Roe; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 9, 1774
  Angra Pequena and Wallfisch Bay, Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, The Earl of Derby *May* 19, 645; Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, Earl Granville *May* 27, 1449
  The International African Association and France—Rumoured Treaty, Questions, The Earl of Fife; Answers, Earl Granville *May* 16, 529; *May* 20, 799; Question, Mr. Brown; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 22, 980

Africa (*West Coast*)—cont.
The Natives in the Congo Territory, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 15, 434

Africa (*West Coast*)—*Angra Pequena*
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for, Papers relating to the assumption by the Emperor of Germany of sovereignty over the bay and harbour of Angra Pequena, on the West Coast of Africa, and neighbouring territories" (*The Viscount Sidmouth*) *May* 12, 3; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Anderson, Mr. G., *Glasgow*
Burgh Police and Health (Scotland), 2R. 1876
Coinage Bill—Profit and Loss of Mintage, 1295
Consolidated Fund, &c. (Permanent Charges Redemption) Acts, 1873 and 1883—Commutation of the Marlborough and Penn Pensions, 667, 846, 1784
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 466, 467
Dynamite Conspiracies—The Government of the United States, 1889
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1330; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1820; *add. cl.* 1927, 1928, 1938

Army (*Questions*)
Barracks
Inverness Barracks, Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 26, 1309
Naas Barracks Drainage, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1776
Re-erection of Longford Barracks, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 15, 428

Billeting, Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 26, 1316
Examinations for Promotion, Questions, Earl Percy; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 26, 1310
Military Ballooning, Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 19, 657
Ordnance Department—Manufacture of Small Arms, Questions, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Brand *May* 27, 1470
Small Arms—Regulation Swords, Question, Mr. C. Phipps; Answer, Mr. Brand *June* 9, 1768
Religious Services for Soldiers (*Barbadoes*), Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 26, 1317
Sale of Sites at Southsea, Question, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 22, 1011
The 45th Regiment—Alleged Outrage at Athlone, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 19, 660; Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, 663
Use of Party Tunes (*Ireland*), Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 19, 657

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
Army (*India*)
Arrears of Non-Effective Army Charges, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 26, 1301
Pensions, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 26, 1295
The Indian Staff Corps, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 19, 665

Auxiliary Forces
Eligibility of Militia Officers to Staff Appointments, Question, The Earl of Galloway; Answer, The Earl of Morley *May* 27, 1438
Militia Recruiting, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1779
Pensioners, Question, Colonel O'Beirne; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 12, 12
Volunteer Camps, Question, Mr. Forester; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 15, 430

Arnold, Mr. A., *Salford*
Egypt—Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1683
Egypt — Events in the Soudan — General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 242
Middlesex Registry, 994
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 787, 790
Parliament—Ascension Day, Motion for Meetings of Committees, 936
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 552, 560, 1199, 1200; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1383, 1384; *cl.* 5, 1829, 1830
Smith's Trust Estate, 2R. 1886
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c., 1608, 1619, 1622
Houses of Parliament, 1545
New Courts of Justice and Offices, 1644

Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings
Clearances in Whitechapel, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 22, 989
The Peabody Trustees, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 19, 660

Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 22 [Bill 222]
Read 2°* *June* 10

Ashburnham, Earl of
Law and Police—Police Protection of H.M. Ministers, 1292

Ashley, Hon. E. M. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Isle of Wight*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 28, 29, 656, 657;—Sir Henry Bulwer, 996
Fiji Islands—Mr. Patterson, 439
Malay States—Abolition of Slavery, 669

[*cont.*

Ashley, Hon. E. M.—*cont.*
- Mauritius—Flogging Laws, 426
  - Mr. Napier Browne, 421
- Portugal—Seizure and Detention of the British Yacht "Maud" on the South African Coast, 1002

Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. E., *Eye*
- Africa (South)—Zululand—Native Hostilities, 1681
- Asia (Central)—Russian Advance, 847, 848, 1012, 1013;—Sarakhs, 658
  - Russian General Staff Map—Afghan Frontier, 1778, 1779
- Egypt—Conference, 850, 1497;—Negotiations with France, 1474, 1475
  - Finance, &c.—International Control, 1788
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Questions
  - Relief of Berber and Dongola, 25, 170, 846, 847
  - Relief of General Gordon, 444, 445, 1181, 1481, 1539
  - Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1682, 1683
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 246, 280
- Madagascar — Rumoured French Reinforcements, 1889, 1890
- National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1705
- Parliament—Business of the House, 449
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1021, 1036, 1095, 1116
  - Houses of Parliament, 1550, 1569
  - Public Offices Site, 1586
- Turkey (European Provinces) — Governor Generalship of Eastern Roumelia, 1889
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 503, 514

Attorney General, The (Sir H. James), *Taunton*
- Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings—Peabody Trustees, 660
- Law and Justice—Questions
  - Arrangement of the Assizes, 176, 685, 1315
  - Birmingham Dynamiters, 1471
  - Lord St. Leonards, 845
- Marriages Legalization, 2R. 1880
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 788, 790
- Parliament—Standing Committee on Law, 179
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1351, 1371; *cl.* 3, 1373, 1374, 1375, 1376, 1377, 1378, 1379, 1380, 1381, 1384, 1387, 1390, 1391, 1392; *cl.* 4, 1393, 1394, 1401, 1804, 1806, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1815, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823; *cl.* 5, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1829, 1831, 1832; Amendt. 1834; *cl.* 7, 1838, 1839, 1846; *cl.* 9, 1854, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868; *cl.* 11, 1870, 1871, 1873; *add. cl.* 1904, 1922

Balfour, Lord
- Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 5, 405; *cl.* 8, 414
- Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 527
- Parliamentary Papers—Irregular Distribution of Public Documents, 529
- Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 801

Balfour, Right Hon. J. B. (Lord Advocate for Scotland), *Clackmannan, &c.*
- Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland), Comm. 138
- Burgh Police and Health (Scotland), 2R. 1875
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1817; *cl.* 7, 1850; *cl.* 8, 1851; *cl.* 9, 1855; *cl.* 10, 1869
- Scotland—Questions
  - Alleged "Boycotting" in South Uist, 420
  - Law and Justice—Alleged Resistance to Sheriff in Lewis, 661, 1536
  - Law and Police—Forged Certificates of Pedigree of Horses—Case of David and Joseph Raeside and another, 1182
  - Poor Law—Mr. D. Ross, Parochial Inspector of Cromdale—Removal by the Board of Supervision, 1309
  - Sasine Office, Edinburgh, 1534
- Supply—Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1653, 1654
  - Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland, 1641
- Universities (Scotland), Leave, 1429, 1433

Balfour, General Sir G., *Kincardineshire*
- Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 464
- Government Annuities—Table of Interest and Sinking Funds, 1306
- Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1604
  - Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1599, 1603
  - Houses of Parliament, 1559
  - Public Offices Site, 1590

Balfour, Mr. A. J., *Hertford*
- Egypt — Conference, 1483, 1484;—Negotiations with France, 1475
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 97, 99
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1221, 1222; *add. cl.* 1901
- Supply—Surveys of the United Kingdom, 1644

Bankruptcy Act, 1883
- *Private Arrangements*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 12, 23
- *Trustees Balances*, Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 22, 990

Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) Bill (*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Stewart Clark*)
- c. Committee, after short debate [House counted out] *May* 12, 138 [Bill 179]
- Committee *; Report *May* 14
- Read 3° * *May* 15
- l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Camperdown*) *May* 16 (No. 101)

Barclay, Mr. J. W., *Forfarshire*
- Merchant Shipping—Northern Lights Commissioners—Lighting of Orkney and Shetland, 1540

[*cont.*

Barclay, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*
Scotland—Highland Crofters—Royal Commission, 1505
Law and Justice—Alleged Resistance to Sheriff in Lewis, 661, 1536

Barttelot, Colonel Sir W. B., *Sussex, W.*
Egypt—Army of Occupation—Discharges from English Regiments, 543, 544
Conference, 670, 675 ;—Negotiations with France, 1479
Parliament—Business of the House, 1011
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 565, 1208, 1236 ; Amendt. 1337, 1338, 1349 ; *cl.* 4, 1820, 1823 ; *cl.* 7, 1847 ; *add. cl.* 1926
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1042

Bath and Wells, Bishop of
Wellington Statue, Res. 829

Baxter, Right Hon. W. E., *Montrose, &c.*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 324

Beach, Right Hon. Sir M. E. **Hicks-**, *Gloucestershire, E.*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 31, 53, 54, 57, 65
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1808, 1809, 1814, 1822, 1823 ; *cl.* 5, Amendt. 1824, 1825, 1830, 1831, 1832 ; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 1855, 1857, 1859 ; *cl.* 11, Amendt. 1869, 1871

Belgium—Universal Exhibition at Antwerp—A British Commission
Questions, Sir Robert Peel ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 10, 1895

Belmore, Earl of
Settlement and Removal Law Amendment, 2R. 1155

Bentinck, Right Hon. G. A. F. Cavendish, *Whitehaven*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1378, 1385 ; Amendt. 1390 ; *cl.* 4, 1393 ; Amendt. 1792, 1800, 1805, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1817, 1820
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), Personal Explanation, 1184, 1188
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 323, 356, 361
Supply—Science and Art Department Buildings, 1646, 1648, 1649, 1650

Beresford, Mr. G. De La Poer, *Armagh*
Ireland—Irish Glebe, &c. Purchasers' Association, 440

Biggar, Mr. J. G., *Cavan Co.*
India (Madras)—Questions
Breach of India Office Regulations, 1879, 1781

[*cont.*

Biggar, Mr. J. G.—*cont.*
The Governor—Payment of the Professional Tax, 999
The Lieutenant Governor—Official Residences, 1480
Ireland—Questions
Army—Use of Party Tunes, 651
Board of Works—Local Inspectors, 649
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Veterinary Inspectors, 651
Fishery Piers and Harbours — Red Bay Pier, 651
Land Court—Mr. Bell, Valuer for Co. Cavan, 1174
Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage, 995
Law and Justice—Birmingham Dynamiters, 1471
Local Government—Medical Inspectors—Appointment of Dr. Woodhouse, 1890
Prisons—Wexford Gaol—Case of Edward Malone, 1680
State of Ireland—Riots at Londonderry—"Young Waller," 8, 9
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Questions
Appeals in Co. Cavan, 1465
Judicial Rents—Case of T. Sinnott, 1681
Re-appointment of Sub-Commissioners, 539
Ireland—Law and Police—Questions
Alleged Assault on the Police by Lord Caledon, 1533
Arrest of Miss Kelly, Ballicudihy, Co. Kilkenny, 1771
Disorderly Conduct of a Detective at Knockbarron Races, Co. Galway, 1891
Ireland—Magistracy—Questions
Mr. Kendrick H. Jones, Co. Antrim, 1534
Oldcastle Union, 1303
Petty Sessions District of Termonfecan, Co. Louth, 1459, 1780
Ireland—National Education—Questions
Board of—Statistics of Expenditure, 650
Commissioners of—Salaries of National School Teachers—Deduction for Attending University Examinations, 840
Commissioners of Intermediate Education—Professor Curtis, 1887
Convent National School Teachers, 1472
Industrial Schools, 429
Kilbiggan National School, 1532
Ireland—Poor Law—Death from Alleged Neglect of the Dispensary Medical Officer, Ballymacarrett, Belfast, 422
Kilrush Board of Guardians—Disorderly Conduct of Chairman, 1532
Ireland—Post Office—Acting Mail Guards, 1894
Irish Mail Service, 172
Literature, Science, and Art—The May Examinations at South Kensington, 1538
Magistracy (England and Wales)—Mr. J. Jaffray (Birmingham), 654, 655
Newspaper Press—Articles on Current Trials for Treason Felony in Ireland, 1537
Parliament—Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 494
Scotland—Alleged "Boycotting" in South Uist, 420
Sasine Office, Edinburgh, 12
Shannon Navigation, 2R. Amendt. 1879

[*cont.*

Biggar, Mr. J. G.—*cont.*
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1094, 1137
  Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1657, 1658
  Divine Service, 137
  Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1601
  Houses of Parliament, 1573
  Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1581
  Public Offices Site, 1592
  Public Works, &c. in Ireland, 1660
  Report, 1722
  Science and Art Department Buildings, 1651
United States of America—Food Adulteration, 1680
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 523

Birkbeck, Mr. E., *Norfolk, N.*
Post Office—Free Postage, 1296

Board of Trade
Constitution and Functions, Resolution, Mr. Mac Iver *June* 10, 1964 [House counted out]
Merchant Shipping—Northern Lights Commissioners—Lighting of Orkney and Shetland, Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *June* 5, 1540
Telegraphic Communication with Light Vessels—The Sunk Light Vessel, Question, Mr. D. Grant; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 16, 544

Bolton, Mr. J. C., *Stirling*
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. 924

Boord, Mr. T. W., *Greenwich*
Woolwich Arsenal—Royal Carriage Department—Mountings for Naval Ordnance—Reduction of Hands, 979, 980

Borlase, Mr. W. C., *Cornwall, E.*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), Personal Explanation, 1185, 1186, 1189

Bourke, Right Hon. R., *Lynn Regis*
Asia (Central)—The Russian General Staff Map—Afghan Frontier, 1779
Egypt—Conference, 671, 674, 1489, 1490, 1491
  Negotiations with France, 1472, 1475, 1786, 1788
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1034
  Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1664, 1665, 1666

Brabourne, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 398

Bramwell, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 397; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 400, 401; *cl.* 5, 405; *cl.* 11, Amendt. 415; *cl,* 14, Amendt. 417; Report, *cl.* 5, 1159; *cl.* 13, Amendt. 1165, 1166

Brand, Mr. H. R. (Surveyor General of the Ordnance), *Stroud*
Army—Ordnance Department—Manufacture of Small Arms, 1471
  Regulation Swords, 1768
Navy—Bursting of a 100-ton Gun, 1539
  Woolwich Arsenal—Royal Carriage Department—Mountings for Naval Ordnance—Reduction of Hands, 980

Brassey, Sir T. (Civil Lord of the Admiralty), *Hastings*
Navy—Assistant Dockyard Constructors, 1892, 1893

Bright, Mr. J., *Manchester*
Portugal—Congo Treaty, 665

Broadhurst, Mr. H., *Stoke-on-Trent*
City Livery Companies—Royal Commission, 436, 1009
Education Department—Political Emblems in National Schools, 432, 1007
Metropolitan District Railway, 3R. 978

Brodrick, Hon. W. St. J. F., *Surrey, W.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1172
  Number of, 1894
Irish Land Court Officers (Exclusion from Parliament), 2R. 1883; Motion for Adjournment, 1884
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 571, 583, 912

Brogden, Mr. A., *Wednesbury*
Public Offices—New Admiralty and War Office, 839

Brooks, Mr. M., *Dublin*
Parliament—Business of the House, 448

Brown, Mr. A. H., *Wenlock*
Africa (West Coast)—France and the International African Association, 980

Bruce, Sir H. H., *Coleraine*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 21, 430, 432, 1299, 1301

Bryce, Mr. J., *Tower Hamlets*
Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts—Clearances in Whitechapel, 989
Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1263
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1203, 1225; *add. cl.* 1932, 1939

Buchanan, Mr. T. R., *Edinburgh*
Army (India)—Arrears of Non-effective Army Charges, 1301
Parliament—Business of the House, 1011
Reformatories and Industrial Schools—Recommendations of the Commission, 654
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1812
Universities (Scotland), Leave, 1433

BULWER, Mr. J. R., *Cambridgeshire*
  Education Department—Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 17
  Law and Justice—Arrangement of the Assizes, 176
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1810, 1819, 1823

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, after short debate *June* 9, 1875 [Bill 167]

BURT, Mr. T., *Morpeth*
  Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 793
  India (Madras)—Salt Laws, 426

BUXTON, Mr. F. W., *Andover*
  Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 102
  Railways (Metropolis)—Metropolitan Urban Districts for Railways—The Map, 1781

BUXTON, Mr. S. C., *Peterborough*
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1784

CADOGAN, Earl
  Literature, Science, and Art—The Blenheim Pictures, 1287, 1288

CAIRNS, Earl
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. 395; *cl.* 2, 397; *cl.* 4, 404; *cl.* 5, 405; *cl.* 8, 408, 409, 412, 414
  Egypt—Conference, 155, 157
    Negotiations with France, 1443
  Public Notaries, 2R. 144

CAMERON, Dr. C., *Glasgow*
  Egypt (Affairs in the Soudan)—Mr. Brewster, Sub-Governor of Suakin, 1460
  Explosives Act—Dynamite Explosion in Ayrshire, 19, 20
  Morocco—Slavery, 541
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1183
    Whitsun Holidays—Adjournment of the House, 1315, 1316
  Public Health (Metropolis)—Re-vaccination, 1172, 1174
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1319, 1320, 1331
  Scotland—Questions
    Evictions—Notice by Post, 1770
    Highland Crofters — Royal Commission, 1499, 1500, 1502, 1503
    Inland Revenue — Income Tax—Tarbert Fishermen, 11, 1769
    Law and Police — Forged Certificates of Pedigree of Horses—Case of David and Joseph Raeside and another, 1182
  Taxation and Expenditure, 480

CAMPBELL, Sir G., *Kirkcaldy, &c.*
  Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 85
  Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 458

CAMPBELL, Sir G.—*cont.*
  India—Quetta Railway, 993
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1362, 1390
  Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1556
    Science and Art Department Buildings, 1645, 1648
    Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland, 1641
  Ways and Means—Financial Proposals, Comm. 496

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Mr. H. (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Stirling, &c.*
  Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Mission of Admiral Sir W. Hewett to the King of Abyssinia, 174, 175
    War in the Soudan—Pensions to Widows and Orphans, 668
  Navy—Questions
    British and French Navies, 437, 438
    Coastguard Station in Donegal, 980
    Committee on Private Shipyards, 659
    General Officers of Royal Marines, 991
    Shipbuilding by Contract, 22
    Unbuoyed Moorings in the Medway, 20
    Woolwich Arsenal—Royal Carriage Department—Mountings for Naval Ordnance—Reduction of Hands, 979

CAMPERDOWN, Earl of
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 403; *cl.* 8, 413
  Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 1276
  Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 805

Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Burt, Colonel Makins, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, Mr. Broadhurst*)
c. Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, after short debate *May* 19, 793 [Bill 111]

CARBUTT, Mr. E. H., *Monmouth, &c.*
  Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1765
  Navy—Bursting of a 100-ton Gun, 1538, 1539
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 368

Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales
c. Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations that they have power to insert in the Cardiff Corporation Bill provisions enabling the said Corporation to contribute the sum of Ten thousand pounds to or for the purposes of the 'University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire'" (*Sir Edward J. Reed*) *June* 9, 1742; after short debate, Question put; A. 185, N. 141; M. 44 (D. L. 108)

CARLINGFORD, Lord (Lord President of the Council)
  Contagious Diseases (Animals), Commons Amendts. Consid. 146

[*cont.*

CARLINGFORD, Lord—*cont.*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act (1878) Amendment, Report, Bill withdrawn, 148, 149
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Cambridgeshire, Motion for Papers, 1287
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 8, 413
Education Department—Grants to Colleges in Wales, 1455
Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners) —Mr. W. Gray, 1279, 1282, 1283
Parliamentary Representation—Boroughs of Ireland, 1290
Public Libraries Act Amendment, Comm. 814

CARLISLE, Bishop of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 5, 405
Marriages Legalization, Report, 147
Meteorological Office—Weather Reports—Return of Unwarned Storms, Motion for a Paper, 530, 532; Motion for a Return, 1273 1275

CARNARVON, Earl of
Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 816
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 402; *cl.* 7, 407
Egypt—Conference, 3, 150, 152;—Negotiations with France, 1439
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 538, 1453
Meteorological Office—Weather Reports—Return of Unwarned Storms, Motion for a Paper, 532
Navy—Condition of the Iron-Clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas Symonds, G.C.B., Motion for Papers, 1738, 1739
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Res. 648
Sugar Trade—West Indian Sugar, 1283
Wellington Statue, Res. 819

CAUSTON, Mr. R. K., *Colchester*
Endowed Schools—Tonbridge School, 992
Supply — Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1627, 1631

CAVENDISH, Lord E., *Derbyshire, N.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 873

Central Asia
Russian Advance—Sarakhs, Questions, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 19, 658; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 20, 847; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 22, 1012; Observations, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Reply, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, 1095; Correction, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 23, 1183
The Russian General Staff Map, Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1773
The Afghan Frontier, Questions, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 9, 1778

[*cont.*

Central Asia—cont.
The Russo-Persian and Afghan Frontiers, Questions, Mr. Jerningham, Lord John Manners, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 26, 1293

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J. (President of the Board of Trade), *Birmingham*
Bankruptcy Act, 1883—Private Arrangements, 23
Trustees Balances, 990
Board of Trade—Telegraphic Communication with Light Vessels—The Sunk Light Vessel, 544
Channel Tunnel—Suspension of Works, 1310
Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 1863
Mercantile Marine—Loss of Life by Shipwreck, 1468
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 685, 695, 700, 701, 708, 723, 737, 748, 768, 780, 786
Merchant Shipping—Northern Lights Commissioners—Lighting of Orkney and Shetland, 1540
Merchant Shipping Acts—Steamship "Elephant," 995
The "Inchclutha," 1003, 1004
Merchant Shipping Bill, 1464, 1482, 1509, 1541
Over-Insurance, 997
Statement of Mr. Chamberlain — The Valuers, 1002, 1306, 1307, 1308
Parliament—Business of the House, 1480
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. Motion for Adjournment, 920
Railways (Metropolis)—Metropolitan Urban Districts for Railways—The Map, 1781
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 318; Amendt. 323, 361
Supply—Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1580

CHANCELLOR, The **LORD** (Earl of **SELBORNE**)
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 7, 407, 408; Report, *cl.* 13, 1166
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 536
Custom House—Searches of Passengers' Luggage—New Regulations, 1277
Egypt—Conference, 158
Great Seal, 2R. 812, 814
Ireland—Public Meetings, 1724
Marriages Legalization, Report, 148
Public Notaries, 2R. 143
Wellington Statue, Res. 818

CHANCELLOR of the **EXCHEQUER**, The (Right Hon. H. C. E. **CHILDERS**), *Pontefract*
Army (India)—Pensions, 1295
Coinage Bill, 670;—Profit and Loss of Mintage, 1295
Colonies—Return of Coinage of Gold, 1319
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. Motion for Adjournment, 1881

[*cont.*

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, The—*cont.*
Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 454, 459, 665, 1001
Inland Revenue—Hackney Carriage Licences, 169
Inland Revenue Office — Grievances of the Officials, 435, 436
National Debt (Conversion of Stock)—Investments by Trustees, 1893
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1408, 1409, 1419, 1426, 1427, 1428, 1710, 1712, 1718; Comm. 1881
Navy—Bursting of a 100-ton Gun, 1538
  Dockyards—Payment of Wages, 1687
Parliament—Business of the House, 1011, 1884
Private Brewing Licences, 485
Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1527
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1021, 1022
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Coinage and Conversion of Stock Bills, 447
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 501, 505, 520, 521, 522, 524, 528

Channel Tunnel—Suspension of Works
Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 26, 1309

CHAPLIN, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Mid*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 137, 180, 186
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 884

Charity Commissioners—General Policy of their Schemes
Observations, Mr. Jesse Collings; Reply, Mr. Mundella; short debate thereon *May* 22, 1077

CHEETHAM, Mr. J. F., *Derbyshire, N.*
Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1248

CHILDERS, Right Hon. H. C. E. (*see* Chancellor of the Exchequer)

CHURCHILL, Lord R. H. S., *Woodstock*
Egypt—Questions
  Conference, 671, 1476, 1477
  Negotiations with Turkey, 1788
  War in the Soudan — Employment of Turkish Troops, 1896
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 193, 198, 201, 207, 222
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 853, 862, 912, 1203, 1217, 1222, 1227, 1242, 1354; *cl.* 3, 1388, 1389, 1391, 1407; *add. cl.* 1940, 1941, 1942

City of London Livery Companies—The Royal Commission
Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 15, 436; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir R. Asshcton Cross *May* 22, 1009

Civil List—The Royal Palaces
Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *June* 9, 1773

Civil Service—Copyists
Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 20, 845

CLARKE, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*
Merchant Shipping, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 786
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 9, 1856, 1858; Amendt. 1859, 1864, 1867
Royal Courts of Justice, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1878

COHEN, Mr. A., *Southwark*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1374

Coinage Bill
Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 19, 670
Profit and Loss of Mintage, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 26, 1295

COLEBROOKE, Sir T. E., *Lanarkshire, N.*
Burgh Police and Health (Scotland), 2R. 1876
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1335

COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Ipswich*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1763
Endowed Schools—Tonbridge School, 991, 992, 993
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1196, 1205
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1019, 1077, 1081, 1083, 1090, 1091, 1092

COLLINS, Mr. T., *Knaresborough*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 562, 1209, 1237, 1247; *add. cl.* 1918, 1937, 1940

COLMAN, Mr. J. J., *Norwich*
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1094

Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Aberdeen*)
l. Read 2ª *May* 13, 146 (No. 78)
Committee*; Report *May* 15
Read 3ª* *May* 16
c. Read 1º* (*Mr. Buszard*) *May* 23 [Bill 228]
Read 2º* *June* 9

Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Derby*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *May* 20, 815
Committee*; Report *May* 23 (No. 44)
Read 3ª, after short debate *May* 26, 1291

Colonies—Return of Coinage of Gold
Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 26, 1319

COLTHURST, Col. D. La Zouche, *Cork Co.*
Ireland—Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage, 995
Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 952

COLVILLE of CULROSS, Lord
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arangements, Res. 648

Commons Regulation Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Considered * *May* 12 [Bill 172]
Read 3° * *May* 13
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *May* 15
Read 2ª * *May* 26 (No. 100)
Committee *; Report *May* 27

Consolidated Fund, &c. (*Permanent Charges Redemption*) *Acts*, 1873 *and* 1883—*Commutation of the Marlborough and Penn Pensions*
Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 667; Questions, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 20, 846; Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 9, 1784

Contagious Diseases (*Animals*) *Acts*
Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Lincolnshire, Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 27, 1469
Movement of Cattle, Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 26, 1294
Pleuro-Pneumonia—Sale of Carcases, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. George Russell *May* 26, 1302; Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1468
Veterinary Inspectors (*Ireland*), Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 651

Contagious Diseases (*Animals*) *Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Cambridgeshire*
Moved, "That there be laid before the House all correspondence relating to the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Cambridgeshire, and to that brought by the steamship 'Toronto'" (*The Lord Harlech*) *May* 26, 1287; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Commons Amendts. considered, and agreed to, after short debate *May* 13, 146
Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. 13]

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act (1878) Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Duke of Richmond and Gordon*)
l. Bill withdrawn, after short debate *May* 13, 148 (No. 16)

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill
(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson*)
c. Report of Select Comm.* *May* 16 [No. 177]

CORBET, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow Co.*
Ireland—Magistracy—Mr. Martin Langton, Co. Wicklow, Appointment of, 26
Morocco—Women Flogging, 10

CORRY, Mr. J. P., *Belfast*
Ireland—Queen's Colleges and Royal University—The Rev. Dr. Molloy, 539

County Courts (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Thomas Dickson*)
c. Read 2° *June* 9, 1884 [Bill 104]

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), *Liskeard*
Africa (South)—Zululand—Native Hostilities, 1681
Africa (West Coast)—Administration of the British Colonies, 1774
Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 794
Civil Service—Copyists, 845
Consolidated Fund, &c. (Permanent Charges Redemption) Acts, 1873 and 1883—Commutation of the Marlborough and Penn Pensions, 667, 846, 1785
Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1260
Customs—Outdoor Officers, 1189
  Promotions, 1774
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 469
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. 1881
Custom House Officials, 1467, 1468
Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels Bill, 426
Excise—Weight and Value of Smuggled Tobacco, 1880-84, 423
Government Annuities—Table of Interest and Sinking Funds, 1306
Inland Revenue—Income Tax—Surcharges, 1776
Ireland—Questions
  Board of Works—Local Inspectors, 650
  Court of Bankruptcy—Unpaid Dividend Fund Account, 13, 839
  Fishery Piers and Harbours, 651
  Inland Navigation and Drainage—Survey of the Barrow, 24;—River Inny, 652
  Irish Land Commission Court—Quit and Crown Rents, 15
  Irish Land Commission—Re-appointment of the Sub-Commissioners, 997
  Land Law Act, 1881, Sec. 3—Loans for Improvements, 663
  Poor Law—Revision in Bantry Union, 837
  Registry of Deeds Office, 423

[*cont.*

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H.—*cont.*
Literature, Science, and Art—Record Office at Venice, 1305, 1306
Technical Education Report, 1776
Middlesex Registry, 995
The Staff, 1314
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 787
Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 639
Royal Courts of Justice, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1878, 1879
Sasine Office, Edinburgh, 12, 13, 663
Scotland—Inland Revenue—Income Tax—Tarbert Fishermen, 12, 1769
Shannon Navigation, 2R. 1879, 1880
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1142, 1147
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1609, 1612, 1616
Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1656
Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1603
Houses of Parliament, 1561, 1571
Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1581
Public Offices Site, 1591
Public Works, &c. in Ireland, 1659, 1660
Royal University (Ireland) Buildings, 1661
Science and Art Department Buildings, 1648
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 1662, 1663
Treasury Solicitors' Act, 1876—Intestates Estates, 539
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 513
Ways and Means—Inland Revenue—Gun Licences, 437

COWEN, Mr. J., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*
Egypt—Conference, 1483, 1492
Events in the Soudan—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 248
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1633
Houses of Parliament, 1549
Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1574

Criminal Law Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Committee *May* 15, 395 (No. 45)
Report *May* 23, 1156 (No. 99)

CROPPER, Mr. J., *Kendal*
Education Department—Speldhurst National School, 666
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1081

CROSS, Right Hon. Sir R. A., *Lancashire, S.W.*
Burgh Police and Health (Scotland), 2R. 1876
City of London Livery Companies—Royal Commission, 1009
Parliament—Business of the House, 1884
Standing Committee on Law, 179
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. 935

[cont.

CROSS, Right Hon. Sir R. A.—*cont.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 566; Amendt. 568, 570, 1350, 1351; *cl.* 4, 1402; *cl.* 9, 1858; *add. cl.* 1899, 1936
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1046

CROSS, Mr. J. K. (Under Secretary of State for India), *Bolton*
Army (India)—Arrears of Non-Effective Army Charges, 1302
Indian Staff Corps, 665
India—Banda and Kirwee Prize Money, 425
Indian Civil Service—Examination of Natives, 1000
India (Madras)—Questions
Breach of India Office Regulations, 1879, 1782
Returns of Lands held by Uncovenanted Civil Servants, &c. 1781
Salem Riots, 70
Salt Laws, 426
The Governor—Payment of the Professional Tax, 999
The Lieutenant Governor—Official Residences, 1480
India—Railways—Questions
Indian State Railways—Contracts, 26
Indo-Afghan Railway, 1005
Quetta Railway, 993
Public Offices—India Office, 27

Crown Lands
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 23, To leave out from "That," add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the management of the Crown Lands, and the principles to be followed in selling or leasing the same" (*Mr. Cheetham*) *v.*, 1248; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate [House counted out]

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment Bill—Pigeon-Shooting
Question, Observations, The Earl of Wemyss; Reply, The Earl of Dalhousie; short debate thereon *May* 16, 532

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Redesdale*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *May* 20 (No. 103)

CUBITT, Right Hon G., *Surrey, W.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 5, 1827; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 1851

CURRIE, Sir D., *Perthshire*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 676

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill
(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Resolutions in Committee *May* 15
Resolutions reported, and agreed to; Bill read 1º* *May* 16 [Bill 206]
Read 2º* *May* 26
Committee—R.P., after short debate *June* 9, 1881

Customs Department
Custom House Officials—Payment of Salaries, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 27, 1467
Outdoor Officers, Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 23, 1189
Promotions, Question, Mr. Acland; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 9, 1774
Searches of Passengers' Luggage—The New Regulations, Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Lord Chancellor *May* 26, 1276

DALHOUSIE, Earl of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 396; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 400; *add. cl.* 401; *cl.* 4, 402, 404; *cl.* 5, *ib.* Amendt. 406; *cl.* 6, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 7, 407; *add. cl.* 408; *cl.* 8, Amendt. *ib.* 410, 412, 415; *cl.* 9, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 11, 416; *cl.* 12, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 13, Amendt. 417; *cl.* 16, Amendt. *ib.*; Report, *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1156; *cl.* 5, 1158; Amendt. 1160; *cl.* 10, 1161; *cl.* 12, 1163; *cl.* 13, 1166
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 534
Scotland—Harbours of Refuge on the North-East Coast—Report of the Special Sub-Committee, 1154
Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 809

DALRYMPLE, Mr. C., *Buteshire*
Post Office—Issue of the New Annuity and Insurance Tables, 669

DAVEY, Mr. H., *Christchurch*
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 788
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1381

DAWNAY, Hon. G. C., *York, N.R.*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 28;—Sir Henry Bulwer, 996
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 272, 278

DAWSON, Mr. C., *Carlow*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 343

Dean Forest and Hundred of St. Briavel's Bill
Question, Colonel Kingscote; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 15, 426

DEASY, Mr. J., *Cork*
Post Office—Telephone Exchange Licences—Telephone Company of Ireland, 418
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1150

DE FERRIERES, Baron, *Cheltenham*
Public Offices—India Office, 27

DE LA WARR, Earl
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 535
Railways—Continuous Brakes, 1264

DE L'ISLE and DUDLEY, Lord
Wellington Statue, Res. 825

DENMAN, Lord
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act (1878) Amendment, Report, Bill withdrawn, 149
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 404; *cl.* 7, 407
Privilege—House of Lords—Court of Appeal—Lord Denman, 394
Wellington Statue, 1449

DERBY, Earl of (Secretary of State for the Colonies)
Africa (West Coast)—Angra Pequena and Wallfisch Bay, 645, 646
Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 815, 816; 3R. 1291
Sugar Trade—West Indian Sugar, 1284

DE ROS, Lord
Wellington Statue, Res. Amendt. 823, 825, 1265

DE WORMS, Baron H., *Greenwich*
Egypt—Questions
Conference, 1479, 1495
Events in the Soudan—Communication with Khartoum, 998
Soudan—Employment of Turkish Troops, 1019
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 88, 129
France and Morocco—Papers, 13
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, Amendt. 1016, 1017, 1022, 1026, 1028, 1052

DICKSON, Mr. T. A., *Tyrone*
Ireland—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 851
Parliament—Business of the House, 448, 450
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 883

DIGBY, Colonel Hon. E. T., *Dorsetshire*
Irish Land Commission—Mr. Sub-Commissioner Gray, 894

DILKE, Right Hon. Sir C. W. (President of the Local Government Board), *Chelsea, &c.*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 277, 278, 280
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Sewerage Scheme), 2R. 1767
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 790
Public Health (Metropolis)—Re-vaccination, 1173
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 569, 570, 1200, 1247, 1361, 1369, 1370, 1371; *cl.* 3, 1388, 1392; *cl.* 9, 1864

DILLWYN, Mr. L. L., *Swansea*
Literature, Science, and Art—The Record Office at Venice, 1305, 1306
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1398

Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Evesham*
Education Department—Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 16, 17
France and China—Treaty of Tien-Tsin, 675, 1294, 1770
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Sewerage Scheme), 2R. 1767
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1409

Dodds, Mr. J., *Stockton*
Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1260

Dodson, Right Hon. J. G. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Scarborough*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, 1878—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Lincolnshire, 1470
Movement of Cattle, 1294
Privy Council—Veterinary Department, 1460
United States of America—Food Adulteration, 1679, 1680

Donoughmore, Earl of
Ireland—Public Meetings, 1724

Duckham, Mr. T., *Herefordshire*
United States of America—Food Adulteration, 1679

Dundas, Hon. J. C., *Richmond*
Yorkshire Land Registries and Yorkshire Registries, Nomination of Select Committee, 795

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H., *Kent, Mid*
Wellington Statue, 1312

Ecroyd, Mr. W. F., *Preston*
Indian State Railways—Contracts, 26
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1351; *add. cl.* 1897, 1900, 1906, 1917, 1930

Education Department
Grants to Colleges in Wales, Question, Observations, Lord Norton; Reply, Lord Carlingford *May* 27, 1455
Instructions to School Inspectors, Question, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 15, 442
Over-Pressure in Elementary Schools—Dr. C. Browne's Report, Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 12, 17; Questions, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella *June* 9, 1772
Pensions of Elementary Teachers, Question, Mr. Sykes; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 15, 441
Political Emblems in National Schools—Rothwell School, Questions, Mr. Broadhurst; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 15, 432; *May* 22, 1007
Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, Questions, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Mac Iver, Mr. Bulwer, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 12, 16

[*cont.*

Education Department—cont.
The "Blue Ribbon" in Board Schools, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 22, 994

Lyefield School Board—Death from Over-Pressure, Question, Mr. Severne; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 15, 419
Rothwell School Board, Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 26, 1311; Question, Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, Earl Granville *May* 27, 1437
Speldhurst National School, Questions, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Cropper; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 19, 666

Endowed Schools—Tonbridge School, Questions, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Causton; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 22, 991

Egerton, Hon. A. F., *Wigan*
Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 793, 794
Navy — Assistant Dockyard Constructors, 1892
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1397; *add. cl.* 1902

Egerton, Hon. Alan de Tatton, *Cheshire, Mid*
Prisons (England and Wales)—Chester Prison, 1305

Egypt
Lords
Events in the Soudan—General Gordon, Questions, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answers, Earl Granville *May* 16, 537; Question, Observations, The Earl of Galloway; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury *May* 23, 1167; Question, Observations, The Earl of Wemyss; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1450

The Proposed Conference, Notice of Question, The Earl of Carnarvon *May* 12, 3; Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 13, 150
Negotiations with France, Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1439; Question, Observations, Earl Stanhope; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury *June* 9, 1724

War in the Soudan—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, Observations, The Earl of Galloway; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook *May* 27, 1457

Egypt
Commons (*Questions*)
Events in the Soudan
Relief of Berber and Dongola, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12, 25

[*cont.*

Egypt—Commons—*Events in the Soudan*—cont.

Dongola, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 13, 170; *May* 20, 846

Admiral Sir William Hewett—Mission to the King of Abyssinia, Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Alexander Gordon, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 13, 174; Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 20, 851; *May* 22, 998; *June* 9, 1791; Observations, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 10, 1897

General Gordon, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 19, 672; Questions, Mr. Gourley, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 22, 1009; Questions, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone *May* 23, 1180; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 27, 1481; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 5, 1539; Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 9, 1785

Relief of General Gordon, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Edmund Lechmere; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 444; Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Gladstone, 450

Telegram, Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 16, 613

Communication with Khartoum, Question, Baron Henry de Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 22, 998

Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 6, 1682

The Garrison at Suakin, Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1784

War in the Soudan

Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, Questions, Sir John Hay, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Speaker *May* 15, 433

Gratuity to the Forces, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1783

Employment of Indian Troops, Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 15, 440

Military Operations—Estimate of Loss of Life, Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 13, 179; Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 450

[*cont.*

Egypt—Commons—*War in the Soudan*—cont.

Pensions to Widows and Orphans, Questions, Colonel Milne-Home, Lord Henry Lennox; Answers, Sir Arthur Hayter, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 19, 668

Employment of Turkish Troops, Question, Baron Henry de Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 22, 1012; Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *June* 10, 1896

The Army of Occupation—Discharges from English Regiments, Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 16, 543

The Proposed Conference

Questions, Mr. M'Coan, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 448; Personal Explanation, Mr. M'Coan; Observations, Mr. Gladstone *May* 16, 545; Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Bourke, Mr. E. Stanhope, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 19, 670; Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Bourke, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 19, 673; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 20, 850; Observations, Mr. A. J. Balfour; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1482

Negotiations with France, Questions, Mr. Bourke, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord John Manners, Baron Henry de Worms, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 27, 1472; Questions, Mr. Bourke, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *June* 9, 1786

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *May* 27, 1482; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Finance, &c.—International Control, Question, Mr. Ashmead Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *June* 9, 1788

Miscellaneous Questions

Affairs in the Soudan—Mr. Brewster, Sub-Governor of Suakin, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 27, 1460

Forced Labour, Question, Mr. Villiers Stuart; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 26, 1313

Gambling at Port Said, Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 5, 1530

Negotiations with Turkey, Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *June* 9, 1788

Punishments — Flogging in Prisons — The "Cat-o'-Nine-Tails," Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12, 15; Questions, Mr. Gray, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 984; Questions, Mr. Gray; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 26, 1318; *May* 27, 1472

[*cont.*

Egypt—COMMONS—*Miscellaneous Questions*—cont.
Re-organization—*Mr. Clifford Lloyd*, Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 27, 1482
The Papers—*Abridgment of No.* 18, Questions, Lord John Manners; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12, 28

Egypt (*Events in the Soudan*)—*General Gordon's Mission*
Moved, "That this House regrets to find that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's Mission, and that even such steps as may be necessary to secure his personal safety are still delayed" (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) *May* 12, 31; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Chaplin*); Motion agreed to
Debate resumed *May* 13, 180; after long debate, Debate adjourned
Debate resumed, 237; after long debate, Question put; A. 275, N. 303; M. 28
Div List, A. and N. 302

ELCHO, Lord, *Haddingtonshire*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1345

Electric Lighting Provisional Order Bill
(*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Read 2ª* *May* 12 (No. 75)
Committee*; Report *May* 13
Read 3ª* *May* 15
Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. xiv]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill (*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Read 1ª* *May* 12 (No. 84)
Read 2ª* *May* 20
Committee*; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª* *May* 26

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Read 2°* *May* 19 [Bill 195]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 26 [Bill 232]
Read 2°* *June* 10

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Monson*)
l. Committee* *May* 16 (No. 68)
Report* *May* 19
Read 3ª* *May* 20
c. Read 1°* *May* 23 [Bill 227]
Read 2°* *June* 10

ELLENBOROUGH, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Report, *cl.* 5, 1158
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1455

ELLIOT, Hon. A. R. D., *Roxburgh*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1319; *cl.* 4, 1811

ELTON, Mr. C. I., *Somerset, W.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1392, 1394, 1798, 1806, 1807, 1808; *cl.* 9, 1868; *cl.* 10, Amendt. *ib.*

EWART, Mr. W., *Belfast*
Post Office—Irish Mail Service, 170
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 891

EXETER, Bishop of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 11, Amendt. 416

Explosives Act
Dynamite Explosion in Ayrshire, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *May* 12, 19
Inspectors (*Ireland*), Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 661

Factory Acts Extension (Shops) Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Pell, Mr. Burt, Lord Randolph Churchill*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 14 [Bill 203]

Factory and Workshop Acts—*Employment of Females in Laundries*
Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 12, 23

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
Literature, Science, and Art—Sir Francis Chantrey's Fund, 447
Supply—Science and Art Department Buildings, 1648

FAWCETT, Right Hon. H. (Postmaster General), *Hackney*
Post Office—Questions
  Free Postage, 1296
  Issue of the New Annuity and Insurance Tables, 669
  Telegraph Department — Female Telegraphists, 1313;—Protection of Telegrams, 167, 168
  Telephone Exchange Licences, 987;—Telephone Company of Ireland, 419
Post Office (Ireland)—Questions
  Acting Mail Guards, 1895
  Appointment of Sorting Clerk and Female Telegraph Learner—Open Competition, 1531
  Drumcondra Post Office, 1541
  Irish Mail Service, 171, 172, 173
  Postal Accommodation in Limerick, 987
  Postal Communication in Co. Waterford, 1530

[*cont.*

FAWCETT, Right Hon. H.—*cont.*
Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Post Office at Portadown, 1180
Sorters in Travelling Post Offices, 844
Telegraph Department—Telegrams in Dublin within Twelve Miles Radius, 1770
Post Office Protection, Bill withdrawn, 1882
Scotland—Evictions—Notices by Post, 1771
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1070, 1076, 1150, 1151, 1152
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1614, 1615, 1624, 1628, 1634, 1635
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 500

FIFE, Earl of
Africa (West Coast)—International African Association and France—Rumoured Treaty, 529, 799

Fiji Islands—Mr. Patterson
Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 15, 439

Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Sykes, Colonel Dawnay*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Sykes*) *May* 16, 641; Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°*
Read 2°, after debate *June* 9, 1882 [Bill 208]

FITZGERALD, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 396; *cl.* 7, 407

FITZMAURICE, Lord E. G. P. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Calne*
Africa (West Coast)—International African Association and France, 981
Natives in the Congo Territory, 434, 435
Asia (Central)—Questions
Russian Advance, 847, 1012, 1013, 1183;—Sarakhs, 658
Russian General Staff Map—Afghan Frontier, 1778, 1779
Russo-Persian and Afghan Frontiers, 1293
Dynamite Conspiracies—Government of the United States, 1889
Egypt—Questions
Affairs in the Soudan—Mr. Brewster, Sub-Governor of Suakin, 1461
Conference, 449
Flogging—The "Cat-o'-Nine Tails," 15, 984, 985, 986, 1318, 1319, 1472
Forced Labour, 1313
Gambling at Port Said, 1530
Papers—Abridgment of No. 18, 28
Re-organization—Mr. Clifford Lloyd, 1482
Soudan—Employment of Turkish Troops, 1012
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Questions
Admiral Sir W. Hewett, 853;—Mission to the King of Abyssinia, 174, 998, 1792, 1897
General Gordon—Telegram, 613, 1181
Khartoum, Communication with, 998
Loss of Life, Estimate of, 179
[*cont.*

FITZMAURICE, Lord E. G. P.—*cont.*
Relief of Berber and Dongola, 25, 26, 170, 846, 847
Relief of General Gordon, 445, 1539, 1540, 1785
Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685, 1686
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 123, 129
France and China—Treaty of Tien-Tsin, 1294, 1770
France and Morocco—Papers, 13
Law and Justice—Execution of Foreign Judgments, 421
Madagascar — Rumoured French Reinforcements, 1890
Morocco—Slavery, 541
Women Flogging, 11
Portugal—Congo Treaty, 438, 666
Detention of the Yacht "Maud," 1310
Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 542, 543, 848, 849, 1688
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1028, 1099, 1113
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1665, 1666
Switzerland—Salvationists, 25
Trade and Commerce—Commercial Treaties—Great Britain and Spain, 444
Turkey (European Provinces)—The Governor Generalship of Eastern Roumelia, 1889
Universal Exhibition at Antwerp—A British Commission, 1895, 1896

FLETCHER, Sir H., *Horsham*
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 757
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), 2R. 388

FOLKESTONE, Viscount, *Wilts, S.*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1010, 1180

FORESTER, Mr. C. T. W., *Wenlock*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Volunteer Camps, 430

FORSTER, Right Hon. W. E., *Bradford*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Mission of General Gordon—Vote of Censure, 207, 242
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1216

FORSTER, Sir C., *Walsall*
Parliament—Public Petitions, Res. 795; Report, 977

FORTESCUE, Earl
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 536

FOWLER, Right Hon. R. N. (Lord Mayor), *London*
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1048
Houses of Parliament, 1548
Public Offices Site, 1586

Fowler, Mr. H. H., *Wolverhampton*
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1191; *cl.* 3, 1389
- Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. Amendt. 1604, 1616, 1620, 1630
  - Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1637

Fowler, Mr. W., *Cambridge*
- National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1688, 1689

France and China—Treaty of Tien-Tsin
- Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 19, 675; Questions, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 26, 1294; *June* 9, 1770

France and Morocco—The Papers
- Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12, 13

Freshwater Fisheries Act Amendment Bill (*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
- *l.* Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. 11]

Galloway, Earl of
- Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Eligibility of Militia Officers to Staff Appointments, 1438
- Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 536
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1167, 1169, 1454
  - War in the Soudan—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 1457
- Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 807

Galway, Viscount, *Nottingham, N.*
- Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1171

Garnier, Mr. J. Carpenter-, *Devon, S.*
- Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1761

Gas Provisional Orders Bill (*The Lord Sudeley*)
- *l.* Read 2^{a} * *May* 19 (No. 81)
- Committee *; Report *May* 20
- Read 3^{a} * *May* 23

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
- *c.* Report * *May* 21 [Bill 181]
- Read 3^{o} * *May* 22
- *l.* Read 1^{a} * (*Lord Sudeley*) *May* 23 (No. 105)

Gibson, Right Hon. E., *Dublin University*
- Africa (West Coast)—Natives in the Congo Territory, 435
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1785
  - Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1683, 1684, 1685
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 108, 123

[*cont.*

Gibson, Right Hon. E.—*cont.*
- Ireland—Questions
  - Irish Land Commission Court—Quit and Crown Rents, 15
  - Palmerstown Races—Gentlemen Riders dressed as Females, 429
  - Public Meetings—Newry Procession, 1790, 1791
  - Purchase of Land, 162, 852
- Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Questions
  - Mr. W. Gray, 432
  - Number of, 1893, 1894
  - Re-appointment of, 997
- Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 970
- Parliament—Business of the House, 449, 1010
- Revision of Jurors and Voters' Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1668, 1670, 1672
- Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1623
  - Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 1661, 1663

Giffard, Sir H. S., *Launceston*
- Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1763, 1764, 1765
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 235, 237
- Royal Courts of Justice, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1879

Giles, Mr. A., *Southampton*
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 375

Gladstone, Right Hon. W. E. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Edinburghshire*
- Africa (South)—Zululand, 676
- Egypt—Questions
  - Affairs of the Soudan—General Gordon's Mission, 672, 673
  - Events in the Soudan—Relief of General Gordon, 446, 450, 1010, 1181, 1182, 1481
  - Finance, &c.—International Control, 1789
  - Negotiations with Turkey, 1788
  - War in the Soudan—Employment of Turkish Troops, 1896
- Egypt—Conference—Questions
  - 449
  - Negotiations with France, 1473, 1474, 1475, 1476, 1477, 1478, 1479, 1787
  - Negotiations with Turkey, 1788
  - Personal Explanation, 545, 670, 671, 674, 675, 850, 851, 1482, 1483, 1484, 1490, 1491
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 52, 53, 54, 57, 65, 75, 99, 186, 198, 207, 208, 270
- Egypt and the Soudan (Military Operations)—Loss of Life, 450
- France and China—Treaty of Tien-Tsin, 676
- Intermediate Education (Wales), 1315
- Ireland—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 851
- Literature, Science, and Art—Chantrey Bequest, 178, 446, 447, 1008
- Merchant Shipping Bill, 1464, 1465

[*cont.*

GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E.—*cont.*
Parliament—Questions
Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 489, 494
Business of the House, 30, 31, 448, 449, 450, 542, 684, 852, 1010, 1011, 1184, 1318, 1481, 1786, 1792
Rules and Orders—Alteration of Notices, 680, 681
Whitsun Holidays—Adjournment of the House, 1316
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 556, 593, 607, 612, 1194, 1199, 1213, 1247, 1328, 1342, 1349, 1350, 1357, 1358; *cl.* 3, 1383, 1384, 1385, 1386, 1387, 1388, 1391; *cl.* 4, 1393, 1396, 1404; Motion for reporting Progress, 1407, 1408, 1795, 1808; *cl.* 7, 1843, 1844, 1847; *cl.* 12, Motion for reporting Progress, 1874; *add. cl.* 1898, 1899, 1902, 1914, 1917, 1935, 1941, 1957, 1958
Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 848, 849
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1020, 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028, 1032, 1034, 1036, 1048
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 499, 504, 512, 514, 515

GOLDNEY, Sir G., *Chippenham*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1759
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1800

GORDON, General Hon. Sir A. H., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Mission of Admiral Sir W. Hewett to the King of Abyssinia, 174
Parliament—Business of the House, 30, 542
Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1558

GORST, Mr. J. E., *Chatham*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 29
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 463
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 74
Merchant Shipping Bill, 1481
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 774, 780
Navy—British and French Navies, 438
Unbuoyed Moorings in the Medway, 20
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 546, 1202, 1228, 1345, 1350, 1354, 1364; *cl.* 3, 1373, 1382, 1389, 1391, 1392; *cl.* 9, 1859, 1865; Amendt. 1868
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, Vote on Account, 1018, 1047

GOSCHEN, Right Hon. G. J., *Ripon*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 260, 270
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1703
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1195, 1196, 1205, 1335

GOURLEY, Mr. E. T., *Sunderland*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1009
Merchant Shipping Bill, 1464

Government Annuities—Table of Interest and Sinking Funds
Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 26, 1306
[See title *Post Office*]

GRANT, Sir G. M., *Elgin & Nairn*
Poor Law (Scotland)—Mr. D. Ross, Parochial Inspector of Cromdale—Removal by the Board of Supervision, 1309

GRANT, Mr. D., *Marylebone*
Board of Trade—Telegraphic Communication with Light Vessels—The Sunk Light Vessel, 544

GRANTHAM, Mr. W., *Surrey, E.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1207; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1372, 1373, 1376, 1382, 1389; *cl.* 7, 1846; *add. cl.* 1903, 1904, 1921, 1922, 1938

GRANVILLE, Earl (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
Africa (West Coast)—International African Association and France—Rumoured Treaty, 529, 799
Africa (West)—Angra Pequena, Motion for an Address, 5, 1449
Criminal Law Amendment, Report, *cl.* 13, 1166
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 535
Custom House—Searches of Passengers' Luggage—New Regulations, 1277
Education Department — Rothwell School Board, 1438
Egypt—Conference, 154, 157
Negotiations with France, 1442, 1446, 1447, 1730
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 538, 1169, 1170, 1453, 1454, 1455
Law and Police—Police Protection of H.M. Ministers, 1292
Literature, Science, and Art—The Blenheim Pictures, 1288
Parliament—Adjournment of the House, 1740, 1741
Sittings of the House—Whitsuntide Recess, 1154, 1456, 1457
Parliamentary Papers—Irregular Distribution of Public Documents, 529
Wellington Statue, Res. 816, 837, 1265, 1447

GRAY, Mr. E. D., *Carlow Co.*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Pleuro-Pneumonia—Sale of Carcases, 1302, 1468
Egypt—Flogging—The "Cat-o'-Nine Tails," 15, 984, 985, 986, 1318, 1472
Ireland—Questions
Borough Funds Act—Collection of Rates, Dublin, 8
Collector General of Rates, Dublin, 1782

Gray, Mr. E. D.—*cont.*
Magistracy—Disqualification of Dispensary Medical Officers, 442
Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Electoral Division of Rathornan, Carlow Union, 1531
Queen's Colleges—Royal Commission, 986
Post Office—Questions
Appointments of Sorting Clerk and Female Telegraph Learner—Open Competition, 1531
Drumcondra Post Office, 1541
Free Postage, 1295, 1296
Ireland — Telegraph Department — Telegrams in Dublin, within Twelve Miles Radius, 1769
Irish Mail Service, 170, 171, 172, 173
Telephone Exchange Licences, 986;—Telephone Company of Ireland, 419
Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1527
Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1675
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1017, 1018, 1020, 1052, 1075, 1119, 1147, 1151, 1152
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1628, 1629, 1630
Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1655, 1657
Houses of Parliament, 1552, 1569, 1574
Public Works in Ireland, &c. 1659

Great Seal Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 83)
Read 2ª, after short debate *May* 20, 812

Greek Marriages Bi [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Milltown*)
l. Report * *May* 15 (Nos. 39-96)
Committee * *May* 20
Report * *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Greer, Mr. T., *Carrickfergus*
Army—Military Ballooning, 657
Ireland—Registry of Deeds Office, 423

Gregory, Mr. G. B., *Sussex, E.*
India—Banda and Kirwee Prize Money, 425
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1708
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. 917
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1362; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1374, 1375, 1376, 1384; *cl.* 4, 1815; Amendt. 1820; *cl.* 7, Amendt. 1835, 1839; *cl.* 11, 1872
Royal Courts of Justice, Comm. *cl.* 3, Motion for reporting Progress, 1877, 1878
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 362
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1046
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1622
New Courts of Justice and Offices, 1642
Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1578, 1579
Public Offices Site, 1583, 1590

Grey, Mr. A. H. G., *Northumberland, S.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1204, 1208, 1363, 1369, 1371

Guest, Mr. M. J., *Wareham*
Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1572

Hamilton, Right Hon. Lord G. F., *Middlesex*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 905, 1209, 1360; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1388, 1390; *cl.* 4, 1399
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Coinage and Conversion of Stock Bills, 448
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 495, 496, 499, 500, 501, 502

Hamilton, Lord C. J., *Liverpool*
Customs—Outdoor Officers, 1189
Ireland—Public Meetings—Newry Procession, 1791
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 861, 862

Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir W. G. V. V. (Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Derby*
City Livery Companies—Royal Commission, 436
Explosives Act — Dynamite Explosions in Ayrshire, 20
Ireland—Law and Justice—The Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters, Motion for a Select Committee, 635
Law and Justice—Juvenile Offenders, 659
Magistracy (England and Wales)—Mr. J. Jaffray (Birmingham), 654, 655
Mineral Properties—Fines, &c. on Leases, 542
Newspaper Press—Articles on Current Trials for Treason-Felony in Ireland, 1538
Parliament—Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 492
Business of the House, 1784
Prisons (England and Wales)—Chester Prison, 1305
Reformatory and Industrial Schools—Recommendations of the Commission, 654
Scotland—Highland Crofters—Royal Commission, 1502
Supply—Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1640

Hardinge, Viscount
Literature, Science, and Art—The Blenheim Pictures, 1288
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Res. 648

Harlech, Lord
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, (1878) Amendment, Report, Bill withdrawn, 149

Harris, Mr., W. J., *Poole*
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1719

Hartington, Right Hon. Marquess of (Secretary of State for War), *Lancashire, N.E.*
- Army—Questions
  - Billeting, 1316
  - Drainage of the Naas Barracks, 1777
  - Examinations for Promotion, 1310, 1311
  - 45th Regiment at Athlone, 660
  - Inverness Barracks, 1309
  - Ireland—Use of Party Tunes, 651
  - Longford Barracks, Re-erection of, 428
  - Military Ballooning, 657
  - Religious Services for Soldiers (Barbadoes), 1317
  - Sale of Sites at Southsea, 1011
- Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Questions
  - Militia Recruiting, 1779
  - Pensioners, 12
  - Volunteer Camps, 430
- Asia (Central) — The Russian General Staff Map, 1773
- Egypt—Army of Occupation—Discharges from English Regiments, 543, 544
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Questions
  - Garrison at Suakin, 1784
  - Relief of General Gordon, 445, 1181
  - Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1687
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 220, 222
- Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Questions
  - Employment of Indian Troops, 440
  - Gratuity to the Forces, 1783
  - Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 434
- Merchant Shipping, 1506
- Supply—Divine Service, 138
- United Kingdom—Defences of the Mercantile Ports—The Clyde, 1780

Hay, Admiral Right Hon. Sir J. C. D., *Wigtown, &c.*
- Army (India)—Indian Staff Corps, 665
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 87
- Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Gratuity to the Forces, 1783
  - Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 433, 434
- Merchant Shipping, 2R. 708
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 8, Amendt. 1851; *cl.* 9, 1853; Amendt. 1854, 1855; *cl.* 10, Amendt. 1869
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 340
- Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 849

Hayter, Colonel Sir A. D. (Financial Secretary to the War Office), *Bath*
- Egypt (War in the Soudan) — Pensions to Widows and Orphans, 668
- Supply—Divine Service, 137

Healy, Mr. T. M., *Monaghan*
- Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 793
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission, 673

[*cont.*

Healy, Mr. T. M.—*cont.*
- Ireland—Questions
  - Irish Land Commission—Re-appointment of Sub-Commissioners, 539
  - Law and Justice—Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, A Prisoner, 545
  - Local Government Board—Vacant Inspectorships, 667
  - National Education — Promotion of Teachers, 655
  - Royal Irish Constabulary—County Inspector French, 175;—Sergeant Gallagher, 425
  - State of Ireland—Meeting of the National League at Abbeyfeale — Suppression of Meeting, 982
- Ireland—Magistracy—Questions
  - Bankrupt Magistrates, 655, 656
  - Disqualification of Dispensary Medical Officers, 442
  - Tyrone Co. 163
  - Walsh, Mr. T., J.P., 838
- Ireland—Poor Law—Manorhamilton Board of Guardians, 164
  - Revision in Bantry Union, 837, 838
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters, Motion for a Select Committee, 614, 620, 623, 624, 627, 628, 637
- Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 959, 960
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 790, 791
- Parliament—Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 488, 489, 490, 492, 493, 494
  - Rules and Orders—Alteration of Notices, 680, 683
- Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 638, 639
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 526

Heneage, Mr. E., *Great Grimsby*
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1204, 1207; *cl.* 11, 1874

Herbert, Hon. S., *Wilton*
- Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts—Clearances in Whitechapel, 990

Herschell, Sir F. (*see* Solicitor General, The)

Hertford, Marquess of
- Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1281

Hibbert, Mr. J. T. (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Oldham*
- Factory and Workshop Acts—Employment of Females in Laundries, 23
- Law and Justice—Magistrates' Clerks—Prosecutions, 994
- Office of Public Prosecutor—Report of the Committee, 1302
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors—Return of Legislation, 657
- Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.), 2R. 639, 640; Comm. 792
- Supply—Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1658

[*cont*

HICKS, Mr. E., *Cambridgeshire*
Parliament — Business of the House — The Order Book, 1785
Private Brewing Licences, 483
Privy Council—Veterinary Department, 1169
Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 1905, 1929
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 349
Ways and Means — Financial Statement—Coinage and Conversion of Stock Bills, 447

HILL, Lord A. W., *Downshire*
Ireland—Public Meetings—The Newry Procession, 1789, 1791
Post Office—Protestants and Roman Catholics in the Post Office at Portadown, 1180

HILL, Mr. A. S., *Staffordshire, W.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 889, 1208

HOLLAND, Sir H. T., *Midhurst*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 656
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1108

HOLLOND, Mr. J. R., *Brighton*
Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 458

HOME, Lieutenant-Colonel D. Milne, *Berwick-on-Tweed*
Egypt (War in the Soudan) — Pensions to Widows and Orphans, 668

HOPWOOD, Mr. C. H., *Stockport*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 341

HOULDSWORTH, Mr. W. H., *Manchester*
Portugal—Congo Treaty, 438

HUBBARD, Right Hon. J. G., *London*
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1419; Amendt. 1426, 1689, 1712

HUNTLY, Marquess of
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Cambridgeshire, Motion for Papers, 1287
Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 799

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) Bill
[H.L.] (*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *May* 15 (No. 98)
2R. put off, after short debate *May* 26, 1275

ILLINGWORTH, Mr. A., *Bradford*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 354
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 525

INCE, Mr. H. B., *Hastings*
Middlesex Registry—The Staff, 1313

INDIA (*Questions*)
Banda and Kirwee Prize Money, Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 15, 425

Madras
Breach of India Office Regulations, 1879—*Mr Tarrant and Others*, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *June* 9, 1781
Returns of Lands held by Uncovenanted Civil Servants, &c., Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *June* 9, 1781
The Governor of Madras—Payment of the Professional Tax, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 22, 999
Official Residences, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 27, 1480
The Salem Riots, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 12, 9
The Salt Laws, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 15, 426

Railways (*India*)
Indian State Railways—Contracts, Question, Mr. Ecroyd; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 12, 26
The Quetta Railway, Questions, Mr. Slagg, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 22, 993
The Indo-Afghan Railway, Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 22, 1004

The Indian Civil Service—Examination of Natives, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 22, 999

International Health Exhibition—Reduced Rate of Admission for the Working Classes
Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 12, 10

IRELAND (*Questions*)
Board of Works—Local Inspectors, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 649
Borough Funds Act—Collection of Rates (Dublin) Act—Legislation, Questions, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 8
Condition of Irish Labourers—The Select Committee, Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 1006
Court of Bankruptcy—Unpaid Dividend Fund Account, Questions, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 12, 13; *May* 20, 838
Emigration—State-aided Emigrants, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 443; Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 852
Irish Glebe and Church Lands Purchasers' Association, Question, Mr. Beresford; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 440
Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883 — "*Home Farms*," Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 653
Schemes for the Erection of Labourers' Cottages, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1177

[*cont.*

IRELAND—*cont.*

Palmerstown Races—Gentlemen Riders dressed as Females, Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 428

Public Meetings—The Newry Procession, Question, The Earl of Donoughmore; Answer, The Lord Chancellor *June* 9, 1724; Questions, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gibson, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, 1789

Registry of Deeds Office (Dublin), Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 15, 423

The Collector General of Rates, Dublin, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1782

Local Government Board

Medical Inspectors—Appointment of Dr. Woodhouse, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 10, 1890

The Rate Collector for the Croghan Division, Boyle Union, Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 842

The Rate Collector of the Blackrock Township Commissioners, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1461

The Vacant Inspectorship, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 667

Lunatic Asylums

Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1304

Education

Board of Intermediate Education—The Examiners, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 981

Professor Curtis, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 10, 1887

Intermediate Education Office (Dublin)—The Dublin City and County Conservative Club, Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1460

Board of National Expenditure—Statistics of Expenditure, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 650

Salaries of National School Teachers—Deduction for attending University Examinations, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 840

Status, Duties, and Leaves of Clerks, Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1314

Carrickaslane National School—Dismissal of Miss Fitzgerald, Question, Mr. Kinnear; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 165

Education Department—Convent National School Teachers, Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1472

Industrial Schools, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 429; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1777

Promotion of Teachers, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 655

The Kilbiggan National School, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1532

[*cont.*

IRELAND—*cont.*

Poor Law

Ballymacarrett Dispensary, Belfast—Death from Alleged Neglect, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 422

Catholic Inmates—Provision for Divine Service in Donegal Workhouse, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 982

Dr. O'Neill, Medical Officer, Athy, Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 169

Revision in Bantry Union, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 20, 837

Election of Guardians

Drumcliff West, Co. Sligo, Questions, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1178

Electoral Division of Rathornan, Carlow Union, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1531

Mountmellick Union—Claim to Vote, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1775

Newry Union—Misconduct of Returning Officer, Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1466

Kilrush Board of Guardians—Disorderly Conduct of Chairman, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1532

Manorhamilton Board of Guardians, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 164

Officers of the Mullingar Board of Guardians, Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1463

Post Office

Acting Mail Guards, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 10, 1894

Post Office, Portadown—Protestants and Roman Catholics, Question, Lord Arthur Hill; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 23, 1180

Sorters in Travelling Post Offices, Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 20, 843

Sorting Clerk and Female Telegraph Learner—Open Competition, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 5, 1531

Drumcondra Post Office, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 5, 1541

Postal Accommodation in Limerick, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 22, 987

Postal Communication in Co. Waterford, Question, Mr. Villiers Stuart; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 5, 1530

Telegraph Department, Dublin—The Twelve Miles Radius, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 9, 1769

Fisheries

Illegal Salmon Fishing, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 842

Piers and Harbours

Red Bay Pier, Cushendall, Co. Antrim, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 651

[*cont.*

Ireland—*cont.*

Inland Navigation and Drainage
Clare Slob Lands Reclamation, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 23, 1176
Survey of the Barrow, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 12, 24
The River Inny, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 652

Law and Justice
Arrest for Illegal Possession of Explosives—Case of —— M'Ginn, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 841
Arrest of Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 15, 443; Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 16, 544
The Brothers Delahunty, Questions, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan; Question, Mr. O'Brien; [no reply] *May* 13, 176
The Newspaper Press—Articles on Current Trials for Treason-Felony in Ireland, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *June* 5, 1537
The Riots at Londonderry—"Young Waller," Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 8

The Magistracy
Bankrupt Magistrates, Questions, Mr. Healy, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 655
County of Tyrone, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 163
Disqualification of Dispensary Medical Officers, Questions, Dr. Lyons, Mr. Healy, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 441
Disqualification of Publicans—Mr. Charles O'Neill, Londonderry, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 844
High Sheriff of Fermanagh, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1463
The Oldcastle Union, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1303
Tipperary County and the King's County, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 163

Mr. Thomas Dowling, J.P., Cappathwaite, Question, Mr. Mayne; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 839
Mr. Claud Cole Hamilton, Moynalty, Co. Meath, Questions, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Leamy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 11
Mr. Kenrick H. Jones, Co. Antrim, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1534
Mr. Joseph Lowry, Sub-Sheriff of Meath, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 840
Mr. Martin Langton, Co. Wicklow, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 26
Mr. M'Clintock, J.P., Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1465

[*cont.*

Ireland—*cont.*
Mr. Matthias M'Manus, Tullamore, Westmeath, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 168
Mr. Hampden Evans Tener and Mr. St. George Lawrence Willcocks, Co. Tyrone, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1296
Mr. Thomas Walsh, J.P., Ballyglass, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 20, 838

Petty Sessions District of Carlingford, Co. Louth, Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 664
Petty Sessions District Bench of Cookstown, Co. Tyrone—Religious Persuasion, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1298
Petty Sessions District of Termonfecan, Co. Louth, Questions, Mr. Biggar, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1459; Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1780

Law and Police
Arrest of Miss Kelly, of Ballicudihy, Co. Kilkenny, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1771
Arrests at Tubbercurry, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 23, 1177
Assault on the Person—Case of Mr. M'Gaughey, Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1303
Assault by Orangemen at Stewartstown, Co. Tyrone, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1462
Alleged Assault on the Police by Lord Caledon, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1533
Disorderly Conduct of a Detective at Knockbarron Races, Co. Galway, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 10, 1891
Firing at the Person—Case of Michael Burke, Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 988
Illegal Action of the Sheriff of King's County, Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 23, 1183
Military Riot at Athlone, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 166

Prisons
Prisons Board—The Report, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 430
Wexford Gaol—Case of Edward Malone, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 6, 1680

Royal Irish Constabulary
Alleged Ill-conduct of Sergeant M'Grath at Coolrain, Mountrath, Queen's Co., Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 9, 1775
Establishment and Extra Police for Co. Waterford, Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 10, 1888
Extra Police for the City of Cork, Observations, Mr. Parnell; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan; debate thereon *May* 22, 1117

[*cont.*

IRELAND—*Royal Irish Constabulary*—cont.
Limitations of Age, Question, Mr. Moore ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1180
Mr. James Ellis French, Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Small ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 13 ; Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Healy ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 175
Police Guard over a Lady, Questions, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 22
Sergeant Gallagher, Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 424 ; *June* 9, 1782

State of Ireland
Evictions
Case of Bernard Ennis, Phillipstown, King's Co., Question, Mr. Sexton ; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 23, 1175
Case of Murphy and O'Connell, Costlea, Co. Limerick, Questions, Mr. O'Sullivan ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 19, 669 ; *May* 20, 844

The Queen's Colleges and Royal University of Ireland—Rev. Dr. Molloy, Question, Mr. Corry ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 16, 539
The Royal Commission, Question, Mr. Gray ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 986
[See titles *Land Law (Ireland) Act*, 1881
Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881 —*Irish Land Commission*
Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882]

Ireland—Law and Justice — The Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 16, to leave out from "That," add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the facts connected with the conviction of the Crossmaglen prisoners and the subsequent release of Bernard Smith (*Mr. Lynch*) *v.*, 614 ; Question proposed, "That the words, &c. ;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Irish Land Court Officers (Exclusion from Parliament) Bill (*Mr. Brodrick, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. Macartney*)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April], "That the Bill be now read 2° ;" Question again proposed ; Debate resumed *June* 9, 1883 ; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Brodrick*) ; Question put, and agreed to ; Debate further adjourned

JACKSON, Mr. W. L., *Leeds*
Excise—Weight and Value of Smuggled Tobacco, 1880-4, 425

JAMES, Sir H. (*see* ATTORNEY GENERAL, The)

JERNINGHAM, Mr. H. E. H., *Berwick-on-Tweed*
Asia (Central)—Russian Advance—Sarakhs, 658
Russo-Persian and Afghan Frontiers, 1293

KENNARD, Mr. C. J., *Salisbury*
Egypt—Gambling at Port Said, 1530
National Debt (Conversion of Stock)—Investments by Trustees, 1893
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1427
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1391 ; *add. cl.* 1940

KENNY, Mr. M. J., *Ennis*
Ireland—Questions
Inland Navigation and Drainage—Clare Slob Lands Reclamation, 1176
Labourers' Act, 1883—Schemes for the Erection of Labourers' Cottages, 1177
Law and Justice—Brothers Delahunty, 176, 178
Post Office — Postal Accommodation in Limerick, 987
Prevention of Crime Act, 1882, 1509
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 789
Stone Coronation Chair, "Lia Fail," or Stone of Destiny, Westminster Abbey, 18

KIMBERLEY, Earl of (Secretary of State for India)
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 8, 410, 412
Egypt—Conference, 152, 161
Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 1276
Navy—Condition of the Iron-clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas M. Symonds, G.C.B., Motion for Papers, 1737

KING-HARMAN, Colonel E. R., *Dublin County*
Civil Service—Copyists, 845
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Mission of Admiral Sir W. Hewett to the King of Abyssinia, 175
Ireland—Magistracy—Bankrupt Magistrates, 656
Poor Law—Dr. O'Neill, Medical Officer, Athy, 169
Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 975
Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1527
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1126, 1132

KINGSCOTE, Colonel R. N. F., *Gloucestershire, W.*
Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels Bill, 426

KINNEAR, Dr. J., *Donegal*
Ireland — National Education — Carrickaslane National School—Dismissal of Miss Fitzgerald, 165

KNIGHTLEY, Sir R., *Northamptonshire, S.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 553

LABOUCHERE, Mr. H., *Northampton*
  Egypt—Questions
    Affairs of the Soudan—General Gordon's Mission, 672
    Conference, 675, 1488
    Punishments — Use of the "Cat-o'-Nine-Tails," 985
  Egypt and the Soudan—Estimate of Loss of Life, 179
  Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 458
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 561, 562, 903, 1203
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 335
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1040

Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Molloy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 21, 936 ; after debate, Question put ; A. 75, N. 138 ; M. 63 (D. L. 101) [Bill 16]

LAING, Mr. S., *Orkney, &c.*
  Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 93
  Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. Amendt. 921

LAMINGTON, Lord
  Custom House—Searches of Passengers' Luggage (New Regulations), 1276

Land Drainage Provisional Orders Bill
l. Read 2ª * *May* 19 (No.82)
  Committee * ; Report *May* 20
  Read 3ª * *May* 23

Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Bill
  Question, Colonel Colthurst ; Answer, Mr. Biggar *May* 22, 995

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—*Section* 31—*Loans for Improvements*
  Question, Colonel Nolan ; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 663

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—*Irish Land Commission*
  Appeals—County Cavan, Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1465
  Sittings at Lifford, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 6, 1687
  Judicial Rents—Case of Thomas Sinnott, Questions, Mr. Small ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 987 ; *May* 27, 1467 ; Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 6, 1681
  Originating Notice for Fair Rent—Date of Liability—Case of Mrs. Casey, Cartongar, Co. Longford, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy ; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 12, 7

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881 — *Irish Land Commission*—cont.
  Case of Patrick Casserlay, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 26, 1308

  Irish Land Commission Court—Irish Interpreter at Sittings in Donegal, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1465
  Quit and Crown Rents, Question, Mr. Gibson ; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 12, 15

Sub-Commissioners
  Mr. William Gray, Question, Sir Hervey Bruce ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 21 ; Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Mr. Gibson ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 430 ; Questions, Colonel Digby, Mr. Lea ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 984 ; Questions, Viscount Galway, Mr. Brodrick ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1171 ; Question, Observations, Viscount Midleton ; Reply, Lord Carlingford *May* 26, 1277 ; Questions, Sir Philip Miles, Sir Hervey Bruce, Viscount Lewisham, Mr. J. Lowther ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, 1299
  Mr. Thomas Walpole, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 5, 1535
  Re-appointment of Sub-Commissioners, Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 16, 539 ; Questions, Mr. Gibson ; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 22, 997
  Number of Sub-Commissioners, Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Brodrick ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *June* 10, 1893

  The Land Court—Mr. Bell, Valuer for Co. Cavan, Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1174

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) (*Questions*)
  Arrangement of the Assizes, Questions, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Bulwer ; Answers, The Attorney General *May* 13, 176 ; Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 26, 1315
  Removal of York Assizes, Question, Sir Frederick Milner ; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 19, 685
  Execution of Foreign Judgments, Question, Mr. Serjeant Simon ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 15, 421
  Juvenile Offenders, Question, Mr. Sexton ; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 19, 658
  Lord St. Leonards, Question, Mr. Sexton ; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 20, 845
  Magistrates' Clerks—Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 22, 993
  Public Prosecutor, Office of — Report of the Committee, Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley ; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 26, 1302
  The Birmingham Dynamiters, Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 27, 1471

  The Magistracy—Mr. John Jaffray (Birmingham), Questions, Mr. Biggar ; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *May* 19, 654

[*cont.*

Law and Police—Police Protection of Her Majesty's Ministers
Questions, The Earl of Ashburnham; Answers, Earl Granville *May* 26, 1292

LAWRENCE, Mr. Alderman W., *London*
Colonies—Return of Coinage of Gold, 1319
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 468
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1706

LAWSON, Sir W., *Carlisle*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon—Telegram, 613
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 201
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Employment of Turkish Troops, 1896
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 434
Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment, Motion for Leave, 641
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1110

LEA, Mr. T., *Donegal*
Explosives Act, 1875—Inspectors, 661
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 984
Navy—Coastguard Station at Donegal, 980

LEAHY, Mr. J., *Kildare*
Ireland — Palmerstown Races — Gentlemen Riders dressed as Females, 428

LEAMY, Mr. E., *Waterford*
Ireland—Questions
  Magistracy — Mr. Claud Cole Hamilton, Moynalty, Co. Meath, 11
  Royal Irish Constabulary—Establishment and Extra Police for Co. Waterford, 1888
  State-aided Emigration, 852
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1138

LECHMERE, Sir E. A. H., *Worcestershire, W.*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan) — Relief of General Gordon, 446

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw (Chief Commissioner of Works), *Reading*
Civil List—Royal Palaces, 1773
International Health Exhibition — Reduced Rate of Admission for the Working Classes, 10
Parks (Metropolis) — Hyde Park — Open-air Preachers, 1001
Public Offices—New Admiralty and War Office, 839
Stone Coronation Chair, "Lia Fail," or Stone of Destiny, Westminster Abbey, 18
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office. &c. Great Britain, 1617, 1619, 1620, 1622, 1632
  Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667
[cont.

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw—*cont.*
  Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1595, 1596, 1598, 1601, 1602
  Houses of Parliament, 1545, 1551, 1554, 1555, 1556, 1557, 1559, 1562, 1565, 1566, 1569, 1571, 1572, 1573
  Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1639
  New Courts of Justice and Offices, 1644
  Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1579, 1581, 1582
  Public Offices Site, 1583, 1584, 1585, 1587, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1592
  Science and Art Department Buildings, 1646, 1647, 1649, 1651
  Surveys of the United Kingdom, 1645
Wellington Statue, 1005, 1006, 1312

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, N.*
Education Department—Over-Pressure in Elementary Schools—Dr. C. Browne's Report, 1773
  Rothwell School Board, 1311, 1312
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 546, 566, 1245, 1247, 1248; *cl.* 4, 1394, 1395, 1398; *cl.* 5, Amendt. 1826, 1833; *cl.* 7, 1844
Treasury Solicitors' Act, 1876 — Intestates Estates, 538

LENNOX, Right Hon. Lord H. G. C. G., *Chichester*
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Pensions to Widows and Orphans, 668

LEWIS, Mr. C. E., *Londonderry*
Ireland, State of—Riots at Londonderry—"Young Waller," 9
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 565, 584, 586, 588, 589, 593, 1231, 1362

LEWISHAM, Viscount, *Kent, W.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1300

LICHFIELD, Bishop of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 7, 407

Literature, Science, and Art
The Blenheim Pictures, Question, Observations, Earl Cadogan; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 26, 1287
The May Examinations at South Kensington, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 5, 1538
The Record Office at Venice, Questions, Mr. Dillwyn; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 26, 1305
The Royal Academy—The Chantrey Bequest, Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 13, 178; Questions, Sir Robert Peel, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 446; Questions, Sir Robert Peel; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 22, 1007
The Technical Education Report, Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 9, 1776

Lloyd, Mr. M., *Beaumaris*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1758, 1759
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1812

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 13 [Bill 200]
Read 2° * *May* 23

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Bandon Waterworks) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 13 [Bill 188]

Local Government Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Monson*)
l. Committee * ; Report *May* 16 (No. 69)
Read 3ª * *May* 19
c. Read 1° * *May* 22 [Bill 223]
Read 2° * *June* 6

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act (Carrick-on-Suir) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Committee * ; Report *May* 15 (No. 54)
Read 3ª * *May* 16
c. Read 1° * *May* 21 [Bill 219]
Read 2° * *June* 6

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (Enniscorthy, &c.) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Monson*)
l. Read 2ª * *May* 12 (No. 64)
Committee * *July* 20
Report * *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26
c. Read 1° * *May* 27 [Bill 236]
Read 2° * *June* 10

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Read 2° *May* 19 [Bill 189]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 13 [Bill 198]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 13 [Bill 199]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 14 [Bill 202]
Read 2° * *May* 26

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 205]
Read 2° * *May* 26

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 210]
Read 2° * *May* 27

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered * *May* 26
Read 1° * *May* 27 [Bill 235]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Committee * ; Report *May* 15 (No. 55)
Read 3ª * *May* 16
c. Read 1° * *May* 21 [Bill 220]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 13 [Bill 190]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 211]
Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, after short debate *June* 9, 1767

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 212]
Read 2° * *May* 27

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 6 [Bill 239]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 6 [Bill 240]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 6 [Bill 241]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 9 [Bill 242]

Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 23 [Bill 226]
Read 2° * *June* 6

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 85)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 86)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law (No. 3) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 87)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Considered * *June* 9 [Bill 150]
Read 3° * *June* 10

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 88)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 89)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 90)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) Bill (*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 91)
Read 2ª * *May* 20
Committee *; Report *May* 23
Read 3ª * *May* 26

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 13 [Bill 191]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 13 [Bill 192]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 213]
Read 2° * *June* 9

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 214]
Read 2° * *May* 27

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 215]
Read 2° * *May* 27

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 9 [Bill 243]

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 10 [Bill 246]

Local Government Provisional Order (Salt Works and Cement) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 19 [Bill 216]
Read 2° * *May* 27

Local Taxation—Resolution of March 28
Observation, Mr. Pell *May* 15, 481

LONDON, Bishop of
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 396

LONGFORD, Earl of
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 397
  Parliament — Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Res. 647, 648
  Settlement and Removal Law Amendment, 2R. 1155, 1156

LOPES, Sir M., *Devonshire, S.*
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 329

LOWTHER, Right Hon. J., *Lincolnshire, N.*
  Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1010, 1539
    Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685
  Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1301
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1183
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 558, 561, 570, 612, 1331, 1335, 1352, 1354, 1365 ; *cl.* 3, 1380, 1381
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1020, 1032
    Houses of Parliament, 1545, 1567, 1572
    Public Offices Site, 1585, 1591

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W., *Rutland*
  Ways and Means — Inland Revenue—Gun Licences, 437

LUBBOCK, Sir J., *London University*
  Ways and Means —Financial Statement, Comm. 502

LYMINGTON, Viscount, *Barnstaple*
  Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1254

LYNCH, Mr. N., *Sligo Co.*
  Army—Billeting, 1316
  Ireland—Questions
    Law and Police—Assault on the Person—Case of Mr. M'Gaughey, 1303
    Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Drumcliff West, Co. Sligo, 1178
    State of Ireland—Police Protection in Galway Co.—Messrs. R. and C. Henry, 1179, 1180
  Ireland—Law and Justice—Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters, Motion for a Select Committee, 614

LYONS, Dr. R. D., *Dublin*
  Ireland—Magistracy—Disqualification of Dispensary Medical Officers, 441, 442
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 596

McARTHUR, Mr. A., *Leicester*
  India (Madras)—Salem Riots, 9

MACARTNEY, Mr. J. W. E., *Tyrone*
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 899
  Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1557

M'CARTHY, Mr. J., *Longford*
  Army—Longford Barracks, Re-erection of, 428
  India (Madras)—Returns of Lands held by Uncovenanted Civil Servants, &c. 1781
  Ireland—Questions
    Inland Navigation and Drainage—River Inny, 652
    Irish Pauper Emigrants, 443
    Land Law Act, 1881—Application for Fair Rent—Case of Patrick Casserlay, 1308 ; —Originating Notice for Fair Rent—Date of Liability for Payment—Case of Mrs. Casey, Cartongar, Co. Longford, 7
    Royal Irish Constabulary—Sergeant Gallagher, 424, 425, 1782
  Supply—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, 1666
    Houses of Parliament, 1568

M'COAN, Mr. J. C., *Wicklow*
  Egypt—Conference, 448 ; Personal Explanation, 545
    Punishments—Use of the "Cat-o'-Nine-Tails," 1318

MACFARLANE, Mr. D. H., *Carlow Co.*
  Asia (Central)—Advances of the Russians, 847, 1012
    Russian General Staff Map—Afghan Frontier, 1778
  Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 451, 665, 1001
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1207
  Scotland—Highland Crofters—Royal Commission, 1504
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 326
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1043
    Houses of Parliament, 1566

McGAREL-HOGG, Sir J. M., *Truro*
  Metropolitan Board of Works—Metropolitan Buildings Acts, 19

MAC IVER, Mr. D., *Birkenhead*
  Board of Trade—Constitution and Functions, 1964
  Customs—Duties on Foreign Imports, 473
  Education Department—Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 17
  Egypt and the Soudan—Estimate of Loss of Life, 179, 450
  Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Employment of Indian Troops, 440
  Mercantile Marine—Loss of Life by Shipwreck, 1468
  Merchant Shipping Acts—The "Inchclutha," 1003, 1004
  Merchant Shipping, 2R. 695 ; Amendt. 753
  Merchant Shipping Bill, 1464, 1465, 1507, 1508, 1509, 1541, 1542

[*cont.*

Mac Iver, Mr. D.—*cont.*
Parliament—Business of the House, 449
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 370
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1111
Houses of Parliament, 1569
Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1578
Trade and Commerce—Commercial Treaties—Great Britain and Spain, 444
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 519, 522

McKenna, Sir J. N., *Youghal*
Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 459
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 585, 894

Mackintosh, Mr. C. Fraser-, *Inverness, &c.*
Army—Religious Services for Soldiers—Barbadoes, 1317
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 7, Amendt. 1849, 1850
Scotland — Sasine Office, Edinburgh, 662, 1534

McLaren, Mr. C. B. B., *Stafford*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1395, 1406 ; *cl.* 5, 1830
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 347

Macliver, Mr. P. S., *Plymouth*
Education Department—" Blue Ribbon " in Board Schools, 994
Inland Revenue—Hackney Carriage Licences, 169
Income Tax Surcharges, 1776

Madagascar—Rumoured French Reinforcements
Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 10, 1889

Magniac, Mr. C., *Bedford*
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1699

Makins, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.*
Egypt (Re-organization)—Mr. Clifford Lloyd, 1482

Malay States—Abolition of Slavery
Question, Mr. Wodehouse ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 19, 669

Manners, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R., *Leicestershire, N.*
Asia (Central)—Russian General Staff Map, 1773
Russo-Persian and Afghan Frontiers, 1293
Egypt—Conference—Negotiations with France, 1478
Papers—Abridgment of No. 18, 28

[*cont.*

Manners, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R.—*cont.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1207, 1226, 1227 ; *cl.* 3, 1375, 1379 ; Amendt. 1385, 1386, 1387, 1390, 1392 ; *cl.* 9, 1856, 1865 ; *add. cl.* 1928, 1940 ; Motion for reporting Progress, 1964
Wellington Statue, 1006, 1312

Marriages Legalization Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Committee * *May* 12 (No. 76)
Report *May* 13, 147 (No. 93)
Read 3ª * *May* 23
c. Read 1° * (*Attorney General*) *May* 27 [Bill 237]
Read 2° ; Committee—R.P. *June* 9, 1880

Marriages Legalization (Wood Green Congregational Church) Bill
(*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. xii.]

Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment Bill
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Committee * *May* 13 (No. 60)
Report * *May* 15, (No. 94)
Read 3ª * *May* 15

Martin, Mr. R. B., *Tewkesbury*
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1710
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1389
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 522

Mauritius
Mr. Napier Broome, Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 15, 421
The Flogging Laws, Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 15, 426

Maxwell, Sir H. E., *Wigtonshire*
Africa (West Coast)—Natives in the Congo Territory, 434, 435
Army—Inverness Barracks, 1309
Asia (Central)—Russo-Persian and Afghan Frontiers, 1293
Channel Tunnel—Suspension of Works, 1309
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Garrison at Suakin, 1784
Rumoured Advance of the Mahdi to Khartoum, 1686, 1687
Inland Revenue Office—Grievances of the Officials, 435, 436
Ireland—Magistracy—Disqualification of Publicans—Mr. Charles O'Neill, Londonderry, 844
Petty Sessions District of Termonfecan, Co. Louth, 1459
Portugal—Congo Treaty, 666
Seizure and Detention of the British Yacht " Maud " on the South African Coast, 1002, 1310
United States of America—Food Adulteration, 1680

MAYNE, Mr. T., *Tipperary*
Ireland—Magistracy—Mr. T. Dowling, J.P., 839

Medical Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Mundella*)
c. Read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 207]

Mercantile Marine
Loss of Life by Shipwreck, Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 27, 1468
Telegraphic Communication with Light Vessels—The Sunk Light Vessel, Question, Mr. D. Grant; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 16, 544

Merchant Shipping Acts
The "Inchclutha," Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain; Question, Mr. O'Donnell; [no reply] *May* 22, 1003
The Steamship "Elephant, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 22, 995

Merchant Shipping Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Holms*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 19, 685
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Mac Iver*); Question proposed, "That 'now' &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. E. Clarke*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned [Bill 1]

Merchant Shipping Bill
Questions, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Gladstone *May* 27, 1464; Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1481; Observations, Mr. Norwood; short debate thereon 1506
Over-Insurance, Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 22, 996
Statement of Mr. Chamberlain—The Valuers, Question, Mr. Norwood; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 22, 1002; Questions, Mr. Norwood, Mr. C. M. Palmer; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 26, 1306

Merchant Shipping — Northern Lights Commissioners—Lighting of Orkney and Shetland
Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *June* 5, 1540

Meteorological Office—Weather Reports—Return of Unwarned Storms
Motion for a Paper (*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*) *May* 16, 530; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Return of the storms which have visited the British Islands between 1st January 1874 and 31st December 1883, and of which no warning has been issued from the Meteorological Office; with a notice of the quarter from which each unwarned storm has reached the coast" (*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*) *May* 26, 1273; after short debate, Motion agreed to

METROPOLIS (*Questions*)
City of London Livery Companies—The Royal Commission, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 15, 436; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir R. Assheton Cross *May* 22, 1009
Metropolitan Improvements—Hyde Park Corner—The Wellington Statue, Questions, The Duke of Rutland; Answers, Lord Thurlow *May* 12, 2
Public Health—Re-vaccination, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 23, 1172
Railways—Metropolitan Urban Districts for Railways—The Map, Question, Mr. Francis Buxton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *June* 9, 1781
The Parks—Hyde Park—Open-air Preachers, Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 22, 1001
[See title *Wellington Statue*]

Metropolitan Board of Works—Metropolitan Building Acts
Question, Mr. B. Samuelson; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg *May* 12, 18

Metropolitan District Railway Bill (*by Order*)
c. Read 3° *May* 22, 978

Metropolitan Police Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 16 Bill 209]
Read 2° * *May* 22
Committee *; Report *May* 26
Re-comm *; Committee; Report; read 3° *June* 10

Metropolitan Police [*Expenses*]
c. Resolution considered in Committee, and agreed to *June* 9, 1885
Resolution reported *June* 10

Metropolitan Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Camperdown*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 27 (No. 113)

Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 19, 787; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Warton*); after short debate, Question put; A. 14, N. 107; M. 93 (D. L. 95)
Original Question again proposed, 789
[*cont.*

Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill—cont.
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*); after short debate, Question put; A. 21, N. 90; M. 69 (D. L. 96)
Original Question again proposed, 790
After short debate, original Question put; A. 86, N. 17; M. 69 (D. L. 97) [Bill 169]

Middlesex Registry, The
Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 22, 994; Question, Mr. Ince; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 26, 1313

Midleton, Viscount
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1277
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Res. 647

Miles, Sir P. J. W., *Somerset, E.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1299

Milltown, Earl of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 395, 396; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 400; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 401; Report, *cl.* 5, Amendt. 1156, 1159; *cl.* 10, Amendt. 1161; *cl.* 12, Amendt. 1163
Public Notaries, 2R. Amendt. 141

Milner, Sir F. G., *York*
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Removal of Cork Assizes, 685

Mineral Properties—Fines, &c. on Leases
Question, Mr. Rolls; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 16, 541

Molloy, Mr. B. C., *King's Co.*
Ireland—Law and Police—Illegal Action of the Sheriff of King's Co. 1183
Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 936, 976
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 787, 789
Parks (Metropolis)—Hyde Park—Open-air Preachers, 1001
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1635
  Public Works in Ireland, &c., Motion for reporting Progress, 1659, 1660
  Surveys of the United Kingdom, 1645

Monk, Mr. C. J., *Gloucester City*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 365
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1049
  Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1581

Monteagle, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 11, Amendt. 416

Moore, Mr. A. J., *Clonmel*
Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary—Limitations of Age, 1180
Labourers (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 953
Post Office—Irish Mail Service, 170, 172
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1109, 1141

Morley, Earl of (Under Secretary of State for War)
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Eligibility of Militia Officers to Staff Appointments, 1438

Morley, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 255, 256
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1399

Morley, Mr. S., *Bristol*
Education Department—Speldhurst National School, 636

Morocco
Slavery, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 16, 541
Women Flogging, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12 10

Mount-Temple, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 5, Amendt. 404, 405; *cl.* 8, 413; Report, *cl.* 5, 1158
Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis), 1R. 1273
Wellington Statue, Res. 826

Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*
Parliament—Committee of Selection, 236;—Special Report, 642, 1171

Mundella, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Sheffield*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1762, 1763, 1764
Education Department—Questions
  "Blue Ribbon" in Board Schools, 994
  Instructions to School Inspectors, 442
  Over-Pressure in Elementary Schools, 18;—Dr. C. Browne's Report, 1773
  Pensions of Elementary Teachers, 441
  Political Emblems in National Schools, 432, 1007
  Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 16, 17
  Rothwell School Board, 1311, 1312
  Speldhurst National School, 666
Elementary Education—Lyefield School Board—Death from Over-Pressure, 420
Endowed Schools—Tonbridge School, 992
Intermediate and Higher Education (Wales)—Aberystwith College, 1318
Literature, Science, and Art—The May Examinations at South Kensington, 1538

[cont.

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J.—*cont.*
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1083, 1090, 1092
Science and Art Department Buildings, 1650, 1651

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) [Costs]
c. Resolution considered in Committee, and agreed to *May* 15, 528
Resolution reported *May* 16

MUNTZ, Mr. P. H., *Birmingham*
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 471
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 327

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill
(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 26, 1408
After short debate, Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. J. G. Hubbard*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. W. Lowther*); after further short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *June* 6, 1688; after debate, Question put; A. 117, N. 34; M. 83 (D. L. 106)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 186]
Committee deferred, after short debate *June* 9, 1881
Investments by Trustees, Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *June* 10, 1893

NAVY (*Questions*)
Assistant Dockyard Constructors, Questions, Mr. A. F. Egerton, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *June* 10, 1892
Assistant Paymasters—Admiral Sir Thomas Symonds's Letter, Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook *May* 27, 1435
Bursting of a 100-ton Gun, Questions, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Brand *June* 5, 1538
Coastguard Station in Donegal, Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 22, 980
General Officers of Royal Marines, Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 22, 991
Shipbuilding by Contract, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 12, 22
The British and French Navies, Questions, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Speaker *May* 15, 437
The Committee on Private Shipyards, Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 19, 659

NAVY—*cont.*
The Dockyards—Payment of Wages, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *June* 6, 1687
Unbuoyed Moorings in the Medway, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 12, 20
Woolwich Arsenal—Royal Carriage Department—Mountings for Naval Ordnance—Reduction of Hands, Questions, Mr. Boord; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Brand *May* 22, 979

Navy—Condition of the Iron-clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas M. Symonds, G.C.B
Motion for Papers, Viscount Sidmouth *June* 9, 1731; after short debate, Motion agreed to

NELSON, Earl
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 403; *cl.* 8, 410

Netherlands—The Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero"—See title *Straits Settlements*

NEWDEGATE, Mr. C. N., *Warwickshire, N.*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1338, 1344, 1350; *cl.* 3, 1384; *cl.* 4, 1797, 1818, 1819
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 369

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway Co.*
Ireland—Land Law Act, 1881—Sec. 3—Loans for Improvements, 663
Parliament—Public Petitions, Res. 794, 795
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1139, 1143, 1146
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 517, 525

NORTHBROOK, Earl of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 1458
Navy—Assistant Paymasters—Admiral Sir Thomas Symonds's Letter, 1436, 1437
Navy—Condition of the Iron-Clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas M. Symonds, G.C.B., Motion for Papers, 1731, 1739

NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H., *Devon, N.*
Egypt—Conference—Negotiations with France, 1478, 1787, 1788
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1182
Relief of Berber and Dongola, 25
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 293
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 786
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1427, 1716, 1718

[*cont.*

NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H.—*cont.*
  Parliament—Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 492
    Business of the House, 29, 30, 31, 449, 684, 1318, 1481
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 610, 1205, 1239, 1329, 1348; *cl.* 3, 1384, 1386; *cl.* 4, 1406, 1803
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 507, 514, 515

NORTON, Lord
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 403; *cl.* 7, Amendt. 406, 408
  Education Department—Grants to Colleges in Wales, 1455

NORWOOD, Mr. C. M., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
  Merchant Shipping Bill, 1506
    Statement of Mr. Chamberlain — The Valuers, 1002, 1306, 1307
  Merchant Shipping, 2R. 708

O'BEIRNE, Colonel F., *Leitrim*
  Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Pensioners, 12

O'BRIEN, Sir P., *King's Co.*
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 911, 912

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Mallow*
  Egypt—Punishments—Use of the "Cat-o'-Nine-Tails," 985
  Ireland—Questions
    Law and Justice—Arrest of Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, 443, 544, 545;—Brothers Delahunty, 178
    Law and Police—Firing at the Person—Case of Michael Burke, 988
    Local Government Board—Rate Collector for the Croghan Division, Boyle Union, 842
    Magistracy—Mr. M'Clintock, J.P., 1465
    Post Office—Sorters in Travelling Post Offices, 843
  Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary — Questions
    Mr. James Ellis French, 13, 14, 175
    Sergeant Gallagher, 425
  Parliament—Rules and Orders of the House—Alteration of Notices, 676, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1120, 1121, 1133, 1144

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Queen's Co.*
  Army—Drainage of the Naas Barracks, 1776, 1777
  Bankruptcy Act, 1883—Private Arrangements, 23
  Consolidated Fund, &c. (Permanent Charges Redemption) Acts, 1873 and 1883—Commutation of the Marlborough and Penn Pensions, 846
  Education Department—Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 17
  Factory and Workshop Acts—Employment of Females in Laundries, 23

O'CONNOR, Mr. A.—*cont.*
  Ireland—Questions
    Inland Navigation and Drainage—Survey of the Barrow, 24
    Irish Land Commissioners—Mr. T. Walpole, 1535
    Law and Justice—Magistrates' Clerks—Prosecutions, 993
    Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Mountmellick Union—Claim to Vote, 1775
    Prisons Board—The Report, 430
    Royal Irish Constabulary—Alleged Ill-conduct of Sergeant M'Grath at Coolrain, Queen's Co. 1775
  Ireland—Irish Land Commission Court (Appeals)—Irish Interpreter at Sittings in Donegal, 1455
    Sittings at Lifford, 1687, 1688
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1017, 1018, 1019; Motion for reporting Progress, 1142, 1143
    Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1631
    Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, Amendt. 1655, 1656
    Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1592, 1596, 1602, 1603
    Lighthouses Abroad, 1666
    Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1636
    Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1575, 1576
    Public Works in Ireland, &c. 1659, 1660
    Royal University, Ireland, Buildings, 1661
    Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 1662, 1663
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. Motion for reporting Progress, 527, 528

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P., *Galway*
  Custom House Officials, 1467, 1468
  Egypt—Conference, 673, 674
  Ireland—Collector General of Rates, Dublin, 1782
    Public Meetings—Newry Procession, 1789
  Irish Land Court Officers (Exclusion from Parliament), 2R. 1884
  Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 946
  Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 789
  Post Office—Telegraph Department—Protection of Telegrams, 167, 168
  Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1678
  Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 849
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1044
    Houses of Parliament, 1542, 1563, 1565, 1566
  Wellington Statue, 1006
  Yorkshire Land Registries and Yorkshire Registries, Nomination of Select Committee, 796

O'DONNELL, Mr. F. H., *Dungarvan*
  Egypt—Conference, 1486
    Punishments—Use of the "Cat-o-Nine-Tails," 986
  India—Indian Civil Service—Examination of Natives, 999

O'Donnell, Mr. F. H.—*cont.*
Merchant Shipping Acts—The "Inchclutha," 1004
Steamship "Elephant," 995
Merchant Shipping Bill—Over-Insurance, 996, 997

Oranmore and Browne, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 398; Report, *cl.* 12, 1163
Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1282
Settlement and Removal Law Amendment, 2R. 1156

O'Sullivan, Mr. W. H., *Limerick Co.*
Ireland—Court of Bankruptcy—Unpaid Dividend Fund Account, 13, 838
Evictions—Costlea, Co. Limerick—Case of Murphy and O'Connell, 669, 844
Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 954
Parliament—Business of the House, 448
Taxation and Expenditure, 478
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 521, 525, 527

Otway, Sir A. J. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Rochester*
Metropolitan District Railway, 3R. 978
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 912, 1195, 1200, 1204, 1320, 1350; *cl.* 4, 1394, 1395, 1802, 1805, 1806, 1811, 1812, 1818, 1820; *cl.* 7, 1838, 1841; *add. cl.* 1932, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 381
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1016, 1017, 1018, 1019, 1020, 1022, 1028, 1052, 1081
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1629, 1635
Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1578
Public Works in Ireland, &c. 1660

Oxford, Bishop of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 8, 414

Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order Bill
(*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. xiii]

Paget, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. 926
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 11, 1873

Palmer, Mr. C. M., *Durham, N.*
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 701, 758
Merchant Shipping Bill—Statement of Mr. Chamberlain—The Valuers, 1308

Parliament
LORDS—
Privilege—House of Lords—The Court of Appeal—Lord Denman, Observations, Lord Denman *May* 15, 394

Sittings of the House—The Whitsuntide Recess, Observations, Earl Granville *May* 23, 1154
(To adjourn from *May* 27 to *June* 16)
Adjournment of the House for Whitsuntide, Observations, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1456
(To adjourn from *May* 27 to *June* 9)
Moved, "That the House do adjourn till Monday next" (*The Earl Granville*) *June* 9, 1740; after short debate, Motion amended, and agreed to
[House adjourned to Friday *June* 13]

Parliamentary Papers—Irregular Distribution of Public Documents, Observations, Lord Balfour; Reply, Earl Granville *May* 16, 529; Resolution, The Lord Balfour *May* 20, 837
Parliamentary Representation—The Boroughs of Ireland, Observations, Lord Waveney; Reply, Lord Carlingford *May* 26, 1289

Private Bills
Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills
Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess *May* 27
Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 72 and 82 be suspended for the remainder of the Session *June* 9
Ordered, That the order of the 18th of March last be suspended, and that a statement in the following form be circulated in the case of all Bills to which Standing Order No. 38 applies, not later than the second day after the first reading [The Form is then appended] *June* 9

Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, or other authority having charge of the arrangements of the House of Lords, to furnish in a substantial manner a portion of the Royal Gallery as a writing room for the use of Peers during the sittings of the House" (*The Earl of Longford*) *May* 19, 647; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

COMMONS—
PRIVATE BILLS
Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Private Bills*—cont.
duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 5th day of June (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *May* 27

THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Report from the Committee of the Chairman's Panel *May* 12, 6;—Mr. Sclater-Booth to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure have leave to sit and proceed on Thursday, the 15th day of this instant May, at Twelve of the clock (*Mr. Sclater-Booth*)

Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 13, 179

Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade *May* 13, 236

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and amended Clauses of the Bills referred to them (*Mr. Sclater-Booth*) *May* 15

Members added *May* 16, 642

Sir Gabriel Goldney discharged, Lord Algernon Percy appointed in respect of the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill *May* 23, 1171

PUBLIC PETITIONS

Public Petitions Committee — Reception of Petitions, Report presented (*Sir Charles Forster*) *May* 22, 977

ORDER

Rules and Orders of the House—Alteration of Notices, Observations, Mr. O'Brien; short debate thereon *May* 19, 676

Merchant Shipping Bill—Circular of the Board of Trade, Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Speaker *June* 5, 1541

Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, Observations, Mr. Healy, Mr. Gladstone; short debate thereon *May* 15, 488

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Orders of the Day

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to General Gordon's Mission (*Mr. Gladstone*) *May* 12

Ordered, That the Adjourned Debate on General Gordon's Mission have precedence, this day, over all Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day (*Mr. Gladstone*) *May* 13

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Question, Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone; short debate thereon *May* 12, 29; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 26, 1318; Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain; Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone *May* 27, 1480;—*Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill*, Questions, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. M. Brooks; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 448; — *Arrangement of Public Business*, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gibson, Mr. T. A. Dickson; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 15, 449; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 19, 684; Questions, Mr. Gibson, Lord John Manners, Mr. Buchanan, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 22, 1010; Questions, Mr. J. Lowther, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 23, 1183;—*Questions to Ministers*, Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 16, 542;—*Orders of the Day*, Question, Mr. Newdegate; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 20, 852;—*The London Government Bill*, Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *June* 9, 1784; —*The Order Book*, Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *June* 9, 1785;—*Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill*, Question, Mr. Charles Russell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Gladstone *June* 9, 1792;—*The Coinage Bill*, Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *June* 9, 1884

Ascension Day, Moved, "That Committees shall not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the Clock, and have leave to sit until Six of the Clock, notwithstanding the sitting of the House" (*Mr. Dodson*) *May* 21, 935; after short debate, Question put; A. 93, N. 37; M. 56 (D. L. 100)

The Whitsuntide Recess—Adjournment of the House, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 26, 1315

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday the 5th of June" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *May* 27, 1482; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Public Petitions, Moved, "That the Order with regard to Petitions be amended, by substituting six for five o'clock as the latest hour for presenting Petitions" (*Colonel Nolan*) *May* 19, 794; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Her Majesty's Attorney General v. *Mr. Charles Bradlaugh—Trial at Bar*—Order for attendance of Sir Thomas Erskine May, K.C.B., Clerk of the House *May* 27, 1529

Parliament — Rules and Orders of the House — Private Bill Legislation— New Standing Order (133A) *to follow Standing Order No.* 133

Moved, "That where a Chamber of Commerce or Agriculture, or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or

[cont.

[cont.

Parliament—Rules and Orders of the House—Private Bill Legislation — New Standing Order (133*a*) *to follow Standing Order No.* 133—cont.

business in any district to which any Railway Bill relates, petition against the Bill, alleging that such trade or business will be injuriously affected by the rates and fares proposed to be authorized by the Bill, or is injuriously affected by the rates and fares already authorized by Acts relating to the Railway undertaking, it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills, if they think fit, to admit the Petitioners to be heard, on such allegation, against the Bill, or any part thereof, or against the rates and fares authorised by the said Acts, or any of them: The provisions of this Order relative to rates and fares already authorised, extend to Traders and Freighters, and to a single Trader, in any case where a locus standi would have been allowed to them or him, if this Order had not been made: Nothing in this Order shall authorise the Referees to entertain any question within the jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners" (*Mr. B. Samuelson*) *May* 21, 914

An Amendt. moved, to leave out all after the first word "Where," insert "an application is made by a Railway Undertaking for Parliamentary powers, attention shall be directed by the Board of Trade to the proposed, and, in the case of an existing Company, to the existing rates or fares, with a view to their consideration by the Committee; and that persons affected by such rates or fares shall have a 'Locus Standi' before such Committee" (*Mr. Laing*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Debate adjourned

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

Took the Oath

Juue 9—The Lord Langford, a Representative Peer for Ireland (Writs and Returns, March 20)

New Peer

May 20—The Right Hon. Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, created Viscount Hampden of Glynde in the county of Sussex

Sat First

May 19—The Lord Fisherwick (Marquess of Donegall), after the death of his brother

May 26—The Lord Mostyn, after the death of his grandfather

June 9—The Lord Raglan, after the death of his father

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

June 5—*For* Athlone Borough, *v.* Sir John J. Ennis, baronet, deceased

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs Issued*—cont.

June 6—*For* Southampton County (Southern Division), *v.* Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu Douglas Scott, Manor of Northstead, in the county of York

June 9—*For* Lincoln City, *v.* John Hinde Palmer, esquire, deceased

New Member Sworn

May 15—Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy, *Kent County* (*Mid Division*)

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*
- Ireland—Condition of Irish Labourers—Select Committee, 1006
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters, Motion for a Select Committee, 627, 628
- Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 956, 959, 965
- Parliament—Rules and Orders—Alteration of Notices, 683
- Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1527
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1117, 1118, 1120, 1121

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
- Parliament—Business of the House, 31
- Universities (Scotland), Leave, 1433

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PEEL, Right Hon. Sir R., *Huntingdon*
- Literature, Science, and Art—Chantrey Bequest, 178, 179, 446, 447, 1007, 1008
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 333
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1020
- Universal Exhibition at Antwerp—A British Commission, 1895
- Wellington Statue, 1005

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878—Movement of Cattle, 1294
- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Lincolnshire, 1469
- Local Taxation—Resolution of March 28, 481
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1346; *cl.* 11, 1873

PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
- Army—Examinations for Promotion, 1310, 1311

PHIPPS, Mr. C. P., *Westbury*
- Army—Small Arms—Regulation Swords, 1768

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Literature, Science, and Art—Technical Education Report, 1776
Parliament—Standing Committees — Chairman's Panel, 6

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1527
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 600

Portugal
The Congo River—Seizure of the British Yacht "Maud," Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *May* 22, 1002; Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 26, 1310
The Congo Treaty, Question, Mr. Houldsworth; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 15, 438; Questions, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 19, 665

POST OFFICE (*Questions*)
Free Postage (Health Exhibition), Questions, Mr. Gray, Mr. Birkbeck; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *May* 26, 1295
Issue of the New Annuity and Insurance Tables, Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 19, 669
[See title *Government Annuities*]

The Irish Mail Service, Questions, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Gray, Mr. Moore, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *May* 13, 170

Telegraph Department
Female Telegraphists, Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 26, 1313
Protection of Telegrams, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *May* 13, 167

Telephone Companies
Royalties from Telephone Companies, Observations, Mr. Gray, Mr. Slagg; Reply, Mr. Fawcett *May* 22, 1052
Telephone Exchange Licences—The Telephone Company of Ireland, Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *May* 15, 418; Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 22, 986

Post Office Protection Bill
(*Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Order for 2R. discharged; Bill withdrawn *June* 9, 1882 [Bill 161]

POWER, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 189

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Ireland—Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Arrest of Thomas Buckley and Richard Power at Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford, 27

POWERSCOURT, Viscount
Wellington Statue, Res. 825

Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882
Conviction of the Brothers Delahunty, Observations, Mr. Kenny; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 27, 1509
Arrest of Thomas Buckley and Richard Power at Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford, Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 12, 27
Orders—Prohibition of National League Meeting at Abbeyfeale, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 22, 982
Police Protection in Galway Co.—Messrs. R. and C. Henry, Questions, Mr. Lynch; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 23, 1179
Trial for Intimidation at Newtownbarry, Co. Wexford, Question, Mr. J. E. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 15, 427

PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Navy—General Officers of Royal Marines, 991

Prisons (England and Wales)—Chester Prison
Question, Mr. Tatton Egerton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 26, 1305

Privy Council—Veterinary Department
Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 27, 1469

Public Expenditure
Observations, Mr. Rylands *May* 15, 481

Public Health (Confirmation of Bye Laws) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Carrington*)
l. Royal Assent *May* 19 [47 *Vict.* c. 12]

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 22 [Bill 221]
Read 2° * *June* 5

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 26 [Bill 229]
Read 2° * *June* 6

Public Libraries Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 13 (No. 95)
Read 2ª * *May* 19
Committee; Report *May* 20, 814
Read 3ª * *May* 23

Public Notaries Bill [H.L.] (No. 53)
(*The Lord Aberdare*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *May* 13, 139
[*cont.*

Public Notaries Bill—cont.
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day six months") (*The Earl of Milltown*); after short debate, on Question, That ("now") &c.? Cont. 30, Not-Cont. 92; M. 62
Resolved in the negative

Public Offices, The
Sanitary Condition of the India Office, Question, Baron De Ferrières; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *May* 12, 27
The New Admiralty and War Office—The Competitive Designs, Question, Mr. Brogden; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 20, 839

Public Prosecutor, Office of—Report of the Committee
Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 26, 1302

PULESTON, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 373

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 13, 162; *May* 20, 852
Motion for Leave (*Mr. Trevelyan*) *May* 26, 1434; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *May* 27, 1510; after debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 238]

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., *Cambridge University*
Education Department—Over-Pressure in Elementary Schools, 17;—Dr. C. Browne's Reports, 1772, 1773
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1198, 1234, 1335; *cl.* 5, 1828; *cl.* 7, 1837; Amendt. 1841, 1844

Railway Regulation Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 22 [Bill 225]

Railways — Continuous Brakes — Legislation
Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Lord Sudeley *May* 26, 1264

RAMSAY, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1635
Disturnpiked Roads in Scotland, 1652, 1654

RATHBONE, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1761
Egypt—Conference, 1493
Law and Justice—Arrangement of the Assizes, 176

READ, Mr. Clare S., *Norfolk, W.*
Private Brewing Licences, 484
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 11, 1872

REDESDALE, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)
Criminal Law Amendment, Report, *cl.* 12, 1163
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 534, 537
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—House of Lords—Interior Arrangements, Res. 648
Settlement and Removal Law Amendment, 2R. 1155
Wellington Statue, 1265

REDMOND, Mr. J. E., *New Ross*
Ireland—Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Trial for Intimidation at Newtownbarry, Co. Wexford, 427

REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K., *Wexford*
Ireland—Questions
Intermediate Education Office (Dublin)—The Dublin City and County Conservative Club, 1460
Office of Commissioners of National Education—Status, Duties, and Leaves of Clerks, 1314
Poor Law—Officers of the Mullingar Board of Guardians, 1463
Post Office—Female Telegraphists, 1313
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1112, 1135

REED, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1742, 1756, 1766

Reformatories and Industrial Schools — Recommendations of the Commission —Legislation
Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 19, 654

Representation of the People Bill
(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate*)
c. Committee [Second Night]—R.P. *May* 16, 546
Committee [Third Night]—R.P. *May* 20, 853
Committee [Fourth Night]—R.P. *May* 23, 1189
Committee [Fifth Night]—R.P. *May* 26, 1319
Committee [Sixth Night]—R.P. *June* 9, 1792
Committee [Seventh Night]—R.P. *June* 10, 1897

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill
(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair;" Question again proposed; Debate resumed *May* 16, 638; Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P.
Committee *June* 5, 1667 [House counted out]

RICHARD, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1746, 1752
Intermediate Education (Wales), 1315

RICHMOND AND GORDON, Duke of
Contagious Diseases (Animals), Commons Amendts. Consid. 146
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act (1878) Amendment, Report, Bill withdrawn, 149
Settlement and Removal Law Amendment, 2R. 1155

RITCHIE, Mr. C. T., *Tower Hamlets*
Army—Ordnance Department—Manufacture of Small Arms, 1470, 1471
Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, 459
Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1555

Rivers Pollution
Moved for "Return of all proceedings instituted in the county courts in England and Wales for the prevention of the pollution of rivers under the 'Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876,' and the result of such proceedings (ordered to be laid before the House on the 29th of May 1883)" (*The Duke of Northumberland*) *May* 12, 5; after short debate, Motion agreed to

ROCHESTER, Bishop of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 402, 404

ROE, Mr. T., *Derby*
Africa (West Coast)—Administration of the British Colonies, 1774

ROGERS, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark*
Railways (India)—Indo-Afghan Railway, 1004

ROLLS, Mr. J. A., *Monmouthshire*
Mineral Properties—Fines, &c. on Leases, 541

ROSEBERY, Earl of
Western Pacific—Deportation of French Recidivists, 643

ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, E.*
Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1616, 1617

Royal Courts of Justice Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)
c. Committee—R.P. *June* 9, 1877 [Bill 139]

Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *June* 9 (No. 114)

RUSSELL, Mr. C., *Dundalk*
Parliament—Business of the House, 1792

RUSSELL, Mr. G. W. E. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Aylesbury*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Pleuro-Pneumonia—Sale of Carcases, 1303

RUTLAND, Duke of
Metropolitan Improvements — Hyde Park Corner—Wellington Statue, 2, 3, 149
Wellington Statue, Res. 819, 826, 837, 1447

RYLANDS, Mr. P., *Burnley*
Civil List—The Royal Palaces, 1773
Egypt—Conference, 1485
Navy—British and French Navies, 437, 438
Shipbuilding by Contract, 22
Public Expenditure, 481
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1201; *cl.* 11, 1872
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1018
Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1611
Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1597, 1598
Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1639
Public Offices Site, 1583, 1584, 1587, 1589
Science and Art Department Buildings, 1647, 1648, 1650

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill (*Mr. Arthur Vivian, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Acland*)
c. 2R., after short debate, Debate adjourned *May* 14, 383 [Bill 13]
Bill withdrawn * *May* 16
Personal Explanation, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, Mr. Borlase; short debate thereon *May* 23, 1184

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 19 (No. 102)

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill
Question, Mr. T. A. Dickson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 20, 851

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors—Return of Legislation
Questions, Mr. Warton; Answers, Mr. Hibbert *May* 19, 657

Sale of Spirits (Mixed Traders) Bill
(*Mr. Kennard, Viscount Folkestone, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cropper*
c. Bill withdrawn * *May* 26 [Bill 79]

SALISBURY, Marquess of
Contagious Diseases (Animals), Commons Amendts. Consid. 147

[*cont.*

SALISBURY, Marquess of—*cont.*
Criminal Law Amendment, Report, *cl.* 5, 1158, 1161; *cl.* 13, 1166
Egypt—Conference, 159, 161
  Negotiations with France, 1444, 1446, 1730
Egypt (Events in the Soudan) — General Gordon, 537, 1170, 1454, 1455
Great Seal, 2R. 813
Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 1275, 1276
Navy—Condition of the Iron-Clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas M. Symonds, G.C.B., Motion for Papers, 1735
Parliament—Adjournment of the House, 1740, 1741
  Whitsun Holidays—Adjournment of the House, 1456, 1457
Wellington Statue, 1264, 1265

SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 472
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1693
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1051
  Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1596
  Houses of Parliament, 1560
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 516

SAMUELSON, Mr. B., *Banbury*
Metropolitan Board of Works—Metropolitan Building Acts, 18
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Private Bill Legislation—New Standing Order to follow Standing Order No. 133, Res. 914

School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) Bill
(*Colonel Colthurst, Mr. William Shaw, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Blennerhassett, Mr. Patrick Martin*)
c. Committee *—R.P. *May* 15 [Bill 45]
Committee *; Report *May* 22 [Bill 224]
Considered * *May* 26

SCLATER-BOOTH, Right Hon. G., *Hants, N.*
Army—Sale of Sites at Southsea, 1011
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1756
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. 1881
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1706
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1196, 1223; *cl.* 4, 1795, 1797; *cl.* 11, 1872, 1874
Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1677
Shannon Navigation, 2R. 1880
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1017, 1018, 1021
  Houses of Parliament, 1555
  Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1579
  Public Works, &c. in Ireland, 1660

SCOTLAND (*Questions*)
Alleged "Boycotting" in South Uist, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 15, 420

SCOTLAND—*cont.*
Evictions — Notices by Post, Question Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *June* 9, 1770
Harbours of Refuge on the North East Coast—Report of the Special Sub-Committee, Question, The Earl of Rosebery; Answer, The Earl of Dalhousie *May* 23, 1154
Law and Justice—Alleged Resistance to Sheriff in Lewis, Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answers, The Lord Advocate *May* 19, 661; *June* 5, 1536
Law and Police—Forged Certificates of Pedigree of Horses—Case of David and Joseph Raeside and another, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 23, 1182
Poor Law—Mr. D. Ross, Parochial Inspector of Cromdale — Removal by the Board of Supervision, Question, Sir George Grant; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 26, 1309
The Highland Crofters—The Royal Commission, Observations, Dr. Cameron; Reply, Sir William Harcourt; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1499
The Sasine Office, Edinburgh, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 12, 12; Question, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 19, 662; Question, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate *June* 5, 1534

Secretary for Scotland Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Read 2^{a}, after debate *May* 20, 799 (No. 79)

SELBORNE, Earl of (*see* CHANCELLOR, The LORD)

SELWIN-IBBETSON, Sir H. J., *Essex, W.*
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 344, 345
Supply—Public Offices Site, 1582, 1590

Settled Land Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl Cairns*)
l. Committee *; Report *May* 12 (No. 52)
Read 3^{a} * *May* 27
c. Read 1^{o} * (*Sir R. Assheton Cross*) *June* 10 [Bill 247]

Settlement and Removal Law Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Belmore*)
. Presented; read 1^{a} * *May* 15 (No. 97)
Order for 2R. discharged, after short debate *May* 23, 1155

SEVERNE, Mr. J. E., *Shropshire, S.*
Elementary Education—Lyefield School Board—Death from Over-Pressure, 419

SEXTON, Mr. T., *Sligo*
Army—45th Regiment at Athlone, 660, 661, 663, 664
Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts—The Peabody Trustees, 660

[*cont.*

cont.

SEXTON, Mr. T.—*cont.*
- Ireland—Questions
  - Board of Intermediate Education—The Examiners, 981
  - Education—Industrial Schools, 1777
  - Evictions—Case of Bernard Ennis, Phillipstown, King's Co. 1175
  - Fisheries—Illegal Salmon Fishing, 842
  - Law and Justice—Arrest for Illegal Possession of Explosives—Case of —— M'Ginn, 841
  - Local Government Board—The Rate Collector of the Blackrock Township Commissioners, 1461
  - Palmerstown Races—Gentlemen Riders dressed as Females, 429
- Ireland—Law and Police—Questions
  - Arrests at Tubbercurry, 1177
  - Assault by Orangemen at Stewartstown, Co. Tyrone, 1462
  - Military Riot in Athlone, 166, 167
- Ireland—Magistracy—Questions
  - Appointment of Mr. Mathias M'Manus, 168
  - Disqualification of Publicans — Mr. C. O'Neill, Londonderry, 845
  - High Sheriff of Fermanagh, 1463
  - Mr. Hampden Evans Tener and Mr. St. George Lawrence Willcocks, Co. Tyrone, 1296, 1297
  - Mr. J. Lowry, Sub-Sheriff of Meath, 840
  - Petty Sessions District Bench of Cookstown, Co. Tyrone—Religious Persuasion, 1298
  - Tipperary County and the King's County, 163
- Ireland—Poor Law—Catholic Inmates—Provision for Divine Service in Donegal Workhouse, 982
  - Election of Guardians—Drumcliff West, Co. Sligo, 1179
- Ireland, State of—Meeting of the National League at Abbeyfeale—Suppression of Meeting, 982
- Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Juvenile Offenders, 658 ;—Lord St. Leonards, 845
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 791
- Purchase of Land (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1521
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1019, 1020, 1022, 1123, 1132, 1152
  - Divine Service, 137

SHAFTESBURY, Earl of
- Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 8, Amendt. 410, 415

Shannon Navigation Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)

c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 13 [Bill 201]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *June* 9, 1879

Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day three months" (*Mr. Biggar*); Question proposed, "That 'now' &c. ;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question put, and agreed to ; Bill read 2°

SHAW, Mr. W., *Cork Co.*
- Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 973

SHEIL, Mr. E., *Meath Co.*
- Ireland—Magistracy—Mr. Claud Cole Hamilton, Moynalty, Co. Meath, 11
- Yorkshire Land Registries and Yorkshire Registries, Nomination of Select Committee, 795, 796

Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Act (1860) Amendment Bill (*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)

c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 9 [Bill 245]

SIDMOUTH, Viscount
- Africa (West)—Angra Pequena, Motion for an Address, 3, 645, 646, 1449
- Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 816 ; 3R. 1291
- Navy—Assistant Paymasters—Admiral Sir Thomas Symonds's Letter, 1435, 1437
- Navy—Condition of the Iron-Clad Navy—Correspondence of Sir Thomas M. Symonds, G.C.B., Motion for Papers, 1731

SIMON, Mr. Serjeant J., *Dewsbury*
- Law and Justice—Execution of Foreign Judgments, 421
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1206

SLAGG, Mr. J., *Manchester*
- Customs and Excise—Duties on Gold and Silver Plate, 460
- India—Quetta Railway, 993
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1068, 1110

SMALL, Mr. J. F., *Wexford Bo.*
- Ireland—Questions
  - Land Law Act, 1881—Fair Rents—Case of Thomas Sinnott, 987, 1467
  - Lunatic Asylums, 1304
  - Magistracy—Petty Sessions District of Carlingford, Co. Louth, 664
  - Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Newry Union—Misconduct of Returning Officer, 1466
  - Royal Irish Constabulary—Mr. James Ellis French, 14
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1138

SMITH, Right Hon. W. H., *Westminster*
- Army (India)—Pensions, 1295
- Coinage Bill, 670
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Mission of Admiral Sir William Hewett to the King of Abyssinia, 174, 851, 998, 1791
- National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1428
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1390
- Royal Courts of Justice, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1878

SMITH, Mr. S., *Liverpool*
- Crown Lands, Motion for a Select Committee, 1258

SMITH, Mr. T. E., *Tynemouth, &c.*
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 782

Smith's Trust Estate Bill [*Lords*]
c. Read 2°, after short debate *June* 10, 1886

Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) Bill (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*)
l. Presented ; read 1ª, after short debate *May* 26, 1265 (No. 109)

South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railways Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Edward Watkin*) *May* 14, 307
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Chamberlain*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c. ;" after long debate, Question put ; A. 84, N. 222 ; M. 138 (D. L. 93)

SPEAKER, The (Right Hon. Arthur W. PEEL), *Warwick*
- Army—45th Regiment at Athlone, 660
- Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 793, 794
- Egypt and the Soudan—Estimate of Loss of Life, 179
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon's Mission—Vote of Censure, 201, 256
- Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Vote of Thanks to Officers and Men of H.M. Sea and Land Forces, 434
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Arrest of Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, 443
- Literature, Science, and Art—The Chantrey Bequest, 1008
- Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Sewerage Scheme), 2R. 1767
- Merchant Shipping, 2R. 695, 1508, 1509
- Metropolitan District Railway, 3R. 978
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. 788, 789
- Navy—British and French Navies, 438
- Parliament—Questions
  - Amendments on Motion for going into Committee—Rulings of Mr. Speaker, 491, 494
  - Business of the House, 30
  - Order—Merchant Shipping Bill, &c. 1542
  - Rules and Orders—Alteration of Notices, 681, 682, 683, 684
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), Personal Explanation, 1188
- Scotland—Highland Crofters—Royal Commission, 1499, 1502
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 323
- Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.), 2R. 640
- Ways and Means — Financial Statement—Coinage and National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bills, 448
- Yorkshire Land Registries and Yorkshire Registries, Nomination of Select Committee, 795, 796

STANHOPE, Earl
- Egypt—Conference—Negotiations with France, 1444, 1724
- Parliament—Whitsun Holidays—Adjournment of the House, 1457

STANHOPE, Hon. E., *Lincolnshire, Mid*
- Asia (Central)—The Russian General Staff Map—Afghan Frontier, 1778, 1779
- Bankruptcy Act, 1883—Trustees Balances, 990
- Egypt—Conference, 671
- Merchant Shipping, 2R. 748, 761
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1215 ; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 1867, 1868
- Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1633
  - Houses of Parliament, 1571
  - Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1577, 1580
  - Surveys of the United Kingdom, 1645

STANLEY, Right Hon. Colonel F. A., *Lancashire, N.*
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1195, 1200, 1202 ; Amendt. 1209

STANLEY, Hon. E. L., *Oldham*
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1801, 1821
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1093

STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, Lord
- Education Department — Rothwell School Board, 1437, 1438

STEWART, Mr. J., *Greenock*
- United Kingdom—Defences of the Mercantile Ports—The Clyde, 1780

STOREY, Mr. S., *Sunderland*
- Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 542, 543, 848, 849, 850, 1688
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1103

Straits Settlements—The Rajah of Tenom —Crew of the "Nisero"
Questions, Mr. Storey ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 16, 542 ; Questions, Mr. Storey, Sir John Hay, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 20, 848 ; Observations, Mr. Storey ; Reply, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ; short debate thereon *May* 22, 1103 ; Question, Mr. Storey ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 6, 1688

STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, Lord
- Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis), 1R. 1265
- Wellington Statue, Res. 817 ; Amendt. 820, 835, 1448

Strensall Common Bill
(*Mr. Brand, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Arthur Hayter*)
c. Read 2°*, and referred to a Select Comm. *May* 12 [Bill 177]
Select Committee nominated *May* 26; List of the Committee, 1434

Strensall Common [*Costs and Expenses of Commissioners*]
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *May* 14, 393
Res. reported *May* 15

STUART, Mr. H. VILLIERS-, *Waterford Co.*
Egypt—Forced Labour, 1313
Ireland—Post Office—Postal Communication in Co. Waterford, 1530
Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment 2R. 940

SUDELEY, Lord
Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 1275, 1276
Railways—Continuous Brakes, 1264
Wellington Statue, The, 149
Wellington Statue, Res. 830

Sugar Trade—West Indian Sugar
Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, The Earl of Derby *May* 26, 1283

SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Westmeath*
Ireland — Labourers' Act, 1883 — "Home Farms," 653
Royal Irish Constabulary—Police Guard over a Lady, 22
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 588
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 524

Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Gibson, Sir Richard Wallace, Mr. Blake, Mr. Corry*)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd April], "That the Bill be now read 3°;" Question again proposed; Debate resumed *May* 22, 1153; Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 3° [Bill 75]
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl of Milltown*) *May* 23 (No. 104)

Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *May* 16, 639 [Bill 55]
Order for Committee discharged; Bill committed to a Select Committee *May* 19, 792

SUPPLY
Report—Postponed First Resolution [5th May] £57,500, Charge for Divine Service, considered and, after short debate, agreed to *May* 12, 137

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—*cont.*
Considered in Committee *May* 22, 1013—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS £3,468,550, VOTE ON ACCOUNT—EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE
Moved, "That a further sum, not exceeding £1,968,550, be granted, &c." (*Baron Henry De Worms*); after long debate, Motion withdrawn
Telephone Companies (*Mr. Gray*)
Charity Commissioners (*Mr. Jesse Collings*)
Central Asia (*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett*)
Straits Settlements—The "Nisero" (*Mr. Storey*)
Royal Irish Constabulary — Extra Police, Cork City (*Mr. Parnell*)
Vote agreed to
Resolution reported *May* 23
Considered in Committee *June* 5; 1542—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES — CLAS I. — PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS—Votes 4 to 21—23 to 26
Resolutions reported *June* 6

Switzerland—The Salvationists
Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 12, 25

SYKES, Mr. C., *York, E. R.*
Education Department—Pensions of Elementary Teachers, 441
Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment, Motion for Leave, 641; 2R. 1882

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1747, 1756, 1759
Education Department—Instruction to School Inspectors, 442
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1377

TAYLOR, Mr. P. A., *Leicester*
International Health Exhibition — Reduced Rate of Admission for the Working Classes, 10
Mauritius—Flogging Laws, 426

THURLOW, Lord
Meteorological Office — Weather Reports — Return of Unwarned Storms, Motion for a Paper, 532; Motion for a Return, 1275
Metropolitan Improvements — Hyde Park Corner—Wellington Statue, 2, 3
Rivers Pollution, Motion for a Paper, 6
Wellington Statue, 1449

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1370, 1371; *cl.* 3, 1375, 1376, 1386; *add. cl.* 1903, 1930
Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 639
South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 366
Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.), 2R. 640
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 524

TOTTENHAM, Mr. A. L., *Leitrim*
Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Motion for reporting Progress, 612, 875

Trade and Commerce—Commercial Treaties —Great Britain and Spain
Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 15, 444

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill (*Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Findlater, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 26 [Bill 231]

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 27 [Bill 233]
Read 2°* *June* 10

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 27 [Bill 234]
Read 2°* *June* 10

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Read 2°* *May* 13 [Bill 193]

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Read 2°* *May* 13 [Bill 194]

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)
c. Read 2°* *May* 19 [Bill 196]

Treasury Solicitors' Act, 1876—*Intestates Estates*
Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 16, 538

TREVELYAN, Rt. Hon. G. O. (Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), *Hawick, &c.*
Army—Alleged Outrage at Athlone, 664
Board of Intermediate Education—The Examiners, 981
Egypt—Punishments—Use of the "Cat-o'-Nine-Tails," 985, 986
Ireland—Questions
  Borough Funds Act—Collection of Rates (Dublin) Act, 8
  Collector General of Rates, Dublin, 1782
  Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Pleuro-Pneumonia—Sale of Carcases, 1469;—Veterinary Inspectors, 652
  Emigration—Irish Pauper Emigrants, 444
  Evictions—Costlea, Co. Limerick—Case of Murphy and O'Connell, 669, 844
  Explosives Act, 1875—Inspectors, 661
  Fisheries—Illegal Salmon Fishing, 843

[cont.

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. G. O.—*cont.*
  Irish Glebe, &c. Purchasers' Association, 441
  Irish Labourers, Condition of—Select Committee, 1007
  Labourers' Act, 1883—"Home Farms," 653;—Scheme for the Erection of Labourers' Cottages, 1178
  Land Court—Appeals—Sittings at Lifford, 1687, 1688;—Mr. Bell, Valuer for Co. Cavan, 1174
  Land Law Act, 1881—Fair Rents—Case of Patrick Casserlay, 1309; — Case of Thomas Sinnott, 988, 1467, 1681
  Lunatic Asylums, 1304
  Palmerstown Races — Gentlemen Riders dressed as Females, 429
  Public Meetings—Newry Procession, 1789, 1791
  Purchase of Land Bill, 163, 852
  State-Aided Emigration, 852
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Appeals in County Cavan, 1465
  Irish Land Commission Court—Irish Interpreter at Sittings in Donegal, 1465
Ireland—Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Questions
  Mr. L. Walpole, 1535
  Mr. William Gray, 21, 431, 432, 984, 1172, 1300, 1301
  Number of, 1894
  Re-appointment, 539
Ireland—Law and Justice—Questions
  Arrest for Illegal Possession of Explosives —Case of —— M'Ginn, 841
  Arrest of Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, 443
  Delahunty Brothers, 177, 178
Ireland—Law and Police—Questions
  Alleged Assault on the Police by Lord Caledon, 1533
  Arrest of Miss Kelly, of Ballicudihy, Co. Kilkenny, 1772
  Assault by Orangemen at Stewartstown, Co. Tyrone, 1462
  Assault on the Person—Case of Mr. M'Gaughey, 1304
  Disorderly Conduct of a Detective at Knockbarron Races, Co. Galway, 1892
  Firing at the Person—Case of Michael Burke, 989
  Military Riot at Athlone, 166, 167
Ireland—Local Government Board—Questions
  Medical Inspectors—Appointment of Dr. Woodhouse, 1891
  Rate Collector for the Croghan Division, Boyle Union, 842
  Rate Collector of the Blackrock Town Commissioners, 1462
  Vacant Inspectorship, 667
Ireland—Magistracy—Questions
  Appointment of Mr. Matthias M'Manus, 168
  Bankrupt Magistrates, 656
  Disqualification of Dispensary Medical Officers, 441, 442
  Disqualification of Publicans—Mr. Charles O'Neill, Londonderry, 845
  High Sheriff of Fermanagh, 1463
  Mr. Claud Cole Hamilton, Moynalty, Co. Meath, 11

[cont.

Trevelyan, Right Hon. G. O.—*cont.*
- Mr. Hampden Evans Tener and Mr. St. George Lawrence Willcocks, Co. Tyrone, 1297
- Mr. J. Lowry, Sub-Sheriff of Meath, 840, 841
- Mr. K. H. Jones, Co. Antrim, 1534
- Mr. M'Clintock, J.P., 1466
- Mr. Martin Langton, Co. Wicklow, Appointment of, 26
- Mr. T. Dowling, J.P., 839
- Mr. T. Walsh, J.P., 838
- Oldcastle Union, 1303
- Petty Sessions District Bench of Cookstown, Co. Tyrone—Religious Persuasion, 1298
- Petty Sessions District of Carlingford, Co. Louth, 664
- Petty Sessions District of Termonfecan, Co. Louth, 1460, 1780
- Tipperary County and King's County, 164
- Tyrone, County of, 163

Ireland—National Education—Questions
- Board of—Statistics of Expenditure, 650
- Carrickaslane National School—Dismissal of Miss Fitzgerald, 165
- Commissioners of—Salaries of National School Teachers—Deduction for Attending University Examinations, 840
- Commissioners of Intermediate Education —Professor Curtis, 1887
- Convent National School Teachers, 1472
- Industrial Schools, 429, 1777
- Intermediate Education Office (Dublin)—Dublin City and County Conservative Club, 1460
- Kilbiggan National School, 1533
- Office of Commissioners—Status, Duties, and Leaves of Clerks, 1314
- Promotion of Teachers, 655

Ireland—Poor Law—Questions
- Catholic Inmates — Provision for Divine Service in Donegal Workhouse, 982
- Death from Alleged Neglect of the Dispensary Medical Officer, Ballymacarrett, Belfast, 422
- Dr. O'Neill, Medical Officer, Athy, 169
- Kilrush Board of Guardians—Disorderly Conduct of Chairman, 1532
- Officers of the Mullingar Board of Guardians, 1464

Ireland—Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Questions
- Drumcliff West, Co. Sligo, 1178, 1179
- Electoral Division of Rathornan, Carlow Union, 1532
- Manorhamilton Board of Guardians, 164
- Mountmellick Union—Claim to Vote, 1775
- Newry Union—Misconduct of Returning Officer, 1466

Ireland—Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Questions
- 1510
- Arrest of Thomas Buckley and Richard Power at Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford, 27
- Trial for Intimidation at Newtownbarry, Co. Wexford, 427

Ireland—Prisons — Prisons Board — The Report, 430
- Wexford Gaol—Case of Edward Malone, 1680

[*cont.*

Trevelyan, Right Hon. G. O.—*cont.*

Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary—Questions
- Alleged Misconduct of Sergeant M'Grath, of Coolrain, Queen's Co. 1776
- Establishment and Extra Police for Co. Waterford, 1888
- Limitations of Age, 1180
- Mr. James Ellis French, 14, 175
- Police Guard over a Lady, 22, 23
- Sergeant Gallagher, 424, 1783

Ireland — Royal Universities — Queen's Colleges and the Royal University—The Rev. Dr. Molloy, 540
- Queen's Colleges—Royal Commission, 986

Ireland, State of—Questions
- Meeting of the National League at Abbeyfeale—Suppression of Meeting, 982
- Police Protection in Galway Co.—Messrs. R. and C. Henry, 1179, 1180
- Riots at Londonderry—"Young Waller," 9

Labourers' (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, 2R. 955, 956, 959, 960, 976

Parliament—Business of the House, 1792

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, Motion for Leave, 1510

Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 579, 583

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, Motion for reporting Progress, 638, 1668, 1672

Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1117, 1119, 1120, 1127, 1133, 1143, 1144, 1147

Truro, Lord
- Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *add. cl.* 401 ; *cl.* 5, 405 ; *cl.* 8, 414

Turkey (European Provinces)—The Governor Generalship of Eastern Roumelia
- Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 10, 1889

Tyler, Sir H. W., *Harwich*
- Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Relief of General Gordon, 450

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill
- (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)
- *c.* Ordered ; read 1°* *June* 9 [Bill 244]

United Kingdom, The—Defence of the Mercantile Ports—The Clyde
- Question, Mr. J. Stewart ; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *June* 9, 1780

United States of America
- *Food Adulteration*, Questions, Mr. Duckham, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Biggar ; Answers, Mr. Dodson *June* 6, 1679

Universal Exhibition at Antwerp—A British Commission
- Questions, Sir Robert Peel ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June* 10, 1895

Universities (Scotland) Bill (*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
- *c.* Motion for Leave (*The Lord Advocate*) *May* 26, 1429; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 230]

University of Cambridge (Borrowing Powers) Bill (*Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Raikes*)
- *c.* Bill withdrawn * *June* 9 [Bill 133]

Vivian, Sir H. Hussey, *Glamorganshire*
- Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1753
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 331

Vivian, Mr. A. P., *Cornwall, W.*
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), 2R. 383, 391

Wales—Intermediate and Higher Education
- *Aberystwith College*, Question, Mr. Rendel; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 26, 1318
- *Legislation*, Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 26, 1315

Walker, Mr. S. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
- County Courts (Ireland), 2R. 1884
- Ireland—Questions
  - Evictions—Case of Bernard Ennis, Phillipstown, King's Co., 1175
  - Land Law Act, 1881—Originating Notice for Fair Rent—Date of Liability for Payment—Case of Mrs. Casey, Cartongar, Co. Longford, 7
  - Law and Justice—Arrest of Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, 443, 545
  - Law and Police—Arrests at Tubbercurry, 1177;—Illegal Action of the Sheriff of King's Co., 1183
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Crossmaglen Prisoners—Michael Watters, Motion for a Select Committee, 623, 627, 628

Warton, Mr. C. N., *Bridport*
- Education Department—Political Lectures in Board School Rooms, 16
- Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 454
- Law and Justice—Juvenile Offenders, 659
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 787
- National Debt (Conversion of Stock), 2R. 1709
- Parliament—Ascension Day, Motion for Meetings of Committee, 936
- Parliament—Public Petitions, Res. 795
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 561; Amendt. 568, 1201, 1243, 1353, 1367, 1371; *cl.* 3, 1374, 1376; *cl.* 4, 1801, 1802, 1805, 1806; Amendt. 1807, 1819, 1822; *cl.* 5, 1832, 1834; *cl.* 7, 1840; *cl.* 9, 1854; Amendt. 1859; *add. cl.* 1900

[*cont.*

Warton, Mr. C. N.—*cont.*
- Revision of Voters and Jurors Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1667
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors—Return of Legislation, 657
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), 2R. 388, 391; Personal Explanation, 1186
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 379, 381
- Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.), 2R. 640, 641
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments—Vote on Account, 1049
  - Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain, 1600
  - Metropolitan Police Court Buildings, 1638
  - Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1579
  - Public Offices Site, 1591
  - Public Works, &c. Ireland, 1660
  - Surveys of the United Kingdom, 1645

Water Provisional Orders Bill (*The Lord Sudeley*)
- *l.* Read 1ª * *May* 12 (No. 92)
- Read 2ª * *May* 20
- Committee *; Report *May* 23
- Read 3ª * *May* 26

Watkin, Sir E. W., *Hythe*
- Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1353, 1354, 1358, 1371; *cl.* 7, 1845
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), Personal Explanation, 1187
- South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railways, 2R. 307, 323, 377

Waveney, Lord
- Parliamentary Representation—Boroughs of Ireland, 1289

WAYS AND MEANS (*Questions*)
- *Customs and Excise*
  - *Duties on Foreign Imports*, Observations, Mr. Mac Iver *May* 15, 473
  - *Duties on Gold and Siver Plate*, Observations, Mr. Slagg; Reply, Mr. Courtney; debate thereon *May* 15, 460
  - *Government Annuities—Table of Interest and Sinking Funds*, Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 26, 1306 [See title *Post Office*]
  - *Public Expenditure*, Observations, Mr. Rylands *May* 15, 481
  - *The Tobacco Duty*, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 19, 665: *May* 22, 1001
  - *Weight and Value of Smuggled Tobacco*, 1880-84, Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 15, 423
  - *Inland Revenue Office—Grievances of the Officials*, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 15, 435
- *Inland Revenue*
  - *Gun Licences*, Question, Mr. J. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 15, 437

[*cont.*

Ways and Means—*Inland Revenue—cont.*

Hackney Carriage Licences, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 13, 169

Income Tax—Assessment of Fishermen at Tarbert, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Courtney *May* 12, 11; *June* 9, 1769

Income Tax Surcharges, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June* 9, 1776

Private Brewing Licences, Observations, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Clare Read; Reply, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 15, 483

Taxation and Expenditure, Observations, Mr. O'Sullivan, Dr. Cameron *May* 15, 478

The Financial Statement—Coinage and National Debt (*Conversion of Stock*) *Bills,* Questions, Mr. Hicks, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 15, 447

Ways and Means—Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco

Amendt. on Committee of Ways and Means *May* 15, to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, a revision of the Import Duties upon Tobacco is expedient and necessary; that the system upon which Duty is now levied upon unmanufactured and manufactured Tobacco is beneficial to home manufacturers only, and is detrimental to the interests of the consumers in the United Kingdom" (*Mr. Macfarlane*) *v.* 451; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

WAYS AND MEANS

Considered in Committee *May* 15, 495—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on £ *s.* *d.*
Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 6"

After debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on £ *s.* *d.*
Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 3" (*Colonel Nolan*), 517; after further debate, Question put; A. 19, N. 70; M. 51 (D. L. 94)

Original Question put, and agreed to

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Customs and Inland Revenue," 527; after short debate, Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*); Motion withdrawn

Original Question put, and agreed to

Resolution reported *May* 16

[See title *Customs and Inland Revenue Bill*]

Considered in Committee *May* 26

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £6,519,368 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom

Resolution reported *May* 27

Wellington Statue, The

Question, The Duke of Rutland; Answer, Lord Sudeley *May* 13, 149; Questions, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; [no reply] *May* 22, 1005; Questions, Lord John Manners, Sir William Hart Dyke; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 26, 1312; Question, Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Redesdale; Reply, Earl Granville, 1264; Question, The Duke of Rutland; Answer, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *May* 27, 1447 [See title *Metropolis*]

Metropolitan Improvements—Hyde Park Corner, Questions, The Duke of Rutland; Answers, Lord Thurlow *May* 12, 2

Wellington Statue, The

The Lord Stratheden and Campbell having proposed to move a Resolution, and the same being objected to as irregular, Moved, "That the said Motion be not made" (*The Earl Granville*) *May* 20, 816; after short debate, on Question? Cont. 52, Not-Cont. 78; M. 26; resolved in the negative

Moved to resolve, "That in the opinion of this House it is not desirable to remove the equestrian statue of the late Duke of Wellington from London until the public have an opportunity of judging the monument by which it is intended to replace it" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*), 820

Moved to resolve, "That this House, being now possessed of fuller knowledge of the views and feelings of the late Duke of Wellington as regards his statue at Hyde Park Corner, is of opinion that it ought not to be removed from London" (*The Lord de Ros*) 823; after short debate Motion (*The Lord Campbell*) withdrawn.

On Question? Cont. 66, Not-Cont. 44; M. 22; resolved in the affirmative

Div. List, Cont. and Not-Cont. 836

Wemyss, Earl of

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment—Pigeon Shooting, 532, 536

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—General Gordon, 1450

Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. W. Gray, 1281

Literature, Science, and Art—The Blenheim Pictures, 1289

[*cont.*

Wemyss, Earl of—*cont.*
  Public Libraries Act Amendment, 814
  Secretary for Scotland, 2R. 805
  Wellington Statue, Res. 819

West, Mr. H. W., *Ipswich*
  Cardiff Corporation Bill—University College of South Wales, Instruction to the Committee, 1752, 1754
  Supply — Public Buildings, Great Britain, 1581

Western Pacific—Deportation of French Recidivists
  Postponement of Motion, The Earl of Rosebery *May* 19, 643

Westminster Abbey — The Coronation Chair, "Lia Fail," or Stone of Destiny—Alteration of the Notice affixed
  Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 12, 18

Whitley, Mr. E., *Liverpool*
  Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland), Comm. 138
  Law and Justice—The Assizes, 1315
  Mauritius—Mr. Napier Broome, 421
  Merchant Shipping, 2R. 700, 737
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1368; *cl.* 3, 1375, 1376; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 1860, 1862
  Supply—Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, &c. 1606, 1620

Wiggin, Mr. H., *Staffordshire, E.*
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 364

Williamson, Mr. S., *St. Andrews, &c.*
  Merchant Shipping, 2R. 772

Willis, Mr. W., *Colchester*
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 337, 345, 353

Wills, Mr. W. H., *Coventry*
  Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 457

Wilmot, Sir J. E., *Warwickshire, S.*
  Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 1931

Wilson, Mr. C. H., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
  Merchant Shipping, 2R. 723

Winchester, Bishop of
  Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 8, 413

Wodehouse, Mr. E. R., *Bath*
  Malay States—Abolition of Slavery, 669

Wolff, Sir H. D., *Portsmouth*
  Africa (West Coast)—Natives in the Congo Territory, 435
  Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Militia Recruiting, 1779
  Egypt—Conference, 671, 1482
  Excise—Import Duties upon Tobacco, Res. 456
  Fiji Islands—Mr. Patterson, 439
  Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Sewerage Scheme), 2R. 1767
  Navy—Questions
    Assistant Dockyard Constructors, 1893
    Committee on Private Shipyards, 659
    Dockyards—Payment of Wages, 1687
  Representation of the People, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1189; *cl.* 3, 1384, 1389, 1391
  Supply—Houses of Parliament, 1558
  Switzerland—Salvationists, 25

Woodall, Mr. W., *Stoke-on-Trent*
  Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 1941, 1942, 1958

Wortley, Mr. C. B. Stuart-, *Sheffield*
  Office of Public Prosecutor, Report of Committee, 1302
  Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 1903

Wyndham, Hon. P. S., *Cumberland, W.*
  South Eastern and Channel Tunnel Railway, 2R. 352

Yorkshire Land Registries and Yorkshire Registries Bills
  Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Yorkshire Land Registries Bill and Yorkshire Registries Bill do consist of seventeen Members:—The Judge Advocate General and Mr. Stuart-Wortley nominated Members of the Committee *May* 19, 795
  Moved, "That Mr. Dodds be one other Member of the said Committee" (*Mr. Dundas*); after short debate, Question put; A. 46, N. 15; M. 31 (D. L. 98)
  Other Members nominated, 796

END OF VOLUME CCLXXXVIII., AND FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

BIBL. LONDIN UNIV.